



Stratford High School
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**ATHLETIC DIGEST
FOR STUDENTS AND PARENTS/GUARDIANS**

Board of Education Approved Programs

FALL SPORTS

Cheerleading - Coed Varsity, Junior Varsity
Cross Country - Boys Varsity
Cross Country - Girls Varsity
Dance - Coed Varsity
Football - Varsity, Junior Varsity, Freshman
Golf - Boys Varsity
Soccer - Boys Varsity, Junior Varsity
Soccer - Girls Varsity, Junior Varsity
Swimming & Diving - Girls Varsity
Volleyball - Girls Varsity, Junior Varsity, Freshman

WINTER SPORTS

Basketball - Boys Varsity, Junior Varsity, Freshman
Basketball - Girls Varsity, Junior Varsity
Bowling - Coed Varsity, Junior Varsity
Cheerleading - Coed Varsity, Junior Varsity
Dance - Coed Varsity
Indoor Track - Boys Varsity, Girls Varsity
Swimming & Diving - Boys Varsity (BHS)
Wrestling - Coed Varsity, Junior Varsity
Rifle Team - Coed Varsity (BHS)

SPRING SPORTS

Baseball - Boys Varsity, Junior Varsity
Golf - Girls Varsity
Lacrosse - Boys Varsity, Junior Varsity (BHS)
Lacrosse - Girls Varsity, Junior Varsity (SHS)
Softball - Girls Varsity, Junior Varsity
Tennis - Boys Varsity
Tennis - Girls Varsity
Outdoor Track & Field - Boys Varsity, Girls Varsity

**Welcome to the
Stratford Public Schools
Athletic Program**

The athletic programs at Stratford and Bunnell High School are an integral part of the school's education program. Interscholastic competition provides students with physical, mental and emotional experiences which benefit not only the individual, but the school and community as well. Participants have the opportunity to develop personal qualities such as self-discipline, self-esteem, commitment and loyalty. Winning will always be kept in the proper perspective at Stratford High School.

Participation in the athletic program is a privilege granted students in return for compliance with certain rules and conditions. This digest represents the efforts of the Stratford Board of Education along with Stratford and Bunnell High Schools, to provide student-athletes and parents/guardians with a resource which will foster better understanding of the athletic program. Please familiarize yourself with the rules and regulations which govern participation in our programs and do your part to support them, including attending as many athletic contests as possible.

Stratford Public Schools Athletic Mission Statement

The Stratford Public Schools Interscholastic Athletics program shall offer programs of interscholastic athletics that are consistent with the district's educational philosophy and serves to attain the district's goals and objectives. These programs shall:

- Strive to achieve a level of success commensurate with the district's commitment to academic excellence.
- Foster school spirit, promote pride in one's school, enhance the quality of life and assist in keeping the community interested and supportive of Stratford's schools.
- Encourage sportsmanship, teach the lessons of self-discipline and sacrifice, and serve to complement the student's academic training and moral and ethical development.
- Expand community service opportunities for student-athletes to promote the good name of the district and reveal to student-athletes the positive experience of helping others.
- Support male and female student-athletes in a fair and equitable manner consistent with the requirements of Title IX.
- Provide opportunities for participation in interscholastic athletics to as many students as possible and fully support the student-athlete with ample resources in terms of operations, personnel, facilities and funding.
- Adhere to the philosophy and guidelines of the CIAC, South-West Conference and Stratford Board of Education.
- Place the highest priority on the overall educational experience of the student-athlete.
- Provide a support mechanism for the physical, emotional, mental and social welfare of student-athletes.
- Be committed to the principles of sportsmanship, ethics, conduct, rules, compliance and amateurism.

Athletic Goals and Objectives - The Class Act Initiative

The ultimate goal of athletics is to see that every participant becomes an effective citizen in a competitive, democratic society through the accomplishment of specific objectives.

