

Sparta High School

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Sparta Area Schools does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability in its programs and activities. In order to protect these rights and assure compliance, the Sparta Area School District has appointed Mr. Mark Kasmer, Mrs. Susan Gates and Mr. Joe Droski as Coordinator of Title VI, Title IX, Section 504, the Age Discrimination Act, and Title II.

SPARTAN ALMA MATER

O' Alma Mater glorious,
Forever more victorious,
We pledge to thee,
Undying Faith and Loyalty.
O' may your wisdom guide us,
Forever stand beside us,
Through all our lives we
pledge,
Devoted faith in thee.

SPARTA FIGHT SONG

Sparta on to victory,
Let them hear our story,
Sparta spirits conquer,
Go out and win this game.
RAH, RAH, RAH!
Bring the victory back tonight,
Do it for the Blue and White,
Oh, may our colors ever fly,
For the dear ol' Sparta High.
FIGHT, FIGHT, FIGHT!!!

ATHLETIC HANDBOOK

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5.0 SPARTAN ATHLETIC CODE OF CONDUCT

5.1 Letter to Parents

This material is important to you if your son or daughter has a desire to participate in interscholastic athletics. 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 policy for students and parents.

When your son/daughter participates in athletics at Sparta Area Schools our staff will strive to provide your son/daughter with:

- Adequate equipment and facilities
- The best available, well-trained coaches
- Equalized contests with skilled officials
- Adequate supervised transportation

5.2 STUDENT-ATHLETE DEFINED

A student-athlete is considered to be a member of any interscholastic sports team. This includes, but is not limited to, Team Managers and Student Trainers.

5.3 Message to the Student-Athlete

As a student-athlete, you are subject to the SHS Athletic Code, the rules and regulations of the OK Conference and the rules and regulations of the Michigan High School Athletic Association (MHSAA). MHSAA guidelines can be found in the Athletic Director and Principal's office or online at www.mhsaa.com. Your dedication as a student-athlete is essential for a successful athletic program.

Participation in interscholastic athletics is a privilege and it is also a responsibility. Being a member of a Sparta 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 Sparta High School, 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 our school. We base our success on two separate venues:

1. The process - what you can learn through athletics that can be used throughout life.
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.

It will not be easy to contribute to such a great athletic tradition. When you wear the colors of Royal Blue and White, 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.

5.4 RESPONSIBILITY

You are expected to share in the responsibility for such an opportunity that is provided. This includes:

5.4.1 Responsibility 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.

5.4.2 Responsibility to your Academic Studies

Your academic studies, and your participation in other extracurricular 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. It is important to realize how few athletes make it to the collegiate level and beyond.

5.4.3 Responsibility to Your School

Another responsibility you assume as a squad member is to your school. Sparta Area Schools cannot maintain its position as having outstanding schools unless you do your best in the activity in which you engage.

5.4.4 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 Sparta High School proud of you and your community proud of your school, by your consistent demonstration of these ideals.

5.4.5 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.

5.4.6 Responsibility to Younger Athletes

The younger students in the Sparta Area Schools 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.

“Being the first to cross the finish line is only one phase of life. It’s what you do after you cross the line that really counts.” Ralph Boston, Olympic Gold Medalist

5.5 Purpose of the Athletic Code

Through the establishment and enforcement of uniform standards, it is expected that all student-athletes will strive for and attain high standards of self-discipline in all areas of their life, thereby allowing them to reach their full potential as students and athletes. The Athletic Code defines the positive expectations that we have for coaches, parents and athletes. The common values in our program reflect shared goals and a framework of principles agreed upon by the stakeholders need for active support from other stakeholders, such as the school board, school administration, other school staff and the community. As in a clearly laid out playing field, it defines how we as a school will establish and maintain a healthy environment in which student athletes can mature through athletics.

This Athletic Code is meant to be a useable, dynamic document to guide the educational process through our school’s athletic program. It defines our mission, philosophy, goals and parameters of our programs.

5.6 SPARTA HIGH SCHOOL INTERSCHOLASTIC SPORTS PROGRAM

Sparta High School offers the following interscholastic sports to all students in grades 9-12:

5.6.1 GIRLS' SPORTS

Fall

- Cheerleading, Cross Country, Volleyball, Football, Equestrian (club)

Winter

- Bowling, Basketball , Competitive Cheer

Spring

- Soccer, Softball, Tennis, Track & Field

5.6.2 Boy's Sports

Fall

- Cross Country, Football, Soccer, Tennis, Equestrian (club)

Winter

- Basketball, Bowling, Wrestling

Spring

- Baseball, Track & Field, Golf

5.7 EQUAL OPPORTUNITY

Sparta High School is an equal opportunity education institution and will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex or handicap in its activities, programs or employment practices as required by Title VI, Title IX and Section 504.

5.8 PHILOSOPHY OF ATHLETICS

Athletics are an integral part of the educational process of Sparta Area Schools. Therefore, it shall be referred to as a 'co-curricular' activity rather than an 'extracurricular' one. If our athletic program is to be successful, it must encourage individual physical fitness, develop a knowledge and appreciation of sports, teach athletic skills and cultivate a competitive nature with good sportsmanship. To this end, the athletic program is designed to stress that:

- A. The student-athlete learns the value of teamwork, self-discipline, hard work and personal sacrifice, all of which are necessary attributes which prepare the student-athlete for success in a democratic society. The athlete learns that their contribution to the team is more important than their personal goals or desires.
- B. The student-athlete learns in a positive manner to cope with the competitive nature of our society. The student-athlete learns the value of success, realizing that s/he will not always win, but s/he can succeed when they continually strive to improve.
- C. The student-athlete learns to be a good sport. Through participation in athletics, the student-athlete must develop emotional control, honesty and cooperativeness and learn to be modest in victory and gracious in defeat.
- D. The student-athlete learns the importance of having a sound physical body. To enjoy life and to be a contributing citizen, one must develop good health habits and must maintain a high degree of physical fitness.

E. The student-athlete will operate within the rules of the sport, the MHSAA (a copy of the MHSAA handbook is available in the Principal and Athletic Director's office and online at www.mhsaa.com), OK Conference and the SHS Athletic Handbook.

- It is better to be safe than ineligible, therefore if you have any questions concerning eligibility, read these rules very carefully and be sure you understand them. If you have any questions, ask them of your Coach, Athletic Administrators, Principal or Superintendent **before** you endanger your high school eligibility rather than **after**!!! After is too late.

In addition, the athletic program of Sparta Area Schools is governed by these general guidelines:

1. Participation in interscholastic athletics at Sparta High School is a privilege and not a right. While we do strive for maximum participation, interscholastic athletics is for those that have outstanding physical skills in their respective sports.
2. We demand that the coaching staff, student-athletes, student body and adult followers never act in a manner, which would reflect negatively on Sparta Area Schools.
3. Success or failure of our athletic programs will be evaluated in light of our educational goals and general guidelines.
4. The athletic program at Sparta High School must reflect school and community values.
5. We will provide our student-athletes with the best teaching and coaching personnel available.
6. We will provide our student-athletes with the best facilities and equipment that are available in relationship to the financial conditions, which exist at the given time.
7. We will provide all spectators an opportunity to support the interscholastic teams of Sparta Area Schools.
8. Our athletic program will strive to provide all student-athletes an opportunity to grow physically, socially and emotionally, establish positive values and provide for a meaningful experience.

