



Utica Community Schools

Code of Conduct for Student Athletics

2015-2016



ROLE OF THE STUDENT ATHLETE

- I. Remember that you are representing your school, family and community.
 - accept and understand the seriousness of your responsibility, and the privilege of representing your school and community;
 - live up to standards of sportsmanship established by the school administration and the coaching staff;
 - learn the rules of the game thoroughly and discuss them with parents, fans, fellow students and elementary students. This will assist both them and you in the achievement of a better understanding and appreciation of the game.
- II. Respect your opponents. Who better than yourself understands the hard work that's put into sports and a team effort?
 - treat opponents the way you would like to be treated, as a guest or friend;
 - refrain from taunting, trash talk or making any kind of derogatory remarks to your opponents during the game, especially comments of ethnic, racial or sexual nature.
Refrain from intimidating behavior;
 - wish opponents good luck before the game and congratulate them in a sincere manner that you would like to be greeted following either a victory or defeat;
 - respect the integrity and judgment of game officials. The officials are doing their best to help promote you and your sport. Treating them with respect, even if you disagree with their judgment, will only make a positive impression of you and your team in the eyes of the officials and all people at the event. Win with humility; lose with grace. Do both with dignity. Avoid excessive celebrating after a play or end of a game.
- III. Display positive actions in public at all times.

ATTENDANCE AREA

Ninth grade student can compete in athletics at their designated high school (by attendance area residence). *Guardianship does not automatically give a student immediate athletic eligibility.*

If the Board of Education changes the high school attendance area before your child enters the tenth grade, your child will be expected to attend the newly designated high school. Students who are reassigned to another high school by Board action will have immediate athletic eligibility upon enrollment.

CODE OF CONDUCT for STUDENT ATHLETES

The Utica Community School District Code of Conduct for Student Athletes has been developed to provide a uniform set of rules and regulations to govern all district athletic participants for every team or school they represent. The Athletic Code of Conduct combines rules and regulations of the Michigan High School Athletic Association (MHSAA) which have been adopted by the Utica Community Schools with specific district rules governing athletic participation. The code of conduct for student athletes will be in effect during the school year and also covers practice sessions, competitions and all other school related activities. Student athletes are to comply with all aspects of the code. It is designed so athletes can enjoy the privilege of continued eligibility for participation in athletics.

Remember, participation in student athletics is a privilege, not a matter of right. As an athlete you are a highly visible representative of your team, your school, the School District, and your community. You are expected to demonstrate high standards of conduct whether on the field or court, whether on-campus, and off-campus in the community at large. As a general rule, athletes are expected to maintain good conduct at all times and all locations, and not to engage in any conduct or behavior which brings discredit to themselves, their family, their team, school, or the School District. Athletes may be denied participation from athletics for failing to maintain good conduct at all times and all locations.

In addition, student athletes who incur school disciplinary action because of violations defined in the district Student Handbook are also subject to the disciplinary actions contained herein. Please note that when a student is academically ineligible to participate in contests and scrimmages, he/she may still practice with the team as long as he/she is not suspended from school as outlined in the Student Handbook. However, the participant may forfeit the opportunity to receive an athletic award if loss of participation in contests prevents him/her from meeting the requirement for earning the award as outlined in the written supplemental team rules and regulations developed by individual coaches and distributed to each participant at the start of their respective sport season. Rules which have been adopted by the Utica Community Schools and which are also covered by MHSAA rules are indicated by an asterisk (*).

Students are subject to all MHSAA rules and regulations even though such rules may not be included specifically in this document.

SECTION I: RULES OF ELIGIBILITY * FOR PARTICIPATION

The following rules of eligibility must be observed in order to participate in the interscholastic athletic program:

A. *ENROLLMENT

The student must be enrolled in the school not later than the fourth Friday after Labor Day (1st semester) or fourth Friday of February (2nd semester) to be eligible for interscholastic athletics. The student must reside in the school attendance area in which he/she attends school and must be enrolled (20 credit hours) in the school for which he/she competes.

