

Lockport City School District

2023-2024



Athletic Handbook

Code of Conduct for Athletes, Parents, and Spectators

Dr. Mathis Calvin, III

Superintendent of Schools

Michael Sobieraski

Director of Athletics and Physical Education

Philosophy

The student athlete represents the best of its school and its community and therefore is held to a high standard. Student athletes are our school's ambassadors to our community and to the schools with whom we compete. They are often leaders in school and role models to children not yet old enough to play sports.

It is the duty of all those concerned with high school athletics to emphasize the proper ideals of sportsmanship, ethical conduct and fair play under all circumstances. The values to be derived from playing fairly should be stressed. Courtesy should be shown toward opponents, officials, coaches, athletes, supervisors, spectators, administrators, etc. Efforts must be made to achieve a thorough understanding and acceptance of the rules of the game and the standards of eligibility and to respect the integrity and the judgment of the sport officials. It is important for all to recognize that the purpose of athletics is to promote the physical, mental, moral, social, and emotional well-being of the individual players.

Participation in interscholastic athletics is a privilege, not a right. Students wishing to take advantage of the opportunities presented to them by the Lockport School District must show a commitment to the athletic program by regular attendance at practices and contests, as well as conformity to the rules established by the district and/or coach. Failure to comply with the rules of conduct will result in appropriate disciplinary action and/or dismissal from the team. This handbook and athletic code of conduct shall be implemented and administered in a manner that is consistent with the Lockport City School District Code of Conduct.

Eligibility

All student athletes must meet the behavioral requirements as established in the student hand book.

1. **Academic Eligibility** - Per New York State rules, a student must be a bonafide pupil of the school which he/she represents. To participate in interscholastic athletic competition at the high school level in the Niagara Frontier League (NFL), a student must have passed, or be passing at the league recognized first tryout date of the season, four (4) credit bearing classes and physical education as defined in 207.0 - Subsection K of General NFL By-Laws.

A. Fall athletic competition eligibility will be based on **final grades from the prior school year through the close of summer school classes in August.**

B. Winter athletic competition eligibility will be based upon student grades as reported on their report card from the **first (10-week) marking period.**

C. Spring athletic competition eligibility will be based upon student grades as reported on their report card from the **second (20-week) marking period.**

- ❖ If a student-athlete is deemed academically ineligible based upon the above standards, he/she is not permitted to participate in any athletic competitions. As per the NFL Constitution and By-Laws, "Once a sports season begins (recognized league start date) each school district has the right to review student eligibility at any time for the purpose of reinstating or removing a student-athlete from participating in approved interscholastic athletic competition. These reviews may take the form of 5 or 10 week checks throughout a season." Therefore, an ineligible student-athlete may be reinstated for competition during the season if the eligibility standards are met at any of the 5-week reporting dates throughout the season.
- ❖ A review of all student-athletes' grades will take place every 5 weeks. Student-athletes are required to maintain their academic eligibility by passing four (4) classes, plus Physical Education at each review point. If a student-athlete is below the minimum standard at the review point, he/she will be placed on academic probation. Student-athletes on probation will be given a period of two school weeks (extended school breaks do not count) to improve their grades to a point where they meet or exceed the minimum requirements for eligibility. During this two-week period, the student-athlete will still be permitted to **practice and compete** as an eligible member of the team. However, student-athletes on probation will be required to:
 - Attend **all** after school A.I.S. sessions Monday through Thursday in the Library to complete required assignments for classes and receive assistance where needed. Attendance is mandatory on all days, and will be tracked by the Athletic Department. If a student misses an A.I.S. session

their probation will be lifted and they will be ineligible for competition until they're passing 4 classes plus P.E.

- Be required to complete a [weekly academic progress report](#) to be filled out by all teachers on the last day of each school week. Student-Athletes will be required to share the link with all of their teachers via email by Thursday and ask that teachers fill them out on Friday of each week. (A [paper report](#) can be provided if necessary).
- Meet with Mr. Scapelliti during the school day when requested to discuss the academic progress report, as well as strategies for success.
- Take home an Academic Probation Agreement and return the next day with signatures from both the parent/guardian and student-athlete.
- ❖ If any of the above listed requirements are not met during the two-week probationary period, the student-athlete will immediately be deemed ineligible to participate in athletic competitions.
- ❖ Furthermore, after the two-week probationary period ends, if a student-athlete is still not meeting the minimum standards for eligibility (passing 4 classes, plus PE), their competitive status will be revoked, and cannot be reinstated until they are passing 4 classes plus P.E.

2. Mandatory Health Screening - All athletic candidates must have a completed sports physical by University of Buffalo Sports Medicine prior to participation. Sport physicals are given each school year. The sport physical is good for one school year and must be repeated the following year. No personal physician physicals are accepted.

3. A student shall be eligible for interscholastic competition in grades 9, 10, 11, 12 until his/her nineteenth birthday. If the age of nineteen is reached on or after July 1, the student may continue to participate during that school year in all sports.

4. A student in grade 7 or 8 who is selected to participate at the varsity, junior varsity, or freshman level must pass Athletic Placement Process "APP" before being able to compete.

Tryouts and Selection of Teams

The Lockport City School District believes in keeping as many students on our teams as possible. Size of team is determined by safety factors such as how many athletes a coach can adequately supervise. Additionally, team numbers are determined by the number of athletes who can positively contribute in some way. Unfortunately, some teams have to make "selections" or "cuts". This is one of the most difficult decisions a coach must make. When athletes are evaluated during a tryout period, coaches are asked to use as many "objective factors" as possible (sport specific skills, timing events, etc.) Some subjective factors come into play like effort, attitude and an athlete's ability to contribute to team success.

Club Teams

It is recognized that many times an athlete may have numerous commitments. Some of these may include participation on outside club teams. It is important that the athletes and their parents understand that as a member of an interscholastic team, their primary commitment is to their school team. The Athletic Department recognizes that many times commitment to a club team also comes along with a significant financial commitment on the part of