5.9 OVERALL ATHLETIC PROGRAM GOALS

Research tells us that the most important reasons why students participate in athletics are for:

1. Enjoyment (FUN!)
2. Participation (in practice and contests)
3. Personal improvement (skills of the sport and in performance)

Therefore the primary goals of the Sparta High School Athletic Program are to:

- Offer students an enjoyable experience;
- Provide the greatest opportunity possible for athletes to participate in both practice and competitions;
- Promote personal improvement in skills, physical condition, performance and knowledge of the sport;
- Promote programs of excellence, which will accomplish the above, and lead to success on and off the playing field.
- Our teams shall also pursue excellence at all times.

We desire a Program of excellence and strive to win every contest in which our teams compete. Central to the goals of Sparta Area Schools is the belief that interscholastic athletics can and should enhance the character of our youth. We put forth the following as the positive character expectations we hold for the primary stakeholders in our Athletic Program.

5.10 THE FOUR C'S

The 4 C's were developed to help develop character through sport. Beyond the basic skills taught, it is our goal to develop the character of our youth through our athletic program

We know that less than 2% of high school athletes go on to play team sports at the collegiate level. Therefore, we understand that high school athletics provide a unique opportunity for the development of not only physical conditioning and athletic skill, but also character traits essential for success in life. To that end we challenge every athlete to strive for the following:

5.10.1 Competence

The necessary level of knowledge and skill to sufficiently train and compete

- To develop the skills necessary to participate competently in the game.

- To demonstrate knowledge of the rules and conventions of the game.
- To demonstrate knowledge of the strategies of the game.
- To demonstrate a level of physical conditioning and fitness sufficient to participate competently in the game.
- To demonstrate knowledge of healthy behaviors including nutritional issues.
- To understand the necessity of abstaining from the use of alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs in order to achieve the positive benefits of interscholastic athletics

5.10.2 Character

The pattern of beliefs, attitudes and therefore behavior that relates to moral strength, constitution and essential qualities that embrace the positive values of Sparta High School and the Community

- To be dependable in fulfilling obligations and commitments.
- To accept responsibility for consequences of actions and not to make excuses or blame others.
- To strive to excel.
- To be committed.
- To persevere, give 100% effort and not give up in the face of setbacks.
- To demonstrate truthfulness.
- To play by the rules of the game and not cheat.
- To control anger and frustration and refrain from displays of temper and bad language.
- To accept losing and winning graciously; to congratulate opponents, not sulk, or display other negative behaviors.

5.10.3 Civility

To demonstrate behavior that exemplifies appropriate respect and concern for others.

- To practice good manners on and off the field.
- To refrain from trash talk and other put-downs of opponents and teammates
- To treat all persons respectfully regardless of individual differences to show respect for legitimate authority (e.g. Coaches Officials Captains).
- To be fair and treat others as one wishes to be treated.
- To listen to and try to understand others.
- To be compassionate and sensitive to others.

- To actively support teammates and others.

5.10.4 Citizenship

Social responsibility as part of a ‘community’

- To be faithful to the ideals of the game including sportsmanship.
- To keep commitments to team.
- To show team spirit, encourage others and contribute to good morale.
- To put the good of the team ahead of personal gain.
- To work well with teammates to achieve team goals.
- To accept responsibility to set a good example for teammates, younger athletes, fans and school community.

5.11 GENERAL ELIGIBILITY REGULATIONS

5.11.1 Forms

A student-athlete is not permitted to participate in interscholastic competition until the following items have been completed and are on file in the Athletic Office:

- A physical examination by a physician. The physician and parent or guardian must sign the Physical Form. The physical form is available in the Athletic Office. The physical must be dated on or after April 15, 2008 in order to be valid for the 2008 - 2009 school year.
- Injury Waiver Form which is part of the Physical Form
- Emergency form for all sports which is part of the physical Form
- Pay the Activity Fee by the appropriate date. The current fee is \$75/student/sport with a \$200 family maximum, which includes students at both the high school and the Middle School. The fee does not guarantee a player “playing time”, participating means being a member of the team. Signature on all forms that acknowledge the athletic code has been received and read.

5.11.2 Injuries

- The Certified Athletic Trainer, physician and/or qualified health care provider can prohibit any student-athlete who sustains an injury from returning to participation until evaluated and released.
- Any student-athlete that sustains an injury is prohibited from returning to participation until the Certified Athletic Trainer has

had either written or verbal communication with the coaching staff.

- Any student-athlete who has been attended to by a physician and has been denied participation must have written release from the physician in order to return to participation.
- A parental medical release or waiver is not acceptable for a return to participation following an injury.
- If any healthcare provider involved in the care of the student-athlete feels the student-athlete is unfit to participate, the Certified Athletic Trainer will not allow the student/athlete to participate.
- If a student-athlete is restricted in any physical education class, that student-athlete may not be allowed to participate in interscholastic athletic activities. The Certified Athletic Trainer reserves the right to make exceptions to this rule.

5.11.3 Age

A student-athlete who competes in any interscholastic athletic contest must be under nineteen (19) years of age, except that a student-athlete whose nineteenth (19th) birthday occurs on or after September 1 of a current school year is eligible for the balance of that school year. Any student born before September 1, 1989 is ineligible.

5.11.4 Semesters of Competition:

A student-athlete may not have more than four (4) first and four (4) second semester seasons of competition in a sport in four (4) years of high school.

5.11.5 Semester of Enrollment:

A student-athlete shall not compete in any branch of athletics who has been enrolled in grades nine to twelve, inclusive, for more than eight semesters. The seventh and eighth semesters must be consecutive. Enrollment in school beyond the fourth Friday after Labor Day (first semester) or the fourth Friday of February (second semester), or competing in one or more interscholastic athletic contest, shall be considered as enrollment for a semester under this rule.

5.11.6 Undergraduate standing:

A student-athlete who is a graduate of a regular four-year high school or who is a graduate of a secondary school, which has the same requirements for graduation as a regular four-year high school, shall not be eligible for interscholastic athletics. However,

a student-athlete who satisfactorily completes the required number of credits for graduation in less than eight semesters shall not be barred from interscholastic athletic competition, while passing at least twenty credit hours of undergraduate work, until the end of the eighth semester.

5.11.7 Amateur practices:

After once representing Sparta Area Schools in competition in any sport, a student-athlete shall not be eligible to participate if that student-athlete receives money or other valuable consideration from any source for participating in athletics, sports or games listed in awards section or signs a professional contract. See #9 for clarification.

