

# **NORTH WARREN CENTRAL SCHOOL**

## **Code of Conduct for Student-Athletes**

Participation on a NWCS athletic team is a privilege which should ignite great pride in both the student athlete and his/her family. It is also an acceptance of responsibility which requires an extra commitment from those who wear our school colors and represent their teammates, coaches, school and community. Standards of behavior are necessarily high and a willingness to meet these standards is a condition for being a member of one of our teams.

Our coaches are responsible for providing leadership, encouragement and direction to assist the student-athlete with meeting his/her personal commitment to their team. They are also responsible for providing the student-athlete the opportunity to compete in an athletic environment that fosters sportsmanship and fair play. Coaches will strive to enhance the academic pursuit of the student-athlete through athletic participation. The following guidelines serve as benchmarks for the conduct of coaches.

### **To the athlete:**

Being a member of a NWCS athletic team is a 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 many years. As a member of an interscholastic squad of the NWCS, you have inherited a wonderful tradition, which you are challenged to uphold. Like anything of value, it comes with a price tag. That price tag is a commitment from you to follow established rules. By participating in athletics to the greatest extent of your ability, you are contributing to the reputation of your school. We base our success on two separate venues, #1 the process, (what you can learn through athletics that can be used throughout life) and #2 the product the win/loss records of our teams. We field teams to compete and our goal is to achieve and to compete at our best possible level, in every contest. It is our deepest goal, that there is always a balance between these two areas.

Our tradition has been to win with honor, to develop young people of character, that our community has pride in, on and off the field. We desire to win, but only with honor to our athletes, our schools and our community. Such a tradition is worthy of the best efforts of all concerned.

Again, you as a student athlete must understand that this substance abuse program is not designed to be a punishment but a deterrent to your becoming involved in the risky and dangerous behaviors that are associated with the use and abuse of the drugs, alcohol and tobacco. It is also to insure that you have the best possibilities to succeed in your sport and to learn the valuable lessons that athletics can teach. Because you're mental and physical well-being is essential to your success, both as a student and as an athlete, we want you to reach your full potential. This can only be fully realized if you remain drug-free. We are asking for your help and cooperation in achieving a totally drug-free athletic program. We are committed to providing such an atmosphere for our student athletes. Therefore, we are asking you to become an active part of the solution, not to become part of the problem. Your active participation in remaining drug-free throughout your athletic career at NWCS is greatly appreciated. The benefit will be in the experience you will have.

It will not be easy to contribute to such a great athletic tradition. When you wear the colors of green and gold, we assume that you not only understand our traditions, but also are willing to assume the responsibilities that go with them. However, the contributions you make should be a satisfying accomplishment to you and your family and our community. Whether right or wrong, society holds athletes in esteem and your behavior at all times is under scrutiny.

### **RESPONSIBILITY**

You are also expected to share in the responsibility for such an opportunity that is provided, that shall include:

**Responsibilities to Yourself:** The most important of these responsibilities is to broaden and develop strength of character. You owe it to yourself to derive the greatest benefit from your high school experiences. To live a healthy lifestyle and to respect your health both physically and mentally at all times.

**Responsibility to your Academic Studies:** Your academic studies, and your participation in other extracurricular and co-curricular activities as well as sports, prepare you for your life as an adult. Athletics, while very important to many young people, is only a small part of life. Realize also how few athletes make it to the collegiate level and beyond.

**Responsibilities to Your School:** Another responsibility you assume as a squad member is to your school. NWCS cannot maintain its position as having outstanding schools unless you do your best in the activity in which you engage.

**Responsibility to your Community:** The community and school tax monies make this athletic experience possible. For that reason, we must remember that we hold a clear and paramount responsibility to our community. You assume a leadership role when you are on the athletic squad. The student body and citizens of the community know you. You are very visible with the spotlight on you. The student body, the community and other communities judge our schools by your conduct and attitude, both on and off the field. Because of this leadership role, you can contribute significantly to school spirit and community pride. Our desire is that our student athletes are a class act, not for the fact that we win rather that we are known as a program of character and excellence. Make NWCS proud of you and your community proud of your school, by your consistent demonstration of these ideals.

