

INTERSCHOLASTIC HANDBOOK



NORTH FULTON WILDCATS

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Revised 8/2018

POLICIES FOR INTERSCHOLASTIC ACTIVITIES

Philosophy

The boards of education at Spoon River Valley and Cuba believe that athletics and all extra-curricular activities are an important part of the overall school experience. We want our students to have an opportunity to be successful in athletics and activities as well as have the opportunity to take advantage of the small school setting by being able to experience a variety of school sports and activities. For schools our size to be successful, coaches and teachers must work together and cooperatively with each other, both in the academic and athletic areas.

OBJECTIVES OF THE ATHLETIC PROGRAM

The objectives of the Athletic Program are:

1. To provide as varied an athletic program as possible for students who wish to participate.
2. To provide a coaching atmosphere that fosters healthy attitudes in cooperation, responsibility and leadership.
3. To insure the health and safety of participants by stressing physical conditioning and proper training habits.
4. To provide a feeling of accomplishment for those involved through participation and end of season rewards.
5. To conduct athletic activities in the school in such a manner that they provide a wholesome experience for both participants and spectators.

Spectator Conduct and Sportsmanship

Any person, including adults, who behaves in an unsportsmanlike manner during an athletic or extracurricular event may be ejected from the event the person is attending and/or denied admission to school events for up to a year after a Board of Education hearing. Examples of unsportsmanlike conduct include: using vulgar or obscene language; possessing or being under the influence of any alcoholic beverage or illegal substance; possessing a weapon; fighting or otherwise striking or threatening another person; failing to obey the instructions of a security officer or school district employee; and engaging in any activity which is illegal or disruptive.

Parents and members of the public must refrain from entering the locker room, dugout or coaching area before, during or after a game. If a parent is interfering with the game or coaching from the sidelines, s/he may be asked to leave the facility. A chain of command should be followed for any parent wishing to lodge a complaint with a coach. An appointment should be made to speak with the coach first. If the concern is not resolved, then the principal or AD

should be contacted prior to going to the Superintendent or School Board. **No parent should confront a coach about an issue before, during, or after a contest.**

Code of Conduct

The Board of Education, administration, and coaching staff feel that good citizenship and good behavior are important aspects of life if extracurricular activities are to fulfill their potential. Consequently, all participants are expected to be exemplary in these areas or the following actions will be taken.

Students are expected to exhibit their best behavior at all times. Students may be removed from any team or activity at any time by the school administration for misbehavior and/or any violation in this Extra-Curricular Code and/or the Interscholastic Handbook. Student participants who violate the Extra-Curricular Code may also be in violation of the Students Conduct and Discipline Code found in the Student Handbook. The rules set forth in this Extra-Curricular Code are in effect throughout the year, 365 days, 24 hours a day, whether or not school is in session and including vacation periods and holidays. The rules apply on and off campus and whether or not the misconduct occurs at school or a school-sponsored activity or in some other locale.

Host District

Although these are cooperative programs, each sport will be assigned to a host district that is responsible for overseeing the activities in these activities. If you have a question or concern about a sport, you should address that concern with the host district while following the established chain of command protocol by first speaking to the coach, then the athletic director, next the building principal, next the district superintendent and finally if necessary the board of education.

Cuba

HS Football
MS Football
HS Track
HS Baseball
JH Track
HS Cheerleading
MS Cheerleading
HS Dance
HS Golf

Spoon River Valley

HS Girls Basketball
MS Girls Basketball
HS Boys Basketball
MS Boys Basketball
HS Softball
HS Volleyball
MS Volleyball

A. General Rules for Practices/Games/Participation

1. Required Forms

- Physical Examination – All athletes/participants are required to have a yearly physical exam on file in the school office prior to participating in a practice or game. Physical exams over 12 months old are invalid.
- Medical Permission – All athletes/participants must have this form on file prior to participating in any practice or game. This allows medical assistance to be administered.
- Proof of Insurance – All athletes/participants must be properly insured prior to participation in any practice or game. If parents have an insurance coverage that is adequate, they may sign a waiver releasing Spoon River Valley C.U.S.D. # 4 and or Fulton County C.U.S.D. #3 of any liability. Those individuals signing a waiver form must have them on file prior to any participation. Insurance may be purchased through American Youth Student and Sports Insurance. Brochures describing the insurance coverage and rates will be provided at registration time.
- Interscholastic Contract – All athletes/participants must have a signed interscholastic contract on file prior to participating in any practice or game. This form must be signed by the student and the parent.