- 1) **Learn Teamwork** - Develop self-discipline, respect for authority and work hard. Place the team and its objectives higher than personal desire.
- 2) **Strive for Success** - Learn to accept defeat with dignity and victory with compassion. Strive to achieve your potential as an athlete and person.
- 3) **Display Good Sportsmanship** - Learn to treat others as one would wish to be treated by developing emotional control, honesty, cooperation and dependability.
- 4) **Continue to Improve** - Pursue goals and objectives by diligently practicing skills and consistently adhering to desirable habits.
- 5) **Enjoy Athletics** - Above all else, have FUN. Acknowledge the personal rewards derived from sports and give sufficiently of self in order to preserve and improve the athletic program.

Athletic Perspective

Parents should familiarize themselves with the rules and regulations which govern participation in our programs and do their part to support students, coaches, and teams by attending as many athletic contests as possible. However, coaches will not tolerate interference from parents relative to athletic and coaching decisions. Coaches will not discuss playing time with parents.

Each sport is conducted in a manner which is in the best interests of the school and its participants. Parents who disagree with a coach's philosophy or methods, or cannot accept their sons/daughters role on a particular team, have a family decision to make. The best advice is to allow your son/daughter to handle all team matters themselves. You will be doing him/her a favor while contributing to his/her growth, development and maturity.

In some sports, it is essential to reduce squads to a workable size. One of the most difficult tasks of coaching is making cuts. No one enjoys telling a youngster with the desire to play a particular sport, that he/she does not possess the necessary abilities to make the team. Our coaches are highly skilled in this area and do their best to select those individuals, who in their judgment, are best suited for the team. Before deciding to be a candidate for any athletic team, a student must be prepared to accept the possibility that he/she may not be selected.

Please understand that coaches are the sole judges of all candidates and their decisions will be supported by administration.

Student-Athletes Must Abide By The Following Rules

1. A parent and student must complete an online registration through FinalForms.
2. A student must pass and turn in a physical examination form (Exams are good for 13 months).
3. A student must be taking a minimum of four one unit subjects each marking period.
4. Marking period grades (not semester grades) are to be used in determining scholastic eligibility to participate in interscholastic athletics during any given marking period. To be eligible for fall sports, a student must have received credit toward graduation of four (4) Carnegie Units of work for which the student has not previously received credit. The final academic grade average determines fall eligibility. Semester courses or mini courses completed earlier in the school year may be counted toward the four (4) units used in determining eligibility for fall season. Year-end failures may be made up through successful completion of LEA approved summer school work in courses failed.
5. A student who receives two or more failing grades (in any classes) the previous marking period shall be ineligible to participate in interscholastic contests."
6. A student-athlete will not be allowed to start a season or compete during a season in which his/her twentieth (20th) birthday falls.
7. A student-athlete may not represent his/her school in more than one sport during a season.
8. After the first scheduled contest, a school's team member cannot practice or play with any other non-school team in that sport.
9. A student has eight consecutive semesters of eligibility once they begin ninth grade.
10. Girls can participate on boys teams when the school does not sponsor programs for girls in those sports. However, boys cannot participate in girls sports when the school does not sponsor programs for boys in those sports.
11. The school district shall determine a student's eligibility to participate in a CIAC gender specific sports team based on the gender identification of that student in current school records and daily life activities in the school and community at the time that sports eligibility is determined for a particular season.
12. A student who transfers from a school to a CIAC member school after the beginning of their sophomore year without a corresponding change of address or legal guardianship may be ineligible from participation in athletics. This transfer penalty could be 50% of one athletic season up to a full calendar year and is subject to review by the CIAC Eligibility Committee.
13. In the sports of tennis, golf, and swimming, a student may practice with non-school teams during the season. Students must obtain permission from the coach, athletic director, and principal to compete on an outside team in these sports during the high school season.

League Affiliation

Stratford (SHS) and Bunnell (BHS) High Schools are members of the Connecticut Interscholastic Athletic Conference (CIAC) which is affiliated with the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFSHSA). SHS and BHS are also members of the South-West Conference in all sports except Rifle (Connecticut High School Rifle League-CHSRL) and Bowling (Connecticut Interscholastic Bowling League-CIBL).