**Responsibility to Others:** As a squad member you also bear a heavy responsibility to your home. If you never give your parents anything to be ashamed of, you will have measured up to that ideal. When you know in your heart that you have lived up to all of the training rules, that you have practiced to the best of your ability everyday and that you have played the game "all out", you can keep your self-respect and your family can be justly proud of you, win or lose.

**Responsibility to Younger Athletes:** The younger students in NWCS Athletics are watching you. They know who you are and what you do. The older upper-class athletes are role models for the young athletes that will come after you. Make them proud. Be an example. They will copy you in many ways. Do not do anything to let them down. Set good examples for them.

#### **To the parent:**

This material is presented to you because your son or daughter has indicated a desire to participate in interscholastic athletics and you have expressed your willingness to permit her/him to compete. We believe that participation in sports provides a wealth of opportunities and experiences which assist students in personal development. It should be recognized that involvement in interscholastic athletics is a privilege.

A student who elects to participate in athletics is voluntarily making a choice of self-discipline and commitment. These are the reasons we place conditions on involvement, as the health and safety and welfare of athletes must be our first priority. Good training habits and lifestyle are necessary for us to insure this experience. Failure to comply with the rules of training and conduct means exclusion from the squad. This concept of self-discipline and commitment is tempered by our responsibility to recognize the rights of the individual within the objectives of the team and the interscholastic program. There is no place in high school athletics for students who will not discipline their minds and bodies for rigorous competition. This decision is not ours alone but that of the Supreme Court of the United States, as there have been challenges to athletic codes on five occasions and the Supreme Court has ruled in favor of such codes on each occasion under the premise that athletes' safety and health must be insured. Challenges to the athletic code shall be considered, but no consideration shall be given to any party or stakeholder who will not agree to such provisions.

It is the role of the department of athletics to establish and maintain rules that govern the spirit of training and competition for the school district. These are the clear and consistent boundaries that insure the success of our young people. These rules need a broad basis of community support, which is achieved only through communication to the parent, the coaches, the student athletes and fans. It is our hope to accomplish this objective through this athletic publication for students and parents.

## To the Coaches

### Coaches will:

1. Build a personal and team philosophy based upon the values expressed in the Interscholastic Athletic Program Philosophy statement.
2. Strive to enlarge their technical knowledge and develop wisdom and competency in all areas of the profession.
3. Enhance and protect the physical and mental well being of their student athletes.
4. Teach student-athletes to respect self, teammates, opponents and officials.
5. Strive to instill in players a desire to know and live by the spirit of the rules of the school, team, and sports.
6. Help create an atmosphere of friendly competition wherein sportsmanship and honor transcend victory or defeat.
7. Cooperate with administrators, faculty and other coaches in maintaining and improving the educational quality of our school.
8. Encourage the highest standards of academic achievement among our student-athletes.
9. Support the highest standards of conduct with regard to character and integrity.
10. Support the chemical health standards and behavioral standards set forth in this code

### A. Application of the Code

The Code of Conduct will apply to each student athlete for the **academic school year (July 1 to June 30)** (including summer) and will be in effect at all times, in all locations, including non-school activities. Violation of the Code will result in penalties, which are consistent with those identified within the code as determined by the coach and/or Athletic Director. Each coach also has the prerogative to establish and implement additional guidelines specific to his/her particular team.

All violations of the Code will be cumulative beginning with a student's initial participation on a modified, junior varsity, or varsity team.

### B. Conditions for Team Membership

Student-athletes are expected to commit themselves to team membership, attendance at school, and at practices/contests for the duration of the season. When this commitment is not fulfilled, the athlete's membership and position on the team shall be reviewed by the coach with the athlete and a recommendation of action will be made by the coach to the Athletic Director for review.