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2. **Absences** – Coaches/sponsors of each activity will determine what constitutes an excused or unexcused absence, other than detention or school suspension. Coaches/sponsors will determine the consequences for excused/unexcused absences and tardies for practices and games.

- **Excused Absence** – This will include but not necessarily be limited to death in the immediate family, observance of religious holidays, illness of the student, medical appointment, home emergency, court appearance, and contagious diseases. Absences other than illness should always be prearranged with the coach/sponsor.
- **Unexcused Absences** – Any situation not covered under excused absences. Unexcused absences may be avoided if prearranged with the coach/sponsor.
- **Tardy** – Tardy is defined as anything less than ½ the practice. Coaches/Sponsors can individually determine additional requirements.
- **Out-of-School Suspensions** – Any player/participant suspended from school will not be allowed to participate in any practice, game, or activity on the days of the suspension. If a student receives a school suspension, the student will miss the next contest/activity. Upon the second school suspension, the student will be dismissed from the activity for the rest of the season.
- **Conflicts** – Coaches/sponsors have the discretion of working out conflicts with other school activities. If the conflict can't be resolved between the two parties, then the administrator will make the final decision.

3. **Training and Grooming** – Additional rules may be established by the coach of each particular activity.

- Proper attire is required for all practices, games, and activities. Any deviation from regular practice, game, and activity dress should be approved by the coach/sponsor before participation.
- Students should have no facial hair/haircut/hairdos that will interfere with the students' safety.

4. **Entering a sport:**

- An athlete may only enter an activity after the first week of practice with the approval of an administrator. Also an athlete may NOT reenter an activity after withdrawing from the activity.

4. **Dropping a sport:**

- An athlete deciding to drop a sport will be expected to handle the situation in an appropriate manner. Any acts of disrespect or displays of flagrant misconduct may be cause for refusal to allow the athlete to participate in any other sports in any other season.

5. **Attendance** –

Cuba-

- Students must be in attendance half the school day to participate in practice or interscholastic competition that day. Eleven-thirty is the dividing point of the school day. The half-day of absence must be an excused absence. Extenuating circumstances must be approved by the administration in advance.

Spoon River Valley-

- Students must be in attendance half the school day to participate in practice or interscholastic competition that day. Students must be in attendance for 150 minutes to count as a half day of attendance. The half-day attendance must be an excused absence. Extenuating circumstances must be approved by the administration in advance.

6. **Transportation** – Students participating in or traveling with a school sponsored group must ride the transportation provided by the school to and from that activity. The coach/sponsor may make exceptions to this policy under the following conditions.

- A student may ride home with his/her parent/guardian after an activity. The parent must personally sign the student out with the coach, sponsor, or designee.
- A student may ride home with another student's parents/guardians, if the student has brought a note from their parents/guardians giving them permission. Such a note should be signed and retained by the coach. The parent/guardian who is then driving the student's home must personally sign the student out with the coach/sponsor or designee.
- Students may not drive themselves home from an activity to which the school has provided transportation.
Students may not drive or ride home with a friend from an activity to which the school has provided transportation.

The following applies specifically to Spoon River Valley student-athletes:

- All athletes must ride the bus provided for all practices, games at Cuba, and away games. There will be a pick-up and drop off at the park in Fairview, and at the home of any athlete that lives directly on the traveled route between Spoon River Valley and Cuba. Students getting picked up at Fairview or their home, may drive to that location and then be picked up by the bus. Athletes can be excused from riding the bus if a note is turned into the office for approval ahead of time and only for the following reasons: doctor appointment, dentist appointment, court appearance, funeral, or work related excuse. Not following these procedures will result in disciplinary action such as detentions, etc. Athletes may sign out and ride home with a parent or the parent of another athlete using the procedures outlined above.

