

**ALLIANCE CITY SCHOOLS  
STUDENT-ATHLETE  
HANDBOOK**



**Alliance High School  
400 Glamorgan Street  
Alliance, Ohio 44601  
330-821-2100**

**Alliance Middle School  
3205 South Union Avenue  
Alliance, Ohio 44601  
330-821-2100**

## **Message to Student-Athletes and Their Parents**

Dear Student-Athletes and Parents,

You are receiving this handbook because your student has indicated a desire to participate in our interscholastic athletic program. We are very pleased that your student has made this decision, and we hope that their experiences will be positive as well as educational.

Participation in athletics gives students the opportunity to learn leadership skills, to gain self-confidence, self-discipline, organization, decision-making skills, and encourages them to set goals. A comprehensive program of student activities is vital to the educational development of our students.

Once students have chosen to participate, there are often many questions which both you and your son or daughter may have regarding the athletic programs. In order to assist in making the athletic experience a more positive one, this handbook has been assembled to answer questions about the guidelines and philosophy of the athletic program. We hope that this will be of assistance, and we encourage you to use it throughout the year. If you have additional questions, please feel free to contact the Athletic Director.

## **Alliance City Schools Athletic Philosophy**

It is the educational philosophy of the Alliance City Schools to prepare all students to become productive citizens in our community and society and contribute in a positive manner. We believe a comprehensive program of activities is vital to the educational development of our students.

Therefore, it is the purpose of the Alliance High School athletic program to develop and promote:

- A competitive atmosphere, which fosters teamwork and sportsmanship while stressing the goals of success and participation.
- Self-confidence, self-discipline, decision-making skills, and goal setting.
- A lifetime appreciation of physical fitness and good health habits.
- A feeling of school loyalty and pride which can be shared by all participants as well as the student body, parents, coaches, and entire community.
- A positive self-esteem and self-concept for everyone involved in athletics regardless of their role on the team.

The interscholastic athletic program shall be conducted in accordance with existing Board of Education policies, rules, and regulations. At all times the athletic program must be conducted in such a way as to justify it as an educational activity.

## **Attendance Requirements**

In accordance with OHSAA guidelines, any student participating in an athletic program must be present for four periods or 3 1/2 hours on the day of the contest or practice in order to be able to participate. If the student is not present as required, the student will not be permitted to compete or practice on that day. A student who is absent on Friday may compete or practice on Saturday. Exceptional situations may be proposed to the Athletic Director prior to the date of absence. Final authority for infractions of this rule will rest with the Athletic Director.

## **Forms**

The following forms must be completed and on file in the athletic office prior to participation.

1. Physical Examination Form
2. Proof of Insurance Form
3. Emergency Medical Form
4. Extra Curricular/Co-Curricular Student Contract
5. Consent to Perform Drug Testing
6. Athletic Contract

## **Equipment**

Each athlete will be issued equipment, which is the property of the school, and he/she is expected to maintain each item of equipment. Please follow care instructions located within most cloth items. All equipment is to be returned at the end of the season. Athletes who fail

to return equipment will not be permitted to participate in other activities, and report cards will be held until the item(s) are returned or purchased. Senior athletes will be held out of graduation ceremonies.

No student will be limited from wearing religious apparel while participating in interscholastic or non-interscholastic extra-curricular activities unless such apparel poses a legitimate danger to the participants. If such danger is identified, the student will be offered reasonable accommodations available for the participant wearing religious apparel.

### **Sportsmanship Rules**

Players, staff members and other team personnel are governed by the sportsmanship policy established by the Ohio High School Athletic Association. It states that any team member or staff member ejected for unsportsmanlike conduct or flagrant foul shall be ineligible for contests for the remainder of that day as well as for all contests in that sport until 2 regular season/tournament contests (one(two) in football) are played at the same level as the ejection. If the ejection is a result of fighting it is 4 games. (Example of "same level" would be: 2(4) freshman games or 2(4) Varsity games.)

If the ejection occurs in the last contest of the season, the student or staff member shall be ineligible for the same period of time stated above in the next sport in which the student or staff member participates. A student or staff member under suspension may not sit on the team bench, enter the locker room or be affiliated with the team in any way in traveling to, during, or traveling after the contest(s).

A student who is ejected a second time shall be suspended for the remainder of the season in that sport. A staff member who is ejected for a second time will be suspended indefinitely and required to attend a mandatory conference with the OHSAA Commissioner.

NOTE: Any athlete that is serving a suspension handed out by the Athletic Director, Head Coach, and/or Alliance High School Administration must be dressed accordingly and remain with the team at all times or the suspension will be repeated.