1. Student-athletes are expected to attend all practices and contests unless excused by the coach. It is the athlete's responsibility to notify the coach, in advance, of any circumstances which would prohibit attendance at practice(s) or contest(s) other than absence from school. Failure to comply may result in disciplinary action ranging from a verbal warning to dismissal from the team dependent upon the nature and/or frequency of the offense.
2. A student who is absent from school will not be eligible for participation in any athletic event or practice session on the day he or she is absent. The Athletic Director may permit participation when, in his/her judgment, the absence is unavoidable and supporting documentation signed by a parent or guardian is provided. Students are therefore advised to make requests for absence(s) in advance. If an event is to be held on a weekend (or long weekend), the student must have been present all day on the day immediately preceding the weekend.

3. Students who are members of an interscholastic athletic team are expected to be in school on time on a daily basis. Students will be ineligible for practice or contest participation that day if they do not report to the AES room prior to or at the start of class. Students who report to school late must present a legal excuse signed by a parent or guardian in order to be eligible to participate (ex. doctor's appointment).
4. The coach will establish team rules for practices/game attendance and participation. All team members will be given a written copy of the team rules and the coach will review the rules with the team members. All team members are expected to comply with and abide by the rules established for their team.
5. A student's absence(s) from practice(s) and or contest(s) due to mandatory participation in family activities will not jeopardize the student's team membership status. However, it is important to note that upon his or her return to the team the position previously held by the student may be held by another team member. It is the returning student's responsibility to regain his or her position through individual effort and team play as determined by the coach.
6. As a member of an interscholastic team, it is expected that your top athletic priority is to your team during the entire season of play. Participation on non-school related athletic teams in the same season of interscholastic participation is permissible as long as such participation does not conflict with fulfilling your responsibilities to the interscholastic team or violate team rules.
7. The use, sale and/or possession of any controlled substance(s), alcohol, tobacco products, illegal drugs or drug paraphernalia other than those prescribed by a physician is strictly prohibited.
8. As a member of an athletic team, students should be mindful that they represent their team, school, family and community. Team members are expected to have an obligation to conduct themselves as good citizens both in and out of school and the community. Students are expected to refrain from exhibiting any behavior(s), which violates the principles of good citizenship. IN other words, NEVER do anything which might bring embarrassment or an unfavorable view to yourself, your teammates, coaches, family, school, or community.
9. An athlete who participates in activities resulting in his/her arrest or formal charges being filed in a court of law may face additional penalties under this Code. If the school district has adequate and competent evidence that the student participated in the offense for which he or she is charged, a penalty may be imposed pursuant to this Code prior to completion of the criminal proceeding. **If the school district does not have such evidence and the student is convicted of a crime (misdemeanor or felony), the penalty pursuant to this code will be imposed upon conviction.** In the latter case, the athlete may continue to participate in his/her sport until resolution of the matter by the judicial system.

## C. Penalties for Misconduct

**North Warren Athletics' 3-Strike Policy is cumulative for students in Grades 7-12. For a "Strike 3" the student athlete shall be removed from participation in all interscholastic athletics for the remainder of his/her athletic career.**

**Level 1 Offenses (Counts as 1 Strike)** The student athlete is suspended for "x" number of contests (see **CHART OF PENALTIES**).

**Level 2 Offenses (Counts as 2 Strikes)** The student athlete is suspended for at least "x" number of contests up to a year (see **CHART OF PENALTIES** on next page).

Examples of Level 1 Offenses may include but are not limited to:

- Possession and/or Use of Alcohol and/or Tobacco products.
- NWCS Student Code of Conduct Violations: Any violation of the NWCS Student Code of Conduct which results in out-of-school suspension.

- Poor Sportsmanship: Student Athletes, whether participants or spectators, will observe courteous behavior during all sporting events. Booming, whistling, name calling, obscene gestures, fighting or arguing with the referee etc.
- Stealing: Stealing of any kind, including athletic clothing belonging to NWCS or our opponent.
- Verbal and/or Physical Abuse: directed at teachers, coaches, students, opponents, officials, etc.
- Attending of Drinking/Drug Parties: Student Athletes are prohibited from attending a party that involves alcohol, drugs or illegal substances. If a student athlete attends a party where alcohol or drugs are present then the student athlete must leave immediately (Leave means leave immediately).