The following applies specifically to Cuba student-athletes:

- Athletes will be allowed to drive to practice if a written note by the parent is turned into the office/coach before the practice.

7. **Theft** – Any participant found guilty of stealing or destroying another student's or any school's property will be suspended from two weeks of games. The student will be required to attend and participate in all practices during this time. In addition, before participating in competition, restitution must be made. If there is a second offense, the student will be dismissed from the squad and cannot participate in any other activity until the student makes restitution.

8. **Unsportsmanlike Conduct** – The following will result in counseling by the coach/sponsor and possible disciplinary action by the administration. Action may include suspensions from all meetings, practices, and/or contests. After the third (3rd) such suspension, the student will be removed from the team or organization.

1. Displays of unsportsmanlike conduct towards an opponent or official or use of profanity during a practice, meeting, organizational event, or contest.
2. Theft or intentional destruction of any school or individual's equipment or property.
3. The hazing of other students.
4. Insubordination or disrespectful behavior towards sponsors and/or coaching staff.
5. The falsification of any information contained on any permit or permission form required by an activity or sport.
6. Any criminal law infraction such as stealing or acts of vandalism, acts of violence, or conduct by a student member that is determined by the coach/sponsor/administration to be detrimental to the organization's program, school, or school district.

IHSA & IESA Bylaw states that any player ejected from a contest for unsportsmanlike conduct shall be ineligible for the next interscholastic contest at that level of competition, and all other interscholastic contests at any level in the interim, in addition to other penalties the IHSA or school may assess.

When a player is ejected from a contest the athlete may not play the rest of that contest. In addition, the ejected player may not play in the next interscholastic contest at that level of competition, whether held the same day or subsequent day, and all other interscholastic contests

at any level in the interim. If an athlete is ejected from the last contest of a season, the player may not play in the first contest of the next interscholastic sport/activity in which the athlete participates.

During a suspension for unsportsmanlike conduct, players may not attend contests or travel with the team to and from contests. Ejections for unsportsmanlike conduct are considered decisions of contest officials and will not be subject to appeal.

9. Tobacco products, alcohol, and/or drug use – Any athlete/participant found by school personnel or law enforcement personnel to be using, in possession of, delivering, or selling of tobacco, smokeless tobacco, e-cigarettes/vaping paraphernalia and substances, alcohol, marijuana, other controlled substances, prescription drugs for which no prescription is attained, steroids, look-a-like drugs or drug paraphernalia will be suspended using the discipline outlined below. Offenses associated with tobacco, smokeless tobacco, vaping and alcohol will start with Level 1 for the first offense and progress to the next level for each subsequent offense. All other offenses, which includes those offenses associated with marijuana or other controlled substances, prescription drugs for which no prescription is attained, steroids, look-a-like drugs or drug paraphernalia, will begin with Level 2 and progress to the next level for each subsequent offense.

The following statement applies specifically to Spoon River Valley student-athletes: Attending a party or other gathering and/or being present in a motor vehicle where alcoholic beverages and/or controlled substances are being consumed by minors is not permitted by students at any time and any student found to have engaged in such activity will be suspended using the discipline outlined below. Spoon River Valley student athletes are also subject to the district extra-curricular drug testing policy outlined in the Random Drug Testing policy.

Level 1

- The athlete/participant shows written proof of enrollment and successful completion of a substance abuse program for alcohol use or a counseling/treatment program for smoking, as recommended by a family physician/guidance counselor that consists of at least 3 hours of treatment.
- The athlete/participant will be suspended from participation for twenty percent (20%) of the scheduled contests or a minimum of two contests of the present and/or next/season. The penalty can carry over into the following sport season.
- Penalties can also carry over to the following school year. Penalties carried over into the following season or school year will be calculated on a weighted percentage. In the case of tournaments, one (1) tournament day equals one (1) contest.

All conditions must be satisfied before reinstatement will occur in each offense. The student must attend all practices and all games and sit with the team in street clothes during the first two offenses.