5.11.8 Awards:

- A student-athlete may accept, for participation in athletics, a symbolic or merchandise award, which does not have a value or cost in excess of \$25.
- Awards for athletic participation in the form of cash, merchandise certificates, or any other type of negotiable documents are never allowed.
- Banquets, luncheons, dinners, non-competitive trips, and fees or admissions to be a spectator at events, if accepted in kind, are permitted.
- A student-athlete shall be ineligible under this Regulation if she/he accepts awards in violation of its provision only in the following activities: baseball, basketball, competitive cheer, cross country, football, golf, ice hockey, soccer, girls softball, swimming, tennis, track and field, girls volleyball or wrestling.
- A student-athlete violating this regulation shall be ineligible for interscholastic competition for a period on not less than one full semester from the date of the student-athlete's last violation.

5.11.9 Limited team membership:

- A student-athlete who, after practicing with or participating in an athletic contest or scrimmage as member of a Sparta Area School athletic team, participates in any athletic competition not sponsored by our school in the same sport during the same season, shall become ineligible for a minimum of the next three days of competition and a maximum of the remainder of that season in that school year. There are some exceptions. See the athletic director for these.

- A student-athlete shall not compete at any time in any MHSAA Tournament sport in any of the following events:
 - a. Any event which is or purports to be an "All Star" contest, regardless of the method of selection;
 - b. "All Star" fund raising events or similar exhibitions if they involve contestants other than the student/athletes and faculty of our school
 - c. Any event that purports to be a national high school championship or the qualification thereto. Participation in such a contest by a student-athlete shall cause that student-athlete to become ineligible for all interscholastic athletics for a maximum period of one year of school enrollment.
- A student-athlete may participate as an individual at any time without losing eligibility as a member of a National Team or Olympic Development Team.

5.11.10 College recruitment:

In the event a college recruiter contacts a student-athlete personally, the student-athlete has an obligation to notify his/her coach, counselor or Athletic Director of any such contact as soon as possible. The coach, counselor or athletic director will work with the student-athlete and his/her parents to make sure all recruiting rules are followed.

- NCAA Clearinghouse: Students who feel that they have the potential to compete at an NCAA Division I or Division II school must have both your academic and amateurism status certified by the NCAA Initial- Eligibility Clearinghouse. The Clearinghouse is an organization that works with the NCAA to determine a student's eligibility for athletic participation in his or her first year of college. Students who want to participate in college sports during their first year of enrollment at a Division I or II College or university must register with the clearinghouse. Registration should take place at the beginning of the Junior Year. More info can be found at www.ncaaclearinghouse.net or in the High School Career Counseling Office.

5.12 ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY

At Sparta High School, there is a two-part eligibility requirement. Student-athletes must meet both to be eligible to compete. The first part is semester eligibility and the second is weekly eligibility.

These eligibility regulations are above the minimum requirements of the MHSAA. Member schools are permitted to adopt more rigid standards. At Sparta High School, we believe that student-athletes should be held to a higher standard. Therefore, our eligibility requirements are more rigid. We will do eligibility checks every week to ensure our students are meeting academic requirements. These checks are done to help motivate the student to do better academically.

5.12.1 Weekly Eligibility

- Weekly Eligibility will be determined by the current 9-week grade.
- Low-grade reports will be run every Monday at noon.
- If a student-athlete has below 70% in more than one class the student will be warned and should look at options to get their grades above that level
- If the grade is below 70% for a second week in more than one class the student will be ineligible to compete in that weeks games/contests. They remain ineligible until they no longer have more than one class under 70%.
- Once a student is identified, the coach will be notified by the athletic office, which in turn will notify the student. If a student feels there has been a mistake, s/he will be responsible for taking care of it with the teacher. At no time will athletic personnel intervene. If there is a change, then the teacher should contact the Athletic Office. Parents will also be notified by mail once the list is complete.

5.12.2 Semester Eligibility

For a student-athlete to be eligible for the semester, s/he must have 70% or better in three (3) of four(4) semester classes the preceding semester. The students must also maintain a 2.00 GPA to remain eligible for athletics. If a student does not have 70% or better for a final grade in 3 out of 4 classes or has a GPA below a 2.00 they will be ineligible for the entire next semester.

5.13 ATTENDANCE REGULATIONS

- a) A student-athlete must be present by the start of their school day on the day of interscholastic competition in order to compete in that day's activities (i.e. practice, games, etc.) The Principal, Assistant Principal, Athletic Director or Athletic Director Assistant may grant exceptions (i.e. Doctor

appointment, funerals, family emergencies, etc.).

Consequence: Suspension from that day's practice or contest.

- b) If a student-athlete goes home sick, s/he will not be allowed to participate in practice or competition for that day.
- c) An athlete who is suspended from regular classroom attendance for four (4) class periods or longer (this includes both in-school and out-of-school suspensions) may not practice or take part in interscholastic competition during said suspension. Consequence: Suspension from that day's practice or contest.
- d) Athletes must have excellent attendance in school. If absenteeism from class becomes a problem, the Athletic Director can deny the athlete the privilege of attending practice or games.
- e) Coaches may impose their own CONSEQUENCES for players missing practice or games.
- f) If the absence is inadvertently overlooked and the student-athlete participates in a contest, s/he must miss the next scheduled practice or contest.

5.14 EQUIPMENT AND UNIFORMS

- 1. A student-athlete is financially responsible for all issued equipment.
- 2. Destroyed, lost, or stolen equipment must be paid for, or the student-athlete will:
 - Not be allowed to participate in the next sport he/she goes out for.
 - Not receive their athletic award.
 - In the case of seniors, may not participate in graduation.
- 3. School issued warm-ups and/or jackets are to be worn for games and practices only. They are not to be worn as general clothing items to school. Game uniforms are to be worn for games only.
- 4. School issued uniform shirts; sweaters or traveling outfits may be worn to school on game days only or as directed by the coach. Only shirts that are appropriate school attire will be allowed.

5.15 TRANSPORTATION

- 1. It is required that all student-athletes travel to and return from away contests (when applicable) with the team on school

provided transportation. This promotes team camaraderie, sportsmanship and provides a means of effective supervision and maximizes safety to and from the athletic event.

Exceptions may be granted by the Principal, Athletic Director or his/her designee and will follow the Board of Education transportation policies.

2. If a student-athlete will not be returning with the team, the following steps must be taken:
 - a. Written approval of the coach or athletic director is obtained before or at the away contest.
 - b. Signed permission statement by a parent/guardian and returned to the coach

5.16 DROPPING A SPORT

Once an athlete has become a member of a team, but wishes to drop the sport, the athlete must have a conference with the coach. A student-athlete cannot drop one sport and go out for another sport in the same season without both coaches written approval. All changes must have the written approval of the athletic director. An athlete who has not followed these steps may not participate in another sport (practice, conditioning or open gyms) until the team's season is complete.

5.17 SUMMER DEAD PERIOD

The summer dead period is a period of seven consecutive calendar days after school is out in June and after a school's participation in MHSAA tournaments is completed. Each school determines its seven-day dead period. June 28 – July 5 will be the dead period for Sparta Area Schools. During the dead period, there is no involvement or contact by the school or coach with students in grades 7-12 in any sport. It is a zero coach-player period; at school or elsewhere. There are to be no school or coach conducted open gyms, conditioning or weight lifting programs on school premises or sponsored by the school or coach at other facilities. The Representative Council adopted the following to further clarify the intent of the summer dead period:

- The Summer Dead Period is intended to provide at least seven consecutive days when school coaches will have no contact with students in grades 7-12 of the school district in any manner related to any sport sponsored by that school.
Unplanned, casual, normal community contact is permitted.

