

Chemical Health Policy for Stratford Public Schools Student-Athletes
(Approved 5/21/07)

The Stratford Board of Education recognizes that the use of chemical substances is a significant health problem for many adolescents, resulting in negative effects on behavior, learning, health, and the total development of each individual. The misuse and abuse of chemical substances affects co-curricular participation and the development of related skills. Misuse and abuse of chemical substances by family members, team members and other significant persons also has a negative effect on adolescents.

The Stratford Board of Education firmly believes that the use of tobacco, alcohol, illegal drugs, (including but not limited to alcohol, marijuana, stimulants, street drugs, cocaine, heroine, anabolic steroids, human growth hormones), and/or the misuse or abuse of prescribed or legal drugs is counter-productive to the physical well-being, development, and conditioning of student-athletes. Therefore, students-athletes are responsible to abstain completely from the possession, sale, use, and/or abuse of these substances. The Stratford Board of Education also believes that participation in interscholastic athletics is a privilege and not a constitutionally protected right and as such, allows the Board of Education the authority to suspend student-athletes from being able to participate in interscholastic athletics when such students violate the district's chemical health policy.

When a coach, school administrator, or other school staff member has reason to believe that a participant in the Stratford Public Schools interscholastic athletics program has violated the letter or spirit of the districts chemical health policy for student-athletes, school officials will follow appropriate "due process" in investigating and determining if a violation of the district's chemical health policy has occurred. "Due Process" procedure shall include the principal and/or his/her designee investigating a student-athlete's alleged violation of the chemical health policy, informing the student-athlete and his/her family of the alleged violation, and providing an opportunity for the student-athlete and his/her family to respond to the "charges". The Board of Education reserves the right to require drug testing when the use of performance enhancing drugs is suspected. Said testing will be conducted in accordance with USOC standards at a Board of Education approved facility and at the Board of Education's expense. After collecting as much information as possible regarding the alleged violation, the principal and/or his/her designee shall decide if a violation of the student-athlete chemical health policy occurred and what consequences shall be meted out. If a violation of the district's chemical health policy has occurred, the following consequences may be implemented:

Note: Consequences and/or disciplinary actions may be carried over from one season to the next, similar to the "Code of Conduct" policy. Athletics related consequences and/or disciplinary actions are in addition to any detention, school suspension, or school removal that may be assigned in the usual implementation of school policies prohibiting the possession and/or use of alcohol, narcotics, tobacco, or other illegal substances. When a student is suspended from school, he/she may not participate in athletics or extra-curricular activities.

First Offense: The consequences will range from possible participation in a school approved substance abuse counseling program through a minimum suspension from participating in 20% of the team's games. A coach, in consultation with the athletic director and principal may choose to dismiss a student-athlete from a team if he/she feels the infraction warrants such dismissal.

Second Offense: The minimum consequence will be suspension from participation in 30% of the team's games, and possible participation in a school approved substance abuse counseling program. A coach, in consultation with the athletic director and principal, may dismiss a student-athlete from the team if he/she feels the infraction warrants such dismissal.

Third Offense: A student-athlete who violates the district's substance abuse policy a third time shall be dismissed from the team (if the violation occurs during the season of play) and the student-athlete shall be ineligible to participate in all sports programs for the rest of the school year. School officials may carry the penalty over to the next school year and extend the period of ineligibility.

Exception: Per CIAC regulations, any student-athlete determined to have used, in or out-of-season, androgenic/anabolic steroids or other performance enhancing substances including but not limited to anabolic agents, diuretics, peptide hormones, analogues, blood doping, or substances and practices identified as banned by the NCAA and the USOC, shall be declared ineligible for all interscholastic sports for one hundred eighty (180) school days on each occurrence. The one hundred eighty (180) school day period of ineligibility commences on the day the CIAC Board of Control makes such determination.

This chemical health policy shall be in effect 24/7 for student-athletes both in-season and out-of-season. Penalties may carry over to the next season or the next school year. This chemical health policy shall be published in the school's student handbooks as well as the athletic digest which are provided to every family prior to the start of every school year and sports season. The student-athlete parent permission form shall include language stating that the students and their parents or legal guardians have read and understand the district's chemical health policy and that they agree to abide by it. The chemical health policy shall be reviewed at all pre-season meetings for student-athletes, parents and coaches.