Level 2

- The athlete/participant shows written proof of enrollment and successful completion of a substance abuse program of alcohol/drug use or a counseling/treatment program for smoking, as recommended by a family physician/guidance counselor that consists of at least 6 hours of treatment.
- The athlete/participant will be suspended from participation for forty percent (40%) of the scheduled contests or a minimum of four contests for the present and/or next season. The penalty can carry over into the following sport season. Penalties can also carry over to the following school year.
- Penalties carried over into the following season or school year will be calculated on a weighted percentage. In the case of tournaments, one (1) tournament day equals one (1) contest.

Level 3

- The athlete/participant shows written proof of enrollment and successful completion of a substance abuse program for alcohol/drug use or a counseling/treatment program for smoking, as recommended by a family physician/guidance counselor that consists of at least 10 hours of treatment.
- The athlete/participant will be suspended from participation for one (1) calendar year.

Level 4

- The athlete/participant will be suspended from participating in all interscholastic activities for the remainder of his or her school career.

*This rule is enforced starting with the athlete/participant's initial enrollment in an activity during Middle School or High School. A student must complete any Middle School consequences before participating in High School. Infractions are cumulative through Junior High and then the count restarts at the High School level. Each infraction takes the athlete to the next level of consequences.

10. Appeal Process

Participation in extra-curricular activities is voluntary and a privilege that is not a property right. However, a student participant may appeal the decision of the administration and/or coach or sponsor by following the procedures listed below:

1. The student, or student's representative, must submit an appeal in writing to the Superintendent within three (3) school days of the decision to impose a penalty. The written appeal must state the reason or basis for the appeal including why the student disagrees with the penalty imposed by the administration and/or coach or sponsor.
2. The appeal will be submitted to the athletic appeals committee for a decision on the appeal. The superintendent will determine the participants in the athletic appeals committee. The committee will decide to affirm, modify or dismiss the penalty imposed by the administration and/or coach or sponsor.

3. The Athletic Appeals Committee will make a decision in regard to the appeal within five (5) school days after the appeal was submitted.
4. The decision of the Athletic Appeals Committee is final.
5. The Superintendent will inform the student and parent/guardian of the final decision.
6. Penalties remain in force during the appeal process.

11. IHSA Steroid Testing Policy Consent to Random Testing

In January 2008, the Illinois High School Association's Board of Directors approved a plan developed by the IHSA's Sports Medicine Advisory Committee to implement random testing for steroids and performance-enhancing dietary supplements of teams and individuals qualifying for state finals competition.

Beginning with the 2008-09 school term, any student-athlete who ingests or otherwise uses substance from the association's banned drug classes, without written permission by a licensed physician, to treat a medical condition, violates IHSA By-law 2.170 and its subsections, and is subject to IHSA penalties, including ineligibility from competition. The IHSA will test certain randomly selected individuals and teams that participate in state series competitions for banned substances. The results of all tests shall be considered confidential and shall only be disclosed to the student, his or her parents, and his or her school.

By signing the attached form, we consent to random testing in accordance with the IHSA's steroid testing policy. We understand that, if the student or the student's team participates in state series competitions, the student may be subject to testing for banned substances.

No student-athlete may participate in IHSA state series competition unless the student and the student's parent/guardian consent to random testing.

A complete list of the current IHSA Banned Drug Classes can be accessed at http://www.ihsa.org/initiatives/sportsMedicine/files/IHSA_banned_drug_classes.pdf.

Specific details concerning the IHSA Performance-Enhancing Drug Testing Policy can be found on the IHSA website at <http://www.ihsa.org>.

12. Supervision

- Coaches will provide adequate supervision of students participating in their sport. This includes the locker rooms, on the practice/playing field, buses and any other situation where the athlete is under the control of the coach.
- No student is to be in the building after 3:45 p.m. without being directly supervised by a staff member. This means that all athletes waiting for an afternoon practice/game must either be out of the building or directly supervised by a staff member.
- All coaches will verify that his/her athletes have left the building at the conclusion of practices and games.

- Due to insurance regulations, **NO STUDENT** is to be using any of the weight lifting equipment without direct supervision by a qualified staff member.

13. Equipment

Each student shall be responsible for any uniform and/or equipment issued to him/her or anything he/she uses. A fine may be assessed to cover the cost of broken, damaged or lost equipment. This includes the weight room.