SWC Member Schools

Bethel	New Fairfield
Brookfield	New Milford
Bunnell	Newtown
Immaculate	ND-Fairfield
Joel Barlow	Pomperaug
Kolbe Cathedral	Stratford
Masuk	Weston

Student-Athlete Code of Conduct

The Board of Education recognizes the value to students of their participation in athletic activities. The interaction with others to achieve a common goal, in a sportsmanlike manner, is an important lifelong skill that students can acquire through such activities. Being a member of a team is a privilege which has responsibilities and rewards. Student-athletes are role models and are expected to conduct themselves in a respectful manner that brings credit to their sport, team, themselves and their school at all times.

Therefore, players shall pledge to:

- Be accountable for their behavior and its outcomes
- Honor their obligations and promises
- Respect the authority of coaches and officials
- Respect their teammates and opponents
- Learn and adhere to the rules of the game both in letter and spirit

Student-athletes will be held accountable for their behavior during school time, during school activities, outside of school, and in the community at all times. The following behavioral standards shall be in effect for student-athletes.

Suspension (in-school or out-of-school)

First Offense: A student-athlete who receives suspension (in-school or out-of-school) shall be declared ineligible to play in ten percent of the contests during the sport season in which he/she is participating. This percentage is based on the total number of contests scheduled for the regular season. This also includes post-season play. If the suspension occurs out of the student-athlete's season-of-play, the period of ineligibility shall be served during the next sport in which the student-athlete is scheduled to participate. Periods of ineligibility carry over to the next school year. Student-athletes may not attend school activities while serving suspensions. A coach, in consultation with the athletic director and principal, may choose to dismiss a student-athlete from the team if he/she feels the cause of the suspension warrants such dismissal. If a student-athlete misses ten percent of his/her contests during the suspension, that shall count as the period of ineligibility.

Second Offense: A student-athlete who receives a second suspension (in-school or out-of-school) shall be declared ineligible to play in twenty percent of contests during the sports season in which he/she is participating. This also includes post-season play. If the suspension occurs outside the student-athlete's season-of-play, the period of ineligibility shall be served during the next sport in which the student-athlete is scheduled to participate. Periods of ineligibility carry over to the next school year. No student-athlete may attend school activities while serving the suspension. A coach may elect to not allow the student-athlete to practice during the period of ineligibility. A coach, in consultation with the athletic director and principal, may dismiss a student-athlete from a team if he/she believes the suspension warrants dismissal. If a student-athlete misses twenty percent of his/her contests during the suspension, that shall count as the period of ineligibility.

Third Offense: A student-athlete who receives a third (cumulative) suspension (in-school or out-of-school) during a school year shall be declared ineligible for the remainder of the school year. If a third suspension occurs outside of the student-athlete's season-of-play, he/she shall be declared ineligible to participate for the next sport the student-athlete is scheduled to play. Periods of ineligibility will be served the next school year if that is when the student-athlete is next scheduled to play a sport.

Suspensions Resulting from Physical Altercations

Any student-athlete who initiates or participates in a fight/physical altercation, either in school or off-campus, which results in a suspension from school, will be subjected to further discipline beyond the penalties outlined above. The severity of the altercation will be evaluated by the school principal and athletic director and an increased consequence up to dismissal from the program, may be levied by school administration.

Expulsion from School

A student-athlete expelled from school is ineligible to practice or play during the period of expulsion and shall be ineligible for the remainder of the school year (assuming the student

returns to school prior to the end of the school year). If a student-athlete returns to school (during) the school year after the expulsion occurred, the expulsion shall be treated the same as a suspension and any other consequences may be carried over to the next school year.

A coach, in consultation with the athletic director and principal, may elect to disallow a student-athlete returning from an expulsion to be a member of his/her team if he/she believes that allowing such a student to be a member of the team is not in the best interests of the team and the other student-athletes on the team.