- It is intended that no sport-related involvement, including attendance at school sport-related fundraisers and functions, take place during the Summer Dead Period.
- It is intended that no sport activities occur on school premises during the Summer Dead Period that involve school coaches or are sponsored by the school or supported by the school.
- Because school personnel are prohibited from holding such activities, it is intended that no school facilities be planned for use by non-school groups or individuals for athletic purposes (including student-led practices or conditioning) during the Summer Dead Period.
- Following the intention and spirit of this regulation will involve the shutting down of athletics for these 7 days and not allowing non-school individuals or groups to do that which the school is prohibited from doing

5.18 PRE-SEASON DOWN TIME

The preseason down time is also a “pause in the action” that the MHSAA Representative Council adopted which prohibits open gyms (which in some schools has evolved into out-of-season practices) for a period of 6 to 14 days prior to the start of each season: From Aug. 1 to the start of fall sports practices, 14 calendar days before winter sports and from March 1 until the start of spring sports. Among the goals of the preseason down time are the following:

- More clearly distinguish the start of each season and its tryout period.
- Decrease the blurry line between allowed preseason activity (open gyms) and the start of tryouts and practices.
- Decrease the overlap of activity between the end of one season and the start of the next.

During the preseason down time certain activities are allowed:

- Contact by a coach within the three-player rule (voluntary, individual skill development).
- Non-mandatory weight training and non-sport specific conditioning.

Certain activities are not allowed:

- Open gyms, camps or clinics that involve that upcoming sport are not permitted.
- o Competition (intra-squad or inter-squad) between groups that resemble school teams may not occur.

Non-school groups or individuals may not do that which the coach or school is prohibited from doing during the down time. The Representative Council has stated, “No open gyms, **camps and clinics** shall occur at the school or be sponsored elsewhere by the school and no competition (intra-squad or inter-squad) between groups that resemble school teams may occur with **any** of that school district’s personnel present.

Because of the similarity between in-season practices in track & field, cross country and swimming & diving and preseason conditioning in these sports and others, the Council added the following language which provides some contrast to conditioning in these three sports which is allowed during the down time:

Regardless of what they are called or where they are held, coach-conducted running or swimming sessions which involve the structure of distances and timing and/or teach sport specific technique shall not be provided even on a voluntary basis during the down time prior to cross country, track & field or swimming & diving seasons if they are conducted by the school coaches of those sports.

Activity that includes both time and distance is more like practice for the sport than not and is not to occur during the down time. This may have the effect of changing how some cross-country teams condition preseason in the summer from August 1 to the start of practice. It does allow for aerobic conditioning (similar to that which is permitted in other sports) but must not resemble regular season practices in cross country.

5.18.1 Down Time and Sport Start Dates

Fall Sport	Down-Time	Start Date
Cross Country	Aug. 1 – 11	Aug. 12
Football	Aug. 1 – 09	Aug. 10
Soccer-Boys	Aug. 1 – 11	Aug. 12
Tennis-Boys	Aug. 1 – 11	Aug. 12
Volleyball	Aug. 1 – 11	Aug. 12
Winter Sport	Down-Time	Start Date
Basketball-Boys	Nov. 2 – Nov. 15	Nov. 16
Basketball-Girls	Oct. 26 - Nov. 8	Nov. 09
Competitive Cheer	Oct. 26 – Nov. 8	Nov. 09
Bowling	Nov. 4 – Nov. 18	Nov. 19

Spring Sport	Down-Time	Start Date
Wrestling	Nov. 2 - Nov. 15	Nov. 16
Baseball	March 1 – 14	March 15
Golf-Boys	March 1 – 14	March 15
Soccer-Girl	March 1 – 14	March 15
Softball	March 1 – 14	March 15
Tennis-Girls	March 1 – 14	March 15
Track & Field	March 1 – 14	March 15

5.19 PLAYING UP A LEVEL

Generally speaking, freshman teams are for freshmen, junior varsity teams are for freshman and/or sophomores, and varsity teams are for juniors and seniors. If a student-athlete is moved one or two levels, the following criteria should be adhered to:

- I. Coaches affected by the move should meet to discuss the following, with the outcome being positive for the student-athlete:
 - A. How will the move affect the academic work of the student-athlete?
 - 1. What kind of student is the student-athlete?
 - 2. What kind of study habits does the student-athlete have?
 - 3. Are the length and number of practices going to affect his/her class work?
 - 4. Will the time and number of games affect the student-athlete's class work?
 - 5. What kind of help is available for the student-athlete?
 - B. How will the move affect the student-athlete emotionally?
 - 1. What kind of pressure will be on the student/athlete?
 - 2. Is the student-athlete emotionally mature enough to play at this level?
 - C. How does the move affect the student-athlete socially?
 - 1. Does the student-athlete have any friends on the team?
 - 2. How great is the age difference?
 - D. How will the move affect the student-athlete physically?
 - 1. Is the student-athlete physically mature enough to play at this level?
 - 2. Will the chance of injury be increased greatly?
 - E. How will the amount of playing time affect the student-athlete?

1. Will the student-athlete contribute to the team during the game?
 2. Will playing time be sufficient to justify the move up or down? The student-athlete is not to be a bench player.
- II. Parent Contacted – Coaches involved in the move will contact the parents of the student-athlete to:
1. Discuss the pros and cons of the move
 2. Get input from the parent about the move
 3. Obtain signed consent form from parent supporting the move.
- III. Re-evaluation – Any decision to move a student-athlete should be reevaluated periodically during the season.

5.20 PLAYING DUAL SPORTS IN THE SAME SEASON

In some instances a student-athlete may play two sports in the same season. For this to happen, the following criteria must be met:

- Both Coaches must agree
- Permission form must be filled out by Student, coaches and parent and signed by the Athletic Director.
- One of the two sports must be a varsity sport
- The student-athlete must designate one sport as a primary sport
- Sports must be compatible in some way

5.20.1 ACTIVITIES CONFLICT GUIDE

It is our belief that students can become well-rounded individuals through their participation in a variety of activities and events. It is understandable that students who participate in more than one activity or event may encounter conflicts. Administrators, teachers, coaches and activity sponsors will work together to help avoid conflicts when possible and resolve conflicts when and if they do occur. These guidelines are intended to address school related conflicts and are not intended to be applied to family or personal related conflicts. These guidelines have been formulated to:

- Reduce the possibility of these types of conflicts through calendar planning and scheduling;
- Increase communication between students, parents, teachers, coaches, and administrators so that conflicts can be avoided or resolved in amicable fashion;

- Employ common sense resolution strategies if unavoidable conflicts occur

5.20.2 Guidelines

In order to reduce the potential for conflicts to occur, and resolve conflicts as they occur, the following expectations and guidelines have been established:

- Communication: Coaches, teachers and activity sponsors will review the dates involving students for their activity so that conflicts will be identified at the earliest possible date.
Coaches, teachers and activity sponsors are responsible for reviewing their schedules and dates with their students.
Students are responsible for making their coaches, sponsors or teachers aware that a conflict exists.
- Notification & Resolution: When conflicts are identified, students will make the involved coaches, sponsors or teachers aware of each conflict at the earliest possible date, no later than two weeks (ten school days) prior the date in conflict.
Coaches, sponsors and teachers will first attempt to assist the student in resolving the conflict without consequence to the student by employing one of the following solutions:

5.20.3 Performance/Competition vs. Practice/Rehearsal/Optional Act:

A performance or athletic contest always takes precedence over a practice, rehearsal or optional activity. The student will attend the performance/athletic contest. When possible, students will be allowed to leave the performance/athletic contest to attend the practice/rehearsal/optional activity once their responsibility to the performance/athletic contest has been completed.