14. Injuries

Injuries may occur to athletes involved in sports, and the potential for serious injury does exist. It is, therefore, important to listen to your coaches and follow their instructions. Each student athlete shall promptly report all injuries, illnesses or medical conditions, regardless of severity, and whether or not caused by a school sponsored activity, to the head coach and/or sponsor of the sport. Each student athlete shall follow his or her coach's instructions in the care and treatment of the injury. If an injury should require that a student be examined and/or treated by a physician, the student must obtain a written release from that physician before he or she will be permitted to return to active participation.

B. Eligibility

1. Academic Eligibility

- High School athletes/participants that are failing two or more classes will be declared ineligible for the following week. Eligibility applies by the semester for High School athletes.
- Middle School athletes/participants must be passing all academic classes. Eligibility applies by the quarter for middle school athletes.
- An ineligible student will be ineligible for participation in all contests for a period of one week.
- A weekly check of student eligibility will be made. The eligibility list will be based on the student's grade as of the end of the day on Thursday. These grades will be submitted/pulled at 1:00 PM on Friday or the last attendance day of the week. This list will be distributed to coaching staff, athletic directors, teachers and administration of both schools.
- Student eligibility is then affected the following Monday. A student will remain ineligible from Monday through Sunday before becoming eligible again.
- The eligibility process requires the teacher to answer the following question: If a student was to transfer to another school, presently what grade is the student achieving for the grading period?
- Any student ineligible for the week will not be allowed to leave school early to attend an extracurricular activity, game, and/or meet.

2. Any Middle School student that is failing a course will be ineligible to participate.

3. Athletes/participants must turn in their equipment or make payment for lost equipment personally to their own coach. Any student failing to do so will not be allowed to participate in another interscholastic activity until this is done.
4. High school athletes/participants, excluding first semester freshmen, that fail two or more courses for the semester will be ineligible for athletics/activities the following semester.

C. IHSA and IESA Bylaws

Students must comply with all rules and regulations contained in the IHSA and IESA Bylaws. Bylaws, which can be read online at www.ihsa.org or www.iesa.org

D. Award/Letter Requirements

High School – Freshman through Senior

Freshman- Receive their **numerals** in which they will graduate and a JV or Varsity certificate (coaches choice). They could also receive a varsity letter for achievement (coaches choice). All other sports that year will be either a JV or Varsity certificate if they have already received their numerals and/or varsity letter.

Sophomore- Receive a **paw or varsity letter** (coaches choice) and a JV or Varsity certificate (coaches choice). All other sports that year will be just a JV or Varsity certificate if they already received a paw and/or varsity letter.

Junior- Receive a **paw or varsity letter** (coaches choice) and a JV or Varsity certificate (coaches choice). All other sports that year will be just a JV or Varsity certificate if they already received a paw and/or varsity letter.

Senior – Receive a **varsity letter and/or varsity pin** (in that sport), and a Varsity certificate.

Middle School – 7th and 8th Grade Letters

6th & 7th Grade- Receive a participation certificate for each activity they participated in.

8th Grade- Receive a small ‘NF’ letter. The ‘NF’ letter will only be given once.

Injuries

If an athlete is injured, awards will be at the discretion of the coach and administration.

Manager

It will be the decision of the coach and administration whether the manager receives a letter or pin.

Not Completing a Season

Any student who does not complete the season due to disciplinary reasons, grades, own withdrawal, or failure to return equipment is not eligible for any type of recognition. A season officially ends when the last contest in that activity is completed and equipment is returned.

Championships

If any team wins the Conference Championship, a special patch will be awarded to each player who meets the season's requirements. If the team wins the County Tournament, a special pin will be given each year to each player who meets the season's qualifications.

Award Events

Individual coaches will be responsible for securing appropriate awards from the athletic director in charge of that sport and then presenting these awards to their athletes at an appropriate time in an appropriate venue as approved by administration.