Student-Athletes shall not engage in behavior in school, during a school sponsored event, or in the community that harms the reputation of the school, brings shame to the school, embarrasses the school, discredits the school, dishonors the school, is in conflict with the school's mission statement regarding character education or violates established Stratford Board of Education policy. This standard of behavior shall be in effect at all times, including non-school hours, holidays and vacations. Failure to conform to this standard of behavior may result in loss of eligibility while the coach, athletic director, and principal investigate and review the case. After reviewing the case, the coach, athletic director, and principal shall determine if the student-athlete shall be ineligible for an additional period of time or dismissed from the team.

Chemical Health Policy for Stratford Public Schools Student-Athletes

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 alcohol, tobacco, stimulants, street drugs, including but not limited to marijuana, heroin and cocaine; anabolic steroids, hormones and analogues, diuretics and other performance enhancing substances; including supplements and Creatine, 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. Possessing, using, or transmitting any substance which is represented to be or looks like a narcotic drug, hallucinogenic drug, amphetamine, barbiturate, marijuana, alcoholic beverage, stimulant, depressant, or intoxicant of any kind, including such substances that contain chemicals which produce the same effect of illegal substances including but not limited to synthetic substances and bath salts are addressed by this policy.

Therefore, student-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 Stratford Public Schools interscholastic athletics program has violated the letter or spirit of the district's 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-athletes 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 extracurricular activities.

Stratford Public Schools and the Stratford/Bunnell Athletic Departments recognize possessing, using, or transmitting of any vaping devices and products, liquid nicotine products and electronic nicotine delivery systems as a violation of the chemical health policy. Please review full definitions of these items in the SPS Alcohol Use, Drugs, and Tobacco Policy #5131.6

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 teams 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 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 USOC, shall be declared ineligible for all interscholastic sports for one hundred eighty (180) school days for 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.

Sportsmanship

The Student-Athlete

As a member of his/her team, a student-athlete serves as a role model. They are admired and respected by many, including younger athletes, and their behavior and actions have a significant impact on others. The student-athlete plays an essential role in promotion of sportsmanship and must always display high standards of sportsmanship.

Student-Athletes will:

- Accept the responsibility and privilege of representing their school and community by showing teamwork, sportsmanship and discipline in all aspects of the game
- Demonstrate respect for self, coach, teammates, opponents, officials and spectators
- Win graciously and lose with dignity
- Have thorough knowledge of and abide by all rules of the game.
- Work for the good of the team at all times
- Cheer for the team, not against the opponent
- Congratulate opponents in a sincere manner following either a victory or defeat
- Refrain from the use of illegal or unhealthy substances to gain an unfair advantage

The Parent/Spectator

High school athletes are an extension of the school's academic program and are designed to build character, values and ethics. Parents and spectators must keep the game in perspective and support the coaches, players and officials in a positive manner.

Parents/Spectators will:

- Respect the integrity and judgment of game officials
- Be respectful of all players, coaches, officials and other spectators
- Never target anyone for abuse whether it be physical, verbal or emotional
- Never engage in name calling, taunting, harassment, obscenities, or any other disrespectful language or gestures
- Always be a positive role model for other spectators and their child
- Cheer for their team, not against the opponent
- Recognize that attending a high school athletic contest is a privilege, not a license to verbally assault officials, coaches or the opposing team(s) and their spectators

Absences /Tardy

A student-athlete who is absent unexcused from school may not practice or compete that day.

Any student-athlete who arrives at school after 7:40a may not practice or compete that day. Repeated unexcused absences or tardiness (3 offenses) may result in suspension or dismissal from the athletic team.

Extenuating circumstances will be given special consideration by the Athletic Director or Principal.

Attendance at Practice

Student-Athletes are required to attend all practice and contests including those scheduled during vacation periods. An injured athlete should attend practice unless excused by a physician. Work and vacation are not acceptable reasons for missing practices and games.

Travel

Student-Athletes are required to travel to and from athletic contests on a team bus under the supervision of a coaching staff member. School bus transportation will be provided for all away contests as well as some off-campus practice sites.

Earning Awards/Letters

The requirements for earning a letter vary from sport to sport. In general, those on varsity teams receive a varsity letter or pin and certificate. Those on junior varsity teams receive certificates. Those on freshman teams receive their graduating class numerals and certificates.