5.20.4 Practice/Rehearsal/Optional Act vs. Practice/Rehearsal/ Optional Act

Every attempt will be made by staff member involved to devise a schedule where the student can participate in both events if realistically possible. Practice/Rehearsal/Optional Activities may also be restructured to permit dual participation. Scheduled Activity vs. Rescheduled/New Activity An activity that has been entered on the activities calendar in the spring takes precedence over activities that have been rescheduled or added at a later date except in the case where an activity has been rescheduled (due to a conflict) to a date where no conflicts exist and another activity causing a conflict is added to that date. In this case, the first rescheduled activity takes precedence.

5.20.5 Performance/Athletic Contest vs. Performance/Athletic Contest

In the event that a performance or athletic contest conflicts with another performance or athletic contest and the conflict was unavoidable due to calendar, league schedules, tournament scheduling or "draws" or other restrictions out of our control, the teachers, coaches and/or sponsors will work with parent involvement to amicably resolve the conflict. If an amicable resolution cannot be found, the conflict will be mediated and resolved by the high school principal or his/her designee.

5.20.6 District/Regional/State/National Activity vs. "Regular" Activity

District, regional, state, and national performance/athletic activities take precedence over a regular school practice, rehearsal, performance or athletic contest. These types of conflicts are sometimes unavoidable due to tournament scheduling, draws and/or continued success (winning) by a team or activity. To insure the best chances for continued success by a team or activity, the district, regional, state or national performance/athletic activity shall take precedence over other school related activities even though the other activity may have been scheduled first.

In the event that a student fails to make the involved coach, sponsor or teacher aware of a conflict at the earliest possible date, no later than two weeks (ten school days) prior to the date in conflict, the student will be subject to consequences as deemed appropriate by the involved coach, sponsor or teacher for the event that is missed.

5.21 ATHLETIC AWARDS

5.21.1 Varsity Letter

- a) One (1) varsity letter (8" block Blue "S") will be awarded a student-athlete during his/her high school career.
- b) Insert pins will be awarded for any other letters earned.
 - i. The first year a letter is earned, an insert pin symbolizing that sport will be given.
 - ii. Each year afterwards that a letter is earned, an insert "bar" pin will be given.
- c) A student-athlete who has earned more than one (1) letter and desires a second letter will be allowed to purchase the same.

- d) Each head coach will determine the criteria for awarding a letter in their sport. These criteria must be explained to all student athletes at the beginning of each sports season. An athlete must complete the season as a member of the team in good standing in order to receive his/her award. An athlete under discipline at the end of the season who continues to practice as a faithful member of the team will be eligible for awards.

5.21.2 Freshman Teams

All Freshmen will receive a certificate of participation and their graduation year numerals.

5.21.3 Sophomore (JV) Teams

All sophomores' will receive a certificate of participation and their graduation year numerals (if they did not receive them as a freshman)

5.21.4 Senior Year

- An athlete who has not met the coach's criteria but has finished his/her senior season in good standing will receive his/her letter.
- An athlete who earns 4 Varsity letters in the same sport will receive the "Four-year letter-winner" plaque.
- The Triple Treat Award is given to any senior student-athlete who plays 3 sports/year for 4 years. (starting with the class of 2011)
- Each sport will be allowed to present, at the expense of the school, three (3) awards to individual student-athletes. The individual awards given to the student-athletes will be a plaque.

5.21.5 MHSAA Guidelines

All awards must be given within the guidelines of the M.H.S.A.A.

5.21.6 Championship Awards

Patches will be given for district and regional championships. If 2 or more of these championships are won in a given year, 1 patch will indicate all championships won. If, in addition a state championship is won, special consideration for awards will be given. White "S" will be given to members of Conference Championship teams.

5.21.7 Team Captains

Team captains will be awarded insert to be place on letters (stars).

5.22 CONDUCT AND VALUES OF A STUDENT-ATHLETE

The community, school administrators and the coaching staff feel strongly that high standards of conduct and citizenship are essential in maintaining a sound program of athletics. The health, safety and welfare of the student, is our major consideration and transcends any other consideration.

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

The conduct of a student-athlete is closely observed in many areas of life. It is important that the student-athlete's behavior be above reproach in the following areas at all times:

- A. In the classroom, the student-athlete should work hard and have good study habits and good behavior. Detentions must be taken care of promptly. A student-athlete must notify each coach of a detention or other disciplinary consequence, which always takes precedent over practice or games.
- B. During competition, a student-athlete must always exhibit good sportsmanship. Use of profanity or illegal tactics is strictly forbidden and will not be tolerated. Student-athletes are not to argue with or show disrespect toward officials, coaches, teammates, opponents or any adult personnel. Disciplinary actions may be left up to the discretion of the coach.
- C. On trips, student-athletes directly represent the community, school and coaches. Therefore, it is expected that all concerned will dress in an acceptable manner when traveling and conduct themselves on the bus in a respectful manner.
- D. A student-athlete must respect school property and equipment at all times. If the student-athlete destroys, loses or steals equipment, s/he is taking from themselves, teammates and the school, entity or person that owned the equipment. Each student-athlete is financially responsible for destruction of equipment or loss of property. Student-athletes and parents will be notified by the coach within two-weeks upon the completion of the season, of any item that is missing or that

needs to be replaced due to loss or destruction. Student-athletes, who intentionally destroy or damage school property or equipment, are subject to disciplinary sanctions up to and including loss of the privilege of participating in athletics, suspension or expulsion from school and/or referral to appropriate law enforcement authorities.

- E. There will be occasions when there are conflicts of responsibilities. We will not excuse athletes from practice for routine conflicts, which, with prior planning can be scheduled around practice sessions and contests. Academics are most important, however, every attempt must be made to arrange obligations so that conflicts do not exist.

5.23 DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS

All current student-athletes and potential student-athletes shall be considered under the jurisdiction of the athletic code, upon enrollment in the Sparta Area Schools. It is understood that the principal, designee or other administrator may suspend from athletics a student-athlete at any time when the student-athlete's conduct may have a detrimental effect upon the image of Sparta Area Schools.