North Fulton Activities

Fall – For high school football, volleyball, golf, dance, cheerleading and middle school football

Winter – For boys' and girls' basketball, cheerleading, and dance

Spring – For high school boys' and girls' track, baseball, softball, and middle school boys' and girls' track

Non - Coop Activities

Individual coaches will be responsible for securing appropriate awards from their athletic director and then presenting these awards to their athletes at an appropriate time in and appropriate venue as approved by building administration.

E. Sharing of Information

The respective school districts may find it necessary to share information regarding students to effectively manage the athletic program. The sharing of this information is at the discretion of the administration as to what they feel is necessary to be shared for the effective management of the athletic program.

Good Luck Wildcats.

Have a Great Season!

North Fulton/Cuba/Spoon River Valley Interscholastic Code of Conduct

STUDENT Participating in Interscholastic Activities

I have read and understand the rules and regulations as stated in the Interscholastic Policy Booklet. As a member of an interscholastic squad representing the North Fulton Coop, Cuba Middle-Senior High School and/or Spoon River Valley Junior-Senior High School; I agree to conduct myself at all times in accordance with the provisions set forth therein. I also agree to possibly be tested for Performance Enhancing Drug Testing as outlined in the IHSA policy. I also understand that information concerning the student athlete may be shared between Cuba Middle-Senior High School and Spoon River Valley Junior-Senior High School for the purposes of student athlete discipline or other matters deemed necessary for effective management of the cooperative athletic program.

Student Signature

Date

PARENT/GUARDIAN of a student participating in Interscholastic Activities

I have read and understand the contents of the Interscholastic Handbook. As a parent/guardian of a student participating in interscholastic activities, I understand the code of conduct expected of my student and will help maintain these standards.

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

IHSA – Illinois High School Coaches Association

Parent and Student Agreement/Acknowledgement Form Performance-Enhancing Substance Testing Policy

Illinois state law prohibits possessing, dispensing, delivering or administering a steroid in a manner not allowed by state law.

Illinois state law also provides that body building, muscle enhancement or the increase in muscle bulk or strength through the use of a steroid by a person who is in good health is not a valid medical purpose.

Illinois state law requires that only a licensed practitioner with prescriptive authority may prescribe a steroid for a person.

Any violation of state law concerning steroids is a criminal offense punishable by confinement in jail or imprisonment in the Illinois Department of Corrections.

STUDENT ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND AGREEMENT

As a prerequisite to participation in IHSA athletic activities, I agree that I will not use performance-enhancing substances as defined in the IHSA Performance-Enhancing Substance Testing Program Protocol. I have read this form and understand that I may be asked to submit to testing for the presence of performance-enhancing substances in my body, and I do hereby agree to submit to such testing and analysis by a certified laboratory. I understand that testing may occur during selected IHSA state series events or during the school day. I further understand and agree that the results of the performance-enhancing substance testing may be provided to certain individuals in my high school as specified in the IHSA Performance-Enhancing Substance Testing Program Protocol which is available on the IHSA website at www.IHSA.org. I understand and agree that the results of the performance-enhancing substance testing will be held confidential to the extent required by law. I understand that failure to provide accurate and truthful information could subject me to penalties as determined by IHSA.

Student Name (Print): _____ Grade (9-12) _____

Student Signature: _____ Date: _____

PARENT/GUARDIAN CERTIFICATION AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

As a prerequisite to participation by my student in IHSA athletic activities, I certify and acknowledge that I have read this form and understand that my student must refrain from performance-enhancing substance use and may be asked to submit to testing for the presence of performance-enhancing substances in his/her body. I understand that testing may occur during selected IHSA state series events or during the school day. I do hereby agree to submit my child to such testing and analysis by a certified laboratory. I further understand and agree that the results of the performance-enhancing substance testing may be provided to certain individuals in my student's high school as specified in the IHSA Performance-Enhancing Substance Testing Program Protocol which is available on the IHSA website at www.IHSA.org. I understand and agree that the results of the performance-enhancing substance testing will be held confidential to the extent required by law. I understand that failure to provide accurate and truthful information could subject my student to penalties as determined by IHSA.