### **Athlete Injury Guidelines**

- Athletes are to first report practice injuries to the coach and then to the athletic trainer. All injuries and health concerns must be reported to the athletic trainer. Medical referral will be coordinated through the training staff.
- In absence of the trainer, the coach will initiate early first aid care. The coach will notify the trainer of all injuries.
- A team physician whose specialty is sports medicine and sports injuries is available for athletes to be referred to.
- Injured athletes are expected to report to practice and games during the treatment and

recovery period, if not it will be treated as an unexcused absence.

- Parents are encouraged to contact the training staff regarding any questions or concerns relating to their child's injury and care.

## **Concussion Policy**

A concussion is a type of traumatic brain injury. Concussions occur when there is a forceful blow to the head or body that results in rapid movement of the head and causes any change in behavior, thinking, or physical functioning. Concussions are not limited to situations involving loss of consciousness.

Some symptoms of a concussion include headache, nausea, confusion, memory difficulties, dizziness, blurred vision, anxiety, difficulty concentrating, and difficulty sleeping or change in personality.

Parents/guardians who inform coaches and teachers that their child is being treated by a healthcare professional for a concussion must provide written clearance from that health care professional for full or limited participation in class, practice, activity, or competition.

Prior to receiving written clearance from a health care professional, students who have sustained a concussion may not participate in any school-related physical activities.

If a concussion is suspected by a teacher or coach, the student will be removed from the class, practice, activity, or game. The student will not be permitted to return to full participation until he or she is evaluated by a health care professional experienced in concussion management and receives written clearance for full participation from that professional. Limited physical activity in the physical education context may eventually be permitted, depending on the recommendation of the health care professional.

Teachers or coaches who suspect a student has been concussed shall record on the **Student Accident Form 5340 F1**, as soon as possible, all pertinent facts concerning the incident and submit it to the Athletic Office.

Parents or guardians shall be notified about the possible concussion and given information on concussions and the need for medical attention.

Prior to the beginning of each season and pre-season training, coaches shall notify parents, guardians, and student athletes of the fact that written clearance for full participation will be required from a health care professional when a concussion is suspected or diagnosed.

Information about this guideline is included in this handbook

## **Concussion Protocol**

Any athlete who exhibits any signs, symptoms or behaviors consistent with a concussion such

as, but not limited to, loss of consciousness, headache, nausea or vomiting, dizziness, confusion or balance problems **shall be immediately removed** from the contest and **shall not return** to play until cleared with written authorization by an appropriate health care professional.

In Ohio, an “appropriate health care professional” shall be a physician, as authorized under the Ohio Revised Code Chapter 4731 and includes both doctors of medicine(M.D.) and doctors of osteopathy(D.O.) and an athletic trainer, licensed under the Ohio Revised Code 4755.-O.A.T.A.

**Other signs and symptoms of a concussion may include:**

- Confusion
- Amnesia
- Headache
- Dizziness
- Ringing in the Ears
- Nausea or Vomiting
- Slurred Speech
- Memory or Concentration Problems
- Sensitivity to Light and/or Noise
- Sleep Disturbance
- Irritability
- Loss of Balance/Unsteady Walking

**When to See A Doctor- Concussions**

Seek medical advice/attention if you have any of the following signs and/or symptoms:

- Prolonged headache that gets worse over time
- Prolonged memory loss
- Loss of Smell or Taste
- Repeated Vomiting
- Seizure (convulsion)
- Vision or Eye Disturbances, including pupils of unequal sizes
- Increased confusion
- Changes in behavior, including irritability or emotional changes

**In order to return to play the student-athlete must follow the five step protocol administered by the athletic trainer along with clearance from the Doctor.**

**Transportation**

All transportation to and from away contests is the responsibility of the school system and will be provided by the school system. Athletes are required to travel to and from away contests in

transportation provided by the school system. If a special situation occurs, the athlete must request approval from the athletic director 24-hours prior to the contest. Forms are in the athletic office and must be signed by the athlete, athlete's parent/guardian, and coach prior to requesting the athletic director's approval. In these cases the athlete will be released only to their own parent/guardian.

The choice of a mode of transportation to and from practices ultimately lies with the athlete and their parents/guardians. We strongly suggest that athletes do not ride with other athletes (or any other person). The driver accepts the responsibility and liability of the transportation.

## **Code of Conduct**

Participation in an extra- curricular activity at Alliance High School is a privilege, not a right. Students participating in extra-curricular activities represent the entire Alliance High School student population in local, state, regional, and national events. This representation of the school district carries with it the additional responsibility of maintaining the highest personal and ethical conduct. In light of this, the following Code of Conduct pertaining to extra-curricular participants will be presented to the Board of Education of the Alliance City Schools for approval. Extra-curricular participants include but are not limited to, athletics, cheerleading, and athletic support groups.