- A. These regulations are in effect throughout the calendar year, summer months inclusive.
- B. When serving a team suspension, a student-athlete must attend all practice sessions and (unless excused) must be present (not in uniform) at all contests. The only exception to this rule would be if a student-athlete were suspended for the full season in one sport. The student-athlete would not be allowed to participate with the team.
- C. If a second consequence is imposed while a previous consequence is being served, the consequence for the second offense will not begin until the consequence for the first offense has been served.
- D. If a consequence is not completed during a given sports season, the portion not served will be carried over to the next sport that the student-athlete previously participated in. (This would apply to student-athletes who are sophomores, juniors or seniors).
- E. These offenses will accumulate throughout the athlete's high school career.

F. If student-athlete transfers into Sparta Area Schools while having a suspension from the school s/he is transferring from, that suspension will be upheld. In an effort to aid the athletic department in determining and applying appropriate and fair consequences for violations, the following four distinct categories have been created:

Category I – Conduct Unbecoming An Athlete (Minor Infractions)

Category II – Conduct Unbecoming An Athlete (Major Infractions)

Category III – Controlled Substances and Medication / Abusive/Threatening Actions

5.23.1 CATEGORY I - CONDUCT UNBECOMING AN ATHLETE (*Minor Infractions*)

Conduct in and out of school shall be such as to bring no discredit to the athlete, parents, school or team. Some examples of misconduct in this area are, disrespect for authority, petty theft, profanity and abusing school property. This is not an all-inclusive list and the athletic director has the discretion to decide whether alleged infractions fall into this category.

5.23.2 CONSEQUENCES FOR CATEGORY I VIOLATIONS

A. **First violation:** May bring a minimum of probation up to a maximum of one contest date suspension.

Conditions for return to program

- i. The student-athlete must show remorse for violating the code of conduct
- ii. The student-athlete must address the coaching staff and the team as a restorative measure as well as apologize to any offended party.

B. **Second violation:** May bring a minimum of one contest date suspension or up to a maximum of 25% of all the interscholastic regular season dates in present sport. If the consequence imposed is 25% of the season, the number of regular season games will be used regardless of when the violation occurred.

Conditions for return to program

- i. The student-athlete must show remorse for violating the code of conduct

ii. The student-athlete must address the coaching staff and the team as a restorative measure as well as apologize to any offended party.

iii. The student-athlete must meet with a school counselor or administrator to determine if there are deeper issues that need to be dealt with.

C. Third violation: May bring a minimum of 25% or up to a maximum of 50% of all the interscholastic regular season dates in present sport. If the consequence imposed is 50% of the season, the number of regular season games will be used regardless of when the violation occurred.

Conditions for return to program

i. The student-athlete must show remorse for violating the code of conduct

ii. The student-athlete must address the coaching staff and the team as a restorative measure as well as apologize to any offended party.

iii. The student-athlete must meet with a school counselor or administrator to determine if there are deeper issues, which need to be dealt with.

D. Fourth violation: May bring a suspension from all athletics for 1 calendar year or any part thereof. This includes practice and competition.

**5.23.3 CATEGORY II - CONDUCT UNBECOMING AN ATHLETE
(Major Infractions)**

Conduct in and out of school shall be such as to bring no discredit to the athlete, parents, school or team. Any activity that is unlawful in nature other than substance abuse will fall into this category. Some examples in this category would be: theft, destruction of property, fighting causing injury to others, vandalism, inappropriate use of the internet, hazing and harassment. This is not an all-inclusive list and the athletic director has the discretion to decide whether alleged infractions fall into this category.

Sparta Area Schools' policy prohibits harassment, sexual harassment, bullying and hazing of students. This behavior disrupts the educational process and interferes with this District's commitment to provide a stable environment to its students. All students are expected to conduct themselves with respect for the dignity of others. The Sparta Area Schools, because of its desire to prevent and prohibit this behavior,

adopts this policy and gives notice that it is wrong and will not be tolerated by this District.

5.23.4. Definition of Harassment:

- a) Submission to such unwelcome conduct or communication is made either an explicit or implicit condition of utilizing or benefiting from the services, activities, or programs of the School District
- b) Submission to, or rejection of, the unwelcome conduct or communication is used as the basis for a decision to exclude, expel or limit the harassed student in the terms, conditions, or privileges of the School District
- c) The unwelcome conduct or communication interferes with the student's education, creates and intimidating hostile or offensive environment, or otherwise adversely affects the student's educational opportunities. This may include racial slurs, mocking behavior, or other demeaning comments.

5.23.5 Definition of Sexual Harassment

Sexual Harassment may include, but is not limited to:

- a) Verbal harassment or abuse
- b) Pressure for sexual activity
- c) Repeated remarks with sexual or demeaning implications
- d) Unwelcome touching
- e) Sexual jokes, posters, cartoons, etc.
- f) Suggesting or demanding sexual involvement, accompanied by implied or explicit threats concerning one's grades, safety, job, or performance or public duties.

5.23.6 Definition of Bullying

Intimidation of others by acts, such as but not limited to:

- a) Threatened or actual physical harm
- b) Unwelcome physical contact
- c) Threatening or taunting verbal, written, or electronic communications
- d) Taking or extorting money or property
- e) Blocking or impeding student movement

5.23.7 Definition of Hazing

Note2

Any type of initiation procedure for any school related activity, which involves conduct such as but not limited to:

- a) Illegal activity, such as drinking or drugs
- b) Physical punishment or infliction of pain
- c) Intentional humiliation or embarrassment
- d) Dangerous activity
- e) Activity likely to cause mental or psychological stress
- f) Forced detention or kidnapping
- g) Undressing or otherwise exposing initiates

Note1: Any administrator, teacher, coach, other school authority who engages in sexual or other inappropriate physical contact with a student

may be guilty of criminal “child abuse” as defined in State Law M.C.L.A. 722.621 et. seq.

Note2: If the school club organization does not have an official and approved initiation procedure, and if no school staff is involved in the activity, there is a significant likelihood that the activity may result in violation of this policy.

5.23.8 Reports of Harassment (harassment, sexual harassment, bullying, and hazing)

The District encourages any student who believes he or she has been victim of harassment to report his/her concerns directly to any building principal or guidance counselor. Complaints or reports of harassment shall be handled as confidentially as possible. However, in certain circumstances, the District may be required by the Child Protection Law to report child sexual abuse to the Department of Social Services or other designated law enforcement agency. All reports or complaints will be promptly investigated by appropriate District representatives. Any student who violates this policy will be subject to corrective action, including suspension or expulsion. The District prohibits retaliation against students who file or make such complaints. Filing of a complaint will not reflect upon an individual’s status nor will it affect a student’s grades or work assignments. However, the District will take appropriate action if it finds that a student has deliberately filed a false complaint.