Return to Play Policy

If an injured athlete is removed from practice or play and is attended by a physician, the student must turn in a written order by physician before he/she is allowed to practice or compete again.

COVID-Return to Play - Student-athletes who test positive for COVID must have the district's Return to Play form signed by his or her physician before returning to athletics.

Ejection Rule

By CIAC rule, any student-athlete or coach who is ejected from any contest for unsportsmanlike conduct of fighting will not be allowed to participate in the next game at the same level of play and all games in between. If the ejection occurs during the last contest of the season, the player (if an underclassmen) or coach will sit out the first contest of the next season. The rule applies to all regular season and tournament games. Any student ejected a second time for fighting is dismissed from the team.

Insurance

Payment to treatment of injuries from participation in school sponsored practices or games must be paid by the family's medical or hospitalization insurance up to its limit. The school systems' interscholastic insurance policy will cover most additional costs or bear most of the full amount if the family does not have medical or hospitalization insurance. All claims for injuries must be submitted within ninety (90) days after the accident / injury occurs. A parent / guardian should contact the athletic director for claim forms and insurance information. If claim forms are not submitted on time, payment for medical costs related to sports injuries may be denied.

Transfer Rule

If you are planning to transfer to a different high school please discuss your pending transfer with your school principal and/or your athletic director prior to the move so you and your family are aware of the possible impact to your athletic eligibility.

- Students who transfer from one member school to another at the end of grade nine will immediately be eligible at their new school providing they are otherwise eligible.
- Students who transfer in grades 10-12 with a corresponding change of legal address and are residing with their parent(s) or legal guardian will be immediately eligible at their new school providing they are otherwise eligible.
- If you transfer in grades 10-12 without a corresponding change of legal address you may be subject to a 50% sit-out in the first varsity sport you played at your previous school and that you wish to play at your new school. Check with your athletic director to see if this rule applies to your transfer.
- If you transfer from one member school to another for athletic reasons you will be subject to a one year restriction of play in the sports you played the previous year.

Residency

Students-athletes under the age of eighteen (18) must be residing with their parents or legal guardian (as determined by the Probate Court) to be eligible to participate. Residence with and support by any individual other than the parent or legal guardian for a period of one year or more does establish the residence of the student for athletic purposes.

Home Schooled Students

Participation on a CIAC school's interscholastic team is extended only to student-athletes whose program is under the direct supervision of a CIAC member school. Home Schooled students are not eligible to participate on CIAC schools' interscholastic teams.

Amateur Status

To remain an amateur and eligible for CIAC participation, you may not participate at any time under an assumed name, and any prizes won must be symbolic in nature. Jackets, sweaters, trophies, rings or watches are permitted; savings bonds, checks or cash are not. Refer to the CIAC Handbook for further information on amateurism.

Performance Enhancing Supplements

There are severe penalties for the use of anabolic steroids and other performance-enhancing supplements. Refer to the CIAC Handbook for more information on this topic.

Recruitment

Recruitment or attempted recruitment of students for athletic purposes, regardless of residence, is a gross violation of the spirit and philosophy of CIAC rules and is expressly forbidden. Athletes and/or families who allow themselves to be recruited by a member school will be declared permanently ineligible at the school to which he/she has been recruited and may be declared ineligible for interscholastic competition for up to one year at any other school. Using undue influence via direct or indirect communication by anyone associated with a school in an attempt to encourage your enrollment in another school is prohibited.

Examples include:

- Arranging any kind of contact with you for the purpose of encouraging your enrollment at another school.
- Visiting or entertaining you or a member of your family with the intent of encouraging your enrollment in another school.
- Providing transportation to you or a family member with the intent of encouraging your enrollment in another school.
- No representative of another school is permitted to encourage your enrollment in that school or a different school.
- Any contact you would have with someone trying to encourage you to enroll in a different school is not permitted.

-Any questions or concerns that you have related to recruitment should be addressed with your athletic director or principal. Additional information on recruitment is available in the CIAC Handbook.

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