1. In regard to personal conduct, gross violations of sportsmanship, attacks on officials, and or other acts of misbehavior in contest situations, the Alliance City School Administration and/or the OHSAA shall have jurisdiction to determine penalties.
2. Any athlete proven to have committed theft of school purchased equipment shall be prosecuted, and/or required to make restitution of missing items. Suspension from the team will be immediate and the Athletic Director will determine the length of the suspension. Dismissal from the team will be considered as well as exclusion from participation on any future athletic team.
3. Any disciplinary problems in school, or school related functions, whereby the athlete is suspended from school classes will result in denial from practice and competition for the same number of days.
4. Any athlete who is charged with a crime will have their case reviewed by the Principal and Athletic Director. They will then determine the consequences on a case-by-case basis.
5. Each coach will establish rules for their team which address absences from practice, disrespect, etc... Any punishment for violations of team policy will be clearly stated. A copy of every team's policies/rules is on file in the athletic office.
6. Any athlete in violation of the athletic policy, but not in their season, punishment will follow the athlete to their next season.

## **HAZING**

### **STUDENT HAZING**

Policy 5516 applies to all athletic teams (whether interscholastic, intramural, or club teams); groups affiliated with an academic class such as band; Honor societies; performing arts groups; spirit groups (e.g., cheer, dance, drill, etc.); and any other student extracurricular activities, including any outside organizations that are affiliated with or that sponsor the extracurricular organization.

In addition to the definition of hazing set forth in Policy 5516 (which comes directly from R.C. 2903.31), the District considers the following conduct also to constitute hazing:

For the purpose of initiating, admitting, or affiliating a student into or with a team or extracurricular activity, or for the purpose of continuing or enhancing the student's membership or status on a team or in an extracurricular activity, intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly causing, coercing, or forcing a student to do any of the following, regardless of whether such conduct occurs on or off school property:

- A. violate Federal or State criminal law;
- B. consume any food, liquid, alcoholic liquid, drug, or other substance that subjects the student to a risk of emotional or physical harm;
- C. endure brutality of a physical nature, including whipping, beating, branding, calisthenics, or exposure to the elements;
- D. endure brutality of a mental nature, including actively adversely affecting the mental health or dignity of the individual, sleep deprivation, exclusion from social contact, or conduct that could result in extreme embarrassment;
- E. endure brutality of a sexual nature; or
- F. endure any other activity that creates a reasonable likelihood of bodily injury to the student.

It is not a defense to a charge of hazing that the student consented to the conduct in question.

Policy 5516 also applies to behavior conducted online, via email, or through electronic media (e.g., texts, instant messages, social media) that relates to school activities and is not protected by freedom of expression. The District does not regularly search for online information but may act if such information is brought to the administration's attention.

### Identifying Acts of Hazing



The following are key indicators that an individual is or has been subjected to hazing:

- A. the activity is degrading and/or demeaning
- B. there is risk of injury or a question of safety
- C. alcohol or drugs are present
- D. cryptic language is used to describe an event, activity, or interaction
- E. active members of the team or extracurricular activity are unwilling to participate in the same activity with new members
- F. active and new members are unwilling to discuss the activity with advisors, coaches, family members, or other school staff
- G. members of the team or extracurricular activity justify their actions as “traditional” in an attempt to convince others that is an acceptable event
- H. changes in behavior such as oversleeping, constant exhaustion, or an inability to focus
- I. a drop in GPA

#### Reporting An Allegation or Incident of Hazing

Student safety is the District’s top priority. As such, the administration takes all reports of misconduct seriously to protect everyone’s health and well-being. The District depends on all community members (staff and students combined) to identify and report behaviors of concern so that the District can provide distressed students and employees with appropriate support services and resources. Any person having knowledge of any activity or conduct that may constitute hazing should contact the Superintendent, Building Principal, or Athletic Director. If an administrator, teacher, classified employee, coach, extracurricular activity advisor, or volunteer associated with an athletic team or extracurricular activity sees any concerning and/or suspicious behaviors, the individual is required to report it to the Superintendent, Building Principal, or Athletic Director.

Students on an athletic team or participating in an extracurricular activity should immediately report any hazing incidents that occur within their team/activity to the Building Principal or Athletic Director, providing a detailed description of the events that have transpired, the

names of any individuals involved, and a description of any actions taken by the coaches/advisors of the team/activity.