5.23.9 Abusive/Threatening Actions

- a) Extortion: To obtain from by coercion or intimidation.
- b) Fighting/Assault: Intentionally causing or attempting to cause physical harm to another through force or violence.
- c) Aggressive Behavior
- d) Instigating: the verbal or physical act of urging, inciting, or encouraging another person to behave in such a way that violates Sparta High School’s Student Code of Conduct.
- e) Threats to Students
- f) Racism/Racial Insensitivity

g) Physical Attacks or Threats to Staff Member

5.23.10 Property and Facilities

a) Destruction of Property: Including both public and private property on school grounds or at school activities.

b) Theft, Attempted Theft, and/or Possession of Stolen Property: This includes stolen property brought to Sparta High School.

Student Valuables: Sparta High School strongly recommends that students leave all valuables (including unnecessary amounts of cash, cell phones, ipods/mp3 players, phones, jewelry, etc.) at home. Sparta High School is not responsible if these types of items are lost or stolen.

5.23.11 Inappropriate Practices and Behaviors

a) Insubordination: Refusal to follow reasonable request made school personnel, or showing disrespect to school personnel.

Students are expected to cooperate with and give respect to staff at all times.

b) Gross Insubordination: Any example of insubordination deemed excessive by administrative discretion.

c) Disruptive Behavior: Any behavior that disrupts the learning environment or the normal functioning of the school.

d) Major Disruptive Behavior: Any example of disruptive behavior deemed excessive by administrative discretion.

e) Disrespect to Staff: Behavior displaying or promoting disrespect to staff members.

5.23.12 CONSEQUENCES FOR CATEGORY II VIOLATIONS

A. First violation: May bring a minimum of 15 % of contest date suspension or up to a maximum of 25% of all the interscholastic regular season dates in present sport. If the consequence imposed is 25% of the season, the number of regular season games will be used regardless of when the violation occurred.

Conditions for return to program

- i. The student-athlete must complete the required educational, corrective and restorative gestures
- ii. The student-athlete must show remorse for violating the code of conduct
- iii. The student-athlete must address the coaching staff and the team as a restorative measure.
- iv. The student-athlete must re-sign the code of conduct in front of teammates and coaching staff

Self Reporting Clause

In an attempt to create a spirit of honesty, any student athlete who self reports an Athletic Code violation will have their first offense consequence reduced to 20% of the season. This self-reporting must be made prior to any investigation and may be made to any high school administrator.

- B. **Second violation:** May bring a minimum of 25% or up to a maximum of 50% of all the interscholastic regular season dates in present sport. If the consequence imposed is 50% of the season, the number of regular season games will be used regardless of when the violation occurred.

Conditions for return to program

Before being readmitted to a team following suspension for the second violation, the student shall show evidence in writing of having received counseling from a community agency or professional individual such as a school counselor, medical doctor, psychiatrist or psychologist.

- C. **Third violation:** May bring a minimum suspension of 50% from all athletics or up to 1 calendar year or any part thereof. This includes practice and competition. a. It is recommended that the student be referred for assessment by a community agency or a professional individual outside the school.

Conditions for return to program

If, after the third violation, the student becomes a participant in a treatment program, the student may be certified for reinstatement in interscholastic activities after a minimum period of 6 weeks from the time the student begins such

treatment. The director or a counselor of a chemical dependency treatment center must issue such certification.

- D. Fourth violation: May bring a suspension from all athletics for the remainder of the student's high school career.

5.23.13 CATEGORY III – Controlled Substances and Medication / Abusive/Threatening Actions

DRUG-FREE STATUS REQUIREMENT: These and other demands placed upon you as a student athlete by the school and community make it essential that you exist in a drug-free environment. This status must be maintained year round, in and out of season and on and off the fields of competition. We in no way concede that such rules end at the confines of our property or outside of our supervision or authority, nor shall we expect athletes to follow these standards during the competitive season and then give them any green light to partake in such behaviors out of season or during the summer. We are entrusted to educate and teach our youth and to maintain clear and consistent boundaries for them. Remember that the intent of this program regarding substance abuse is not punitive; it is preventive. It is designed to ensure that you remain drug-free and, in so doing, continue as a student athlete in your chosen sport at Sparta High School, continuing to benefit in the mental, social and physical health associated with the participation in organized athletics. We, as coaches, educators and administrators, recognize all the positive aspects of participation in athletics. But these benefits can truly only be realized in a drug-free environment. The many benefits of athletic participation would soon be diminished if we accepted the inclusion of drugs, alcohol and tobacco into our athletic programs. We cannot permit the use of these substances by a small minority of athletes to lessen the values of our athletic programs for the majority of athletes who are remaining drug-free and enjoying the full benefits of their participation. To reemphasize, a student-athlete shall not be in possession of, use, sell, distribute, or be under the influence of illicit controlled substances. The possession, use, sale, or distribution of substance abuse paraphernalia is

also prohibited. Our message to student-athletes is loud and clear and should be understood by all --NO USE!

Possession is defined as: The student becomes part of a situation where alcohol or drugs are illegally present or being used.

The use or possession of these types of drugs is strictly prohibited for our student athletes at all times. The associated nature of consequences for such violations shall be more severe than other violations as they constitute a greater degree of danger and legal and criminal action. – Simply stated, drug abuse is the consumption of any chemical substance or the smoking of some plant derivatives for the purpose of mood modification. The use or misuse of drugs is a social problem. Students with a strong sense of purpose have no need for mood modifiers. The rule against substance abuse is in effect all year, on and off of school property.

5.23.14 Controlled Substances and Medication

Self-Medication Policy: Students who are using prescription medication must have a statement from their doctor on file in the office. Medication must be in the prescription bottle. Students who take non-prescription medication must have a statement from the parent/guardian on file in the office. All medication must be kept in the office and will be dispensed according to their doctor's and or parent's instruction. Failure to comply with this policy could result in possession of a controlled substance.

Violations:

- a) Sale, Furnishing, Purchasing, or Exchange of Narcotics, Illegal Drugs, Prescription Drugs, or Alcohol: Students shall not furnish/sell narcotics, illegal drugs, or alcohol. This includes all "look-a-likes".
- b) Possession with Intent to Distribute

- c) Possession or use of Drugs and/or Alcohol: Students shall not possess or use narcotics, illegal drugs, prescription drugs, alcohol, "look-a-likes" or any other related paraphernalia (i.e. rolling papers such as zig zags, pipes, etc.) on school grounds or at school activities. Students attending school activities under the influence of narcotics, illegal drugs, or alcohol will be suspended from the activity and shall forfeit the right to attend like activities for the balance of the school year in addition to disciplinary action.
- d) Possession of Drug Paraphernalia
- e) Possession of Non-Prescription Medication
- f) Possession and/or use of Tobacco Products: Students are not permitted to use or possess any type of tobacco on school property.
- g) Possession and/or use of lighters & matches

5.23.15 Abusive/Threatening Actions

- a) Extortion: To obtain from by coercion or intimidation.
- b) Fighting/Assault: Intentionally causing or attempting to cause physical harm to another through force or violence.
- c) Aggressive Behavior
- d) Instigating: the verbal or physical act of urging, inciting, or encouraging another person to behave in such a way that violates Sparta High School's Student Code of Conduct.
- e) Threats to Students
- f) Racism/Racial Insensitivity
- g) Physical Attacks or Threats to Staff Member

5.23.16 CONSEQUENCES FOR CATEGORY IV VIOLATIONS

To provide for the safety and health of our student athletes, the following procedures, remedies and consequences are applied to any violation of your drug-free status with regard to the use of any ILLEGAL and PERFORMANCE ENHANCING DRUGS/SUPPLEMENTS violation.