Name (Print): _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Relationship to student: _____

INSURANCE WAIVER

2018-2019 SCHOOL YEAR

Date: _____

To: The Board of Education, Cuba District #3
The Board of Education, Spoon River Valley District #4

I certify that adequate coverage is provided by

(Insurance Company)

For _____
(Student's name)

We hereby release the school personnel and the Board of Education from any responsibility for medical expenses incurred while our children are participating in school programs.

(parent/guardian signature)

EMERGENCY MEDICAL INFORMATION:

If I cannot be reached, and if in the judgment of school authorities, immediate medical attention is indicated, I authorize responsible school personnel to send my child to an available doctor or hospital.

Doctor preference: _____

Hospital preference: _____

If a parent/guardian cannot be reached to be informed of an accident, who is the next person that we should notify?

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Concussion Information Sheet/Form

A concussion is a brain injury and all brain injuries are serious. They are caused by a bump, blow, or jolt to the head, or by a blow to another part of the body with the force transmitted to the head. They can range from mild to severe and can disrupt the way the brain normally works. Even though most concussions are mild, **all concussions are potentially serious and may result in complications including prolonged brain damage and death if not recognized and managed properly.** In other words, even a “ding” or a bump on the head can be serious. You can’t see a concussion and most sports concussions occur without loss of consciousness. Signs and symptoms of concussion may show up right after the injury or can take hours or days to fully appear. If your child reports any symptoms of concussion, or if you notice the symptoms or signs of concussion yourself, seek medical attention right away.

Symptoms may include one or more of the following:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Headaches ● “Pressure in head” ● Nausea or vomiting ● Neck pain ● Balance problems or dizziness ● Blurred, double, or fuzzy vision ● Sensitivity to light or noise ● Feeling sluggish or slowed down ● Feeling foggy or groggy ● Drowsiness ● Change in sleep patterns 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Amnesia ● “Don’t feel right” ● Fatigue or low energy ● Sadness ● Nervousness or anxiety ● Irritability ● More emotional ● Confusion ● Concentration or memory problems (forgetting game plays) ● Repeating the same question/comment
Signs observed by teammates, parents and coaches include:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Appears dazed ● Vacant facial expression ● Confused about assignment ● Forgets plays ● Is unsure of game, score, or opponent ● Moves clumsily or displays incoordination ● Answers questions slowly ● Slurred speech ● Shows behavior or personality changes ● Can’t recall events prior to hit ● Can’t recall events after hit ● Seizures or convulsions ● Any change in typical behavior or personality ● Loses consciousness 	

What can happen if my child keeps on playing with a concussion or returns too soon?

Athletes with the signs and symptoms of concussion should be removed from play immediately. Continuing to play with the signs and symptoms of a concussion leaves the young athlete especially vulnerable to greater injury. There is an increased risk of significant damage from a concussion for a period of time after that concussion occurs, particularly if the athlete suffers another concussion before completely recovering from the first one. This can lead to prolonged recovery, or even to severe brain swelling (second impact syndrome) with devastating and even fatal consequences. It is well known that adolescent or teenage athletes will often fail to report symptoms of injuries. Concussions are no different. As a result, education of administrators, coaches, parents and students is the key to student-athlete's safety.

If you think your child has suffered a concussion

Any athlete even suspected of suffering a concussion should be removed from the game or practice immediately. No athlete may return to activity after an apparent head injury or concussion, regardless of how mild it seems or how quickly symptoms clear, without medical clearance. Close observation of the athlete should continue for several hours. IHSA Policy requires athletes to provide their school with written clearance from either a physician licensed to practice medicine in all its branches or a certified athletic trainer working in conjunction with a physician licensed to practice medicine in all its branches prior to returning to play or practice following a concussion or after being removed from an interscholastic contest due to a possible head injury or concussion and not cleared to return to that same contest. In accordance with state law, all IHSA member schools are required to follow this policy.

You should also inform your child's coach if you think that your child may have a concussion. Remember it's better to miss one game than miss the whole season. And when in doubt, the athlete sits out.

For current and up-to-date information on concussions you can go to:

<http://www.cdc.gov/ConcussionInYouthSports/>

Student-athlete Name Printed

Student-athlete Signature

Date

Parent or Legal Guardian Printed

Parent or Legal Guardian Signature

Date