Anonymous reports may be submitted online at [ahs.alliancecityschools.org](https://ahs.alliancecityschools.org). Say Something Anonymous Reporting.

Making an intentionally false accusation of hazing is prohibited and subject to corrective or restorative action as enumerated in the Student Code of Conduct.

If a member of the school community is aware of immediate physical danger to a student or others, the person must contact local police or dial 911.

### Investigations of Allegations and Charges

The District is committed to reviewing all reports of hazing. While anonymous reports are accepted, the District's ability to obtain additional information may be compromised and its ability to investigate anonymous reports may be limited.

Upon receiving a report of alleged hazing, the Building Principal or the Athletic Director will investigate the claims. As part of the investigation, the District will:

- A. contact (if possible) the individuals bringing forward the allegations of hazing;
- B. contact the individuals alleged to have perpetrated the hazing;
- C. contact the coach or advisor associated with the team or extracurricular activity involved;
- D. interview all parties, including victims, the accused students, and any witnesses;
- E. request relevant information/evidence from the students involved (e.g., text messages, screenshots, pictures, videos).

During the course of the investigation, students may request to enter information into the record and may recommend specific witnesses to the investigators. Ultimately, the investigator will determine the relevance of the information or the credibility of the witnesses.

Students participating in an investigation process are expected to do so in an active, cooperative, and truthful manner.

While students are required to attend investigation meetings, they will not be compelled to answer questions or provide information. If a student fails to participate in the investigation

process, the District will nevertheless proceed to resolve the matter. No adverse inference will be drawn against a student who does not participate in the investigation process.

Falsifying, distorting, intentionally omitting, or misrepresenting information is a violation of the Student Code of Conduct.

The Building Principal/Athletic Director will determine whether interim/supportive measures are needed to protect the safety and/or well-being of anyone involved in the incident and offer such to affected individuals.

The District may encourage a student to undergo a physical examination, particularly when allegations of physical abuse are part of the hazing investigation. If the results of the physical examination are provided to the District, the report will be protected by applicable Federal and State laws, but the investigator may include a summary of any physical signs of hazing (i.e., bruises, burns, blood alcohol content, drug usage, etc.) in the investigation report.

The investigator will provide a written investigation report to the Superintendent. Upon receipt of the report, the Building Principal/Athletic Director will determine if the claims are substantiated. If they are, the Building Principal and Superintendent (to the extent warranted) will impose disciplinary consequences commensurate with the severity of the wrongdoing in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct. In addition, other educational activities may be required as conditions of the sanction. Further, the Superintendent may take collective action with respect to the team or extracurricular activity that was implicated in the hazing.

Violations of Policy 5516 by employees may result in corrective action or discipline (including termination) in accordance with Board of Education policy and any applicable collective bargaining agreement.

Every effort will be made to complete the investigation in a timely manner.

The District will always notify the appropriate law enforcement agency(ies) when a report of hazing is received and document that the notification was made.

### Retaliation

Retaliation against a person who makes a report or files a charge alleging unlawful student hazing/retaliation or participates as a witness in an investigation involving allegations or charges of student hazing/retaliation is prohibited. Neither the Board nor any other person may intimidate, threaten, coerce or interfere with any individual because the person opposed any act or practice made unlawful by R.C. 2903.31, or because that individual made a report, charge, testified, assisted or participated or refused to participate in any manner in an investigation, proceeding, or hearing related to R.C. 2903.31 and/or Policy 5516, or because

that individual exercised, enjoyed, aided or encouraged any other person in the exercise or enjoyment of any right granted or protected by that law and/or Policy 5516.

Retaliation against a person for making a report of student hazing, filing a charge of student hazing, or participating in an investigation or meeting involving allegations or charges of student hazing is a serious violation of Policy 5516 that can result in the imposition of disciplinary sanctions/consequences and/or other appropriate remedies.

Reports or charges of retaliation may be filed according to the procedures set forth above.

The exercise of rights protected under the First Amendment of the United States Constitution does not constitute retaliation prohibited under Policy 5516 or this administrative guidelines.

### **Chemical Abuse Policy**

The Board of Education requires that each student enrolling in one of the district's extra curricular programs agree to sign an enrollment application by which they agree to participate in a random, reasonable suspicion drug-testing program, conducted and paid for by the district. The random selection will be of athletes from the **ENTIRE** pool of athletes for the **ENTIRE** school year.

Students involved in extracurricular activities shall not at any time possess, use, sell, deliver, conceal, consume or be under the influence of any drugs of abuse including alcoholic beverages or any substance that is directly or indirectly represented to be a drug of abuse, including tobacco. Participants shall not possess, use, sell, and offer to sell, deliver, or conceal any instrument or paraphernalia for the use with drugs or abuse.