B. *AGE

HIGH SCHOOL: A student in grades nine through twelve who participates in any interscholastic athletic contest must be under nineteen (19) years of age. When a student's nineteenth birthday occurs on or after September 1, of a current school year, he/she is eligible for participation for the balance of that school year.

JUNIOR HIGH: A seventh, eighth grade student must be under fourteen (14) and (15) years of age respectively. A student who reaches that age after September 1, is eligible for participation for the balance of that school year.

NOTE: Ninth graders of a designated junior high/middle school in a school district with multiple junior and senior high schools may be counted for athletic purposes and therefore, be eligible in the senior high school designated by residence. Ninth graders not housed in their designated high school in the Utica Community School District may participate in sports at their designated high school.

C. *PARENT/GUARDIAN CONSENT AND STUDENT APPLICATION

The student must submit the signed parent/guardian consent form and the signed student application form to the coach or to the athletic director prior to participating in tryouts, practice sessions or contests. Students and parents are to read the Code of Conduct for Student Athletes and the Student Handbook before signing the parent/guardian consent form and the student application form. The completed form will be kept on file in the building athletic director's office during subsequent sport seasons.

D. *PARTICIPANT PHYSICAL EXAMINATION

A student must have a physical examination completed by a physician (MD, DO, Physician's Assistant or nurse practitioner) certifying that the student is fully able to compete in athletics. The physical must take place after April 15 of the previous school year to be used for the current school year. The student must submit the completed physical form to the coach or to the athletic

director prior to participating in tryouts, practice sessions or contests. The completed form will be kept on file in the building athletic director's office during subsequent sports seasons.

E. *SEASONS OF COMPETITION

A student, while enrolled in grades nine through twelve shall be eligible to compete in no more than four (4) seasons in either first or second semester athletics. For example, a student may not compete in more than four (4) seasons of a particular sport: football, soccer, tennis, etc.

F. *SEMESTER OF ELIGIBILITY

A student shall not be eligible to compete in any branch of athletics who has been enrolled in grades nine to twelve for more than eight semesters. The seventh and eighth semesters must be consecutive. Enrollment in a school for a period of three weeks or more, or competing in one or more interscholastic athletic contests, shall be considered as enrollment for a semester under this rule. Students in grades seven, and eight are not limited in the number of semesters in which they may be eligible.

G. *ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY

A student athlete must meet the MHSAA minimum requirement of passing four (4) classes at all times. Refer to the Utica Community Schools Student Handbook. An athlete's eligibility will be monitored on a five (5) week basis. Seventh or eighth grade students must be passing at least 50% of the total periods of work carried.

FAILURE TO COMPLY

Any student who fails to meet any of the above regulations will not be allowed to participate until such time as he/she complies with the regulations in this section. The student is ineligible until deficiencies are corrected. Students who fail to pass the required classes during the previous semester must sit out the entire current semester.

UTICA COMMUNITY SCHOOLS - ELIGIBILITY POLICY

Utica Community Schools adheres to the Michigan High School Athletic Association eligibility policy. In addition, the District has established the following eligibility procedures:

1. The high schools will conduct an eligibility check of its in-season athletes every five (5) weeks in conjunction with the Progress Reports and the ten (10) week Report Cards. This will ensure that all athletes will be treated fairly and that all athletes will be monitored more efficiently. A five (5) week monitoring period will provide the coach with a good indicator of any athletes who are experiencing academic difficulties.
2. Once the academically endangered athlete has been identified, the athletic director will notify the athlete's coach and the athlete. At that point, the athletic director and athlete or coach and athlete may establish

a plan to improve the athlete's grades. The plan may include but not be limited to such things as:

- improving the athlete's study habits;
 - encouraging the student to devote greater time during the day to his/her studies;
 - use of practice time for studies;
 - carrying a daily progress report to class and returning it to the coach at practice time;
 - suspension of game participation;
 - notifying parents; removal from the team.
3. The athlete will be monitored on a weekly basis on each Friday to determine if there has been improvement in those areas that have been identified.
 4. If the athlete fails to show improvement in the identified areas, the athletic director will discuss the situation with the athlete and coach. Game privileges will be withheld on a week to week basis until the athlete shows improvement.