A. First violation: May bring a minimum 25% suspension or up to a maximum of 50% of all the interscholastic regular season dates in present sport. If the consequence imposed is 50% of the season, the number of regular season games will be used regardless of when the violation occurred.

Conditions for return to program

- i. The student-athlete must complete the required educational, corrective and restorative gestures ii. The student-athlete must show remorse for violating the code of conduct
- iii. The student-athlete must address the coaching staff and the team as a restorative measure.
- iv. The student –athlete must re-sign the code of conduct in front of teammates and coaching staff
- v. The student-athlete must provide at his/her own expense a drug test that shows the absence of drugs in their system.

Self Reporting Clause

In an attempt to create a spirit of honesty, any student athlete who self reports an Athletic Code violation will have their first offense consequence reduced. (to 15% of the season If the offense occurred out of season or 25% if the offense occurred in season) This self-reporting must be made prior to any investigation and may be made to any high school administrator.

B. Second violation: Will bring a minimum of 25% suspension or up to a maximum of all the interscholastic regular season dates in present sport. If the consequence imposed is the entire season the season, the number of regular season games will be used regardless of when the violation occurred.

Conditions for return to program

- i. The student shall show evidence in writing of having received counseling from a community agency or professional individual such as a school counselor, drug counselor, medical doctor, psychiatrist or psychologist.
- ii. The student-athlete must address the coaching staff and the team as a restorative measure and show remorse for violating the code of conduct.
- iii. The student –athlete must re-sign the code of conduct in front of teammates and coaching staff
- iv. The student-athlete must provide at his/her own expense a drug test that shows the absence of drugs in their system.

C. Third violation: Will bring a minimum one sport season of all the interscholastic regular season dates in present sport up to a maximum of 1 calendar year or any part thereof. This includes practice and competition.

Conditions for return to program

- i. It is recommended that the student be referred for assessment of potential chemical abuse, misuse or dependency by a community agency or a professional individual outside the school.
- ii. If, after the third violation, the student becomes a participant in a chemical dependency program or treatment program, the student may be certified for reinstatement in interscholastic activities after a minimum period of 8 weeks from the time the student begins such treatment. The director or a counselor of a chemical dependency treatment center must issue such certification.
- iii. The student-athlete must show remorse for violating the code of conduct

iv. The student-athlete must address the coaching staff and the team as a restorative measure.

v. The student-athlete must re-sign the code of conduct in front of teammates and coaching staff

vi. The student-athlete must provide at his/her own expense a drug test that shows the absence of drugs in their system.

D. Fourth violation: May bring a suspension from all athletics for the remainder of the student's high school career.

5.23.17 PROCEDURES FOR REPORTING VIOLATIONS AND RULE ENFORCEMENT

1. A signed, written report of the alleged violation must be made to the Athletic Director, Principal, Assistant Principal, or Coach.
2. The appropriate personnel will convene a meeting with the student-athlete to determine whether a violation occurred.
3. Appropriate personnel will provide verbal notification to the student-athlete of the reported violation.
4. Further investigation through interviews with those who may be aware of violations first-hand, those who may have limited knowledge of the violations, or those who may be involved with such violations will be conducted.
5. Any and all allegations of violations of the student-athlete's drug-free status will be seriously address and investigated.
6. The approved and appropriate remedies and consequences for the type of violation will be applied and enforced.
7. The Athletic Director or his designee will attempt to notify parents verbally and in writing of the reported charge of the student-athlete's violation and possible consequences.
8. At the conclusion of the hearing, the student-athlete will be notified verbally and the parents in writing within five (5) days of the ruling.
9. The Athletic Director will notify the school-counseling department to assist the student with follow-up substance abuse counseling, if the situation warrants such action.

COOPERATION DURING INVESTIGATION

It is important for all student athletes to understand that involvement in our athletic programs is a privilege. With the responsibility of being an athlete, come commitments, which are the conditions of this code of conduct. In the event that a student athlete comes under investigation for possible violations to the provisions of this code, it is expected that:

1. The student athlete be truthful
2. That the student athlete be forthcoming with information
3. That the student athlete not be deceptive or untruthful
4. That the student athlete be cooperative during the investigation of any student athlete violation the student athlete must be truthful and forthcoming with information or the Athletic Director has within his/her power to impose a greater level of consequence if it is determined that the student athlete has lied, been deceptive or untruthful prior to or after the determination of guilt and or consequences. Great weight must be placed on the privilege of representing our community outside the confines of our community and any athlete that would fail to be truthful and/or cooperative would jeopardize the perceived character of our programs. Failure to comply with the above conditions may result in full expulsion from the athletic program for the duration of the student athletes' future career.

5.23.18 APPEALS PROCESS

A. Declaration of Appeal

If the parents or legal guardian feel that equity has not been granted their child, they may appeal the decision to the Athletic Director within 3 school days of verbal or written notification. Failure to comply with the time limit will result in automatic denial of the appeal.

B. Informal Discussion

After the written request has been submitted to the athletic director, there shall be an informal discussion by the person appealing a decision and the person who made the decision that is being appealed in an attempt to resolve the problem.

C. Informal Meeting

If the appeal is between a student-athlete and member of the coaching and administrative/professional staff other than the

athletic director, the parties involved shall meet informally with the athletic director in an attempt to reach an agreement.

D. Formal Appeal

If a settlement cannot be reached informally, the appeal shall be filed with the chairperson of the Athletic Appeals Board.

The Appeals Board will be made up of one:

- Female coach
- Male coach
- An Administrator not involved in the earlier decision

E. Formal Hearing

- When possible, a hearing shall be conducted within 7 days of the receipt of the request. If the 7-day schedule cannot be met, the hearing shall be held at the earliest possible date thereafter.
- Both individuals involved in the appeal shall be present at the hearing to present their cases and to refute invalid information, which might be presented by the other party.
- After each party involved in the appeal has presented her/his case, members of the Appeals Board shall meet in private to render a decision.
- The parties involved shall receive, in writing, the decision of the Appeals Board within three (3) days of the completion of the review.

Note:

- The student-athlete may not participate in any interscholastic competition while the appeal is pending.
- If the appeal concerns a post-season tourney, it must be submitted within 1 day before the competition starts. All levels of appeal will be heard before the competition begins.

5.23.19 ADDITIONAL RULES AND REGULATIONS

Each coach has the authority and responsibility, with the approval of the Athletic Director, to establish his/her own rules and regulations as they pertain to his/her sport. No team rule however, may have as a consequence, one that will be in greater degree than what is allowed in these rules and regulations. All team rules must be in writing and clearly communicated to each team member and his/her parent(s) at the beginning of the season. Coaches have the right to dismiss participants for conduct considered detrimental to the team. To assure that such decisions

by individual coaches are reasonably just and fair, any decision can be appealed.



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