It should be clear that the Alliance City School Administration maintains a ZERO TOLERANCE on drugs and alcohol for student-athletes. Attendance at parties/establishments where drugs/alcohol is present and is being served and/or consumed by student-athletes, high school age student, or minors will result in the following:

- **Voluntary Admission** occurs when a student and/or parent admits to a violation of the policy prior to a school official being aware of any specific information regarding a violation of this policy. Voluntary admission does not apply when there is a deliberate attempt to circumvent the first offense step following a violation.

Voluntary admission shall result in assignment to professional assessment. Failure to comply with all required recommendations of the assessment shall result in placement on the first offense step.

**Note:** Voluntary Admission may only be used once per school year.

- After any of the following three offenses, athletes must complete: a professional drug/alcohol assessment and any recommended treatment program, at the cost of the parent. Failure to complete the assessment and recommended treatment and provide supporting documentation will result in denial of participation in the AHS sports program.
- **First Offense** will result in 10% denial of participation for the current season, or next season of participation. Athletes may practice.
- **Second Offense** will result in 20% denial of participation for the current season, or next season of participation. Athletes may practice.
- **Third Offense** will result in denial of participation for one calendar year. The calendar year will begin on the date of termination.

### **Eligibility Policy**

All athletes shall meet all requirements set forth by Alliance City Schools and the OHSAA.

#### **High School**

- In order to be eligible for athletics, all athletes must pass 5 one-credit courses or the equivalent in the preceding grading period.
- In addition to the eligibility requirements established by the Ohio High School Athletic Association, to be eligible for any interscholastic extracurricular activity, a student must have maintained at least a 1.5 grade-point average and may have received a failing grade in a course for the grading period previous to the one in which the student wishes to participate.
- Students educated at home or enrolled in a nonpublic school who are permitted to participate on a District interscholastic team must fulfill the same academic, nonacademic, and financial requirements as any other participant. See Policy 9270.
- An exception may be made by the principal if the student has been participating in an intervention program and has shown satisfactory progress toward achieving the minimum grade-point average.
- If a student who becomes ineligible under these standards improves their grade point average during the current grading period to meet the eligibility standard, the student may be reinstated at the beginning of the next grading period.
- Athletes may compete in more than one sport during the same season with permission from the Athletic Director. (Agreed upon by both Head Coaches)

#### **Middle School**

- All athletes entering the 7<sup>th</sup> grade are automatically eligible for competition.
- In order to be eligible for athletics, all athletes must be passing 4 classes from the

preceding grading period.

- In addition to the eligibility requirements established by the Ohio High School Athletic Association, to be eligible for any interscholastic extracurricular activity, a student must have maintained at least a 1.5 grade-point average and may have received a failing grade in a course for the grading period previous to the one in which the student wishes to participate.
- All athletes entering the 9th grade must have passed 4 classes and maintained a 1.5 grade-point average and may have received a failing grade in a course for their final grading period at the Middle School

### **Changing Sports**

- A student may not transfer from one sport to another after the first regularly scheduled game has been played, unless both coaches agree in writing that a change may be made.
- If a student is dismissed from an interscholastic team because of disciplinary reasons or quits after the first regularly scheduled game, he or she may not report to another interscholastic team, fitness or pre-season conditioning of another sport until after completion of the ***regular season*** in the first sport.

### **Awards**

Although we all understand the importance of team accomplishment, we also realize that individual awards are a special item. We at Alliance provide a Sports Award Night at the end of each season. It is required that athletes and coaches attend, except in cases of a special circumstances. The Athletic Director must be notified 24 hours in advance. Athletes must meet the following criteria in order to be eligible for any post-season awards:

1. **The student-athlete must finish the season in good standing.** The last event of the season is attending the Sports Award Night.
2. The student must have remained eligible for the entire season.
3. Each Head Coach determines letter requirements.
4. In case of an injury, a coach may award an athlete if that student could not physically complete the season.
5. End of the school year awards will be voted on by all of the Head Varsity Coaches.

*"Athletics are a privilege...not a right"*

**RETURN THIS SIGNED FORM TO THE ATHLETIC DIRECTOR or ATHLETIC OFFICE**

*I have attended the mandatory OHSAA pre-season meeting and have received the Alliance City Schools Student-Athlete handbook. This handbook outlines all of our athletic policies and guidelines.*

Parent/Guardian Name \_\_\_\_\_  
*Please Print*

Name of Athlete(s) \_\_\_\_\_  
*Please Print*

Parent or Guardian  
Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date Signed \_\_\_\_\_