Examples of Level 2 Offenses may include but are not limited to:

- Possession and/or use of Drugs: The possession and/or use of illegal drugs and/or paraphernalia or the possession and/or use of drugs or medications without a prescription is strictly prohibited.
- Hosting of Drinking/Drug Parties: Student Athletes are prohibited from hosting a party that involves alcohol, drugs or illegal substances.
- Hazing/Initiation Ceremony – NWCS interscholastic coaches will not permit, nor will NWCS student athletes stage any type of “initiation ceremony,” or hazing for athletes at any time and on any level. This prohibition includes any athlete giving other athletes haircuts, shaving other athletes, locker/shower pranks etc.
- Verbal and/or Physical Abuse: directed at teachers, coaches, students, opponents, officials, etc.
- Vandalism and/or Property Destruction

**Violent Behavior of any manner shall be grounds for immediate dismissal.**

**Cyber Image Policy** – Any identifiable image, photo or video which implicates a student athlete to have been in possession or presence of drugs or portrays actual use, or out of character behavior of crime, shall be confirmation of a violation of the code. Since there is no way to establish timeframe for when or location of where the image was taken, it shall be a responsibility that the student athlete must assume. It must also be noted that there may be persons, who would attempt to implicate an athlete, by taking such images, to place them in a situation where they might be in violation of this code standard. This is our rationale for demanding that our athletes not place themselves in such environments.

**It should be noted, notwithstanding the chart of penalties, that the facts of an incident may warrant immediate removal from the team if the Athletic Director and the Administration believe that the offense committed by the athlete warrants such action. Further, the Athletic Director and the Administration hold discretionary rights when assigning a strike(s) and penalty to a student athlete.**

**CHART OF PENALTIES:**

<b>Number of Regular Season Scheduled Contests</b>	<b>Strike 1 Contest Penalty</b>	<b>Strike 2 Contest Penalty</b>
<b>7-11</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>At LEAST 4, up to a year</b>
<b>12-15</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>At LEAST 6, up to a year</b>
<b>16-19</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>At LEAST 8, up to a year</b>
<b>20-24</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>At LEAST 10, up to a year</b>

## D. Due Process

Prior to the imposition of any penalty under the Code, the coach and/or Athletic Director will notify the athlete of the nature of the infraction and the athlete will be given an opportunity to explain his or her side of the issue.

## E. Appeal Procedure

The student and/or parent/guardian have the right to appeal athletic penalties to the Athletic Review Committee. Appeals must be made in writing within three days of assignment of a penalty for a violation of the code.

1. The Athletic Review Committee will meet within 48 hours upon receipt of a written notice to appeal an athletic penalty unless the committee members are unavailable. In such a circumstance the Committee will meet as soon as these individuals may be assembled.
2. The student and his/her parents will be notified within 48 hours of receipt of the written appeal.
3. Upon review of the appeal, the committee will render a decision. The Athletic Director will notify parents of the decision in writing.

All student team members and parent(s) will be required to sign and return the acknowledgement portion of the code to their respective coach. The signed acknowledgement will be kept on file by the Athletic Director and is in effect for any sport in which a student participates in any academic year. **No student team member will be allowed to participate in any team activities until the signed acknowledgement is returned to the coach.**

## F. Distribution of Policy

The coach will review this policy with all potential team candidates prior to the first official tryout session. During the tryout period, all participants are subject to all school and athletic policies and conditions under this code.

## G. Academic Eligibility for Student-Athletes

If a student is failing two or more courses (less than a 65% average) that student is ineligible to participate in extra-curricular activities. Throughout the year the ineligible list will be generated 11 times.

### **Once on the list, can a student get off the list?**

Yes. If a student is on the ineligible list for two or more subjects the only way he/she can become eligible, before the next list is published, is if he/she gets off the list for **ALL** subjects he/she is failing. For example, a student is on the ineligible list for math and science; in order to become eligible that student must get off the list for BOTH math and science.

### **Can a student be placed back on the list?**

Yes. Using the same example, if the student again begins failing math, science, or both then he/ she can be placed back on the ineligible list.

### **If a student is not on the list when the list was generated, can that student be added to the list?**

No. The next time a student can be placed on the ineligible list is when the next one is generated.