SECTION II: * AWARDS

- A. A student may not accept from any source anything for participation in athletics other than an emblematic award, which could include, but not be limited to, any medal, ribbon, badge, plaque, cup, trophy, banner, picture or regular letter award.
- B. No acceptable award shall exceed twenty-five (\$25.00) dollars in value with the exception of the regular letter award of the school. The cost of engraving a medal or similar award need not be included in determining the value of the award.
- C. No one, such as a parent, friend or other person, may accept an award on behalf of the athlete at any time prior to graduation from high school.
- D. Acceptance of such items as cash, merchandise, memberships, privileges, services, sweaters, athletic equipment, wearing apparel and watches would be a violation.
- E. Requirements for earning a letter have been established. Athletes should be informed of these requirements prior to the season.

FAILURE TO COMPLY

Any student violating any area of this section would be ineligible for interscholastic athletic competition for a period of at least one semester from the date of the violation. If violation occurs after the Friday of the fourth week of a semester, a student is ineligible for the balance of that semester and the succeeding semester.

SECTION III: * MAINTAINING AMATEUR STATUS

- A. Students participating or planning to participate in interscholastic athletics may NOT:
1. Accept any money or other valuable consideration for participating in athletic sports or games.
 2. Receive any money or other valuable consideration for officiating an interscholastic athletic contest. (Exception: MHSAA interpretation. - A 12th grader who is at least 17 years old may register with the MHAA and officiate sub-varsity contests if he or she works with an official who has been included on the MHSAA "approved" list and has been authorized by the MHSAA as an acceptable mentor. The student may receive the normal compensation paid to officials by schools);
 3. Sign a contract with a professional team.
- B. The rule in (A) above applies to all sports offered by Utica Community Schools.
- C. A student may be compensated for giving lessons as part of a youth camp or recreation program, but may not also be a camper or participant in the camp or program.

FAILURE TO COMPLY

A student violating this rule is ineligible and may not apply for reinstatement until the equivalent of one full school year has elapsed from the date of the last violation. After that date the student may request reinstatement.

SECTION IV: * OUTSIDE OF SCHOOL ATHLETIC COMPETITION

- A. A student who has participated (including practices & tryouts) in any athletic contest or scrimmage as a member of a school team, may not participate in the same sport in the same season in any athletic competition outside of and not sponsored by the school. The exception to this rule is the individual sport athlete who may participate in a maximum of two (2) individual sports meets or contests during that sport season while not representing his/her school.

A student may not compete in any "all-star" contests or national high school championship at any time in any sport sponsored by the MHSAA during the school year.

- B. A member of a school's interscholastic team may not participate in either a school or non-school 3 on 3 (or more) competition in that sport during the MHSAA season for that sport without loss of eligibility under this regulation.

FAILURE TO COMPLY

A student violating rules in this section will be ineligible to participate in athletic contests and scrimmages for a

period from a minimum of the next three contests up to a maximum of one school year depending on the violation.

SECTION V: STUDENT ATTENDANCE REQUIRED FOR ATHLETICS

- A. A student with an unexcused absence from school may not participate in the athletic contest or practice scheduled for that day.

SECTION VI: ATTENDANCE AT ATHLETIC PRACTICE SESSIONS AND CONTESTS

Attendance at practice sessions is essential to prepare athletes physically and mentally for athletic contests. All team members are required to be at all athletic practice sessions and contests at the times designated by the coach. Should situations occur when it is impossible for a participant to attend due to illness, injury and other required school or family commitments, the student shall make prior arrangements with the coach for an excused absence.

FAILURE TO COMPLY

Failure to attend regularly scheduled practice sessions without an excused absence will lead to disciplinary action as outlined within the supplemental team rules distributed by the coach.

ATHLETIC ATTENDANCE POLICY

- three unexcused absences may result in removal from the team;
- athlete not in attendance during the school day, except for school approved early dismissals should not practice;
- athlete must be in attendance for three (3) school hours to practice or play in the games;
- suspensions are unexcused absences and count toward the three unexcused absences;

SECTION VII: TRAVELING TO AND FROM AWAY CONTESTS

Any student on a team traveling to an away athletic contest on school owned or chartered transportation or other such approved vehicles shall return to the home school on the same vehicle after the contest is over. The only exception is when prior arrangements are made and the coach grants permission for the student to leave the contest site with his/her parent/guardian or other adult family member.

FAILURE TO COMPLY

Any participant not returning from any away contest with a team without prior arrangements of the coach is subject to disciplinary action by the coach.

1 WAY TRANSPORTATION

Players will not be released to ride with anyone other than their parent, guardian or person stated on parent permission slip or if parent gives 18 yr. or older student permission.

SECTION VIII: UNIFORMS AND EQUIPMENT

Athletic participants are responsible for the care, security and use of uniforms and equipment issued to them.

FAILURE TO COMPLY

Athletic participants will be responsible to pay the replacement cost for any uniform or equipment items that are abused or not returned. Athletes will not be allowed to participate in succeeding sports seasons and report cards may be held until obligations are met.

SECTION IX: GENERAL MISCONDUCT

Athletes are expected to maintain good conduct at all times and all locations, whether on or off-campus, and not to engage in any conduct or behavior which brings discredit to themselves, their family, their team, school, or the School District. A student athlete must not engage in or be an accomplice to any criminal acts including, but not limited to, acts of assault, theft, extortion, or vandalism. A student athlete must not engage in any acts of gross disrespect or insubordination. A student athlete must not engage in any behavior or conduct which makes the student athlete unworthy to represent the ideals, standards, or principles of the School District.

FAILURE TO COMPLY

Student athletes violating this section may be denied participation in athletics for up to the equivalent of one full school year, depending upon the severity of the misconduct.

SECTION X: USE OR POSSESSION OF TOBACCO

Students are to refrain from use of tobacco or tobacco products including smokeless tobacco, electronic cigarettes, hookah pens or other similar devices.

FAILURE TO COMPLY

Student athletes will be subject to discipline policies established by Utica School Administration as described in the Student Handbook.

SECTION XI: USE OR POSSESSION OF ALCOHOL AND OTHER CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES

Student athletes are to refrain from use of any alcoholic beverage and any illegally used controlled substance, look-alike or mood altering chemical at all times, including anabolic steroids.

FAILURE TO COMPLY

Breach of the above policy will present possible cause for immediate suspension from athletics, pending a parental conference and final disposition. Due to the serious consequences of these acts immediate suspension from athletics may be recommended on the first or second offense. Participation in an assessment program may also be recommended. Refer to Utica Community Schools Student Handbook governing student conduct.

Within the provisions of this Code of Conduct for Student Athletes and the written supplemental team rules and regulations, the coach may suspend or exclude a student from athletic participation. A team member who is suspended from a school as outlined in the Student Handbook may not participate in practice or contests because the suspension covers all school activities. However, a team member ruled academically ineligible to participate in contests and scrimmages may still be able to practice with the team. Any participant who is dismissed from the team for the remainder of a sports season will have forfeited the opportunity to earn an athletic award.

The Utica Community School District endorses the "1/9th" policy for athletics.

- a. If an athlete is disciplined for possession or use of alcohol and/or tobacco or tobacco products, the athlete will be forced to miss 1/9th of the season for the first offense. A second offense during that season will result in his/her removal from the team.

Examples:	Baseball	- 2 games	Soccer	- 2 games
	Basketball	- 2 games	Softball	- 2 games
	*Cheerleading/ *Dance	- 1 game	Swim	- 2 games
	Cross Country	- 1 meet	Tennis	- 2 meets
	Football	- 1 game	Track	- 1 meet
	Golf	- 2 matches	Volleyball	- 2 matches
Club Sports:	Hockey	- 2 games	Wrestling	- 1 match
	Lacrosse	- 2 games	Bowling	- 2 matches

** In club sports ice hockey, bowling, lacrosse, ect. The 1/9th policy will be enforced*

The 1/9th policy will be enforced when the violation has been witnessed by any district employee and does not have to occur on school grounds.

- b. If an athlete has been found to have either possessed or used an illegal substance (i.e. marijuana, cocaine, pills, steroids, etc.), he/she will be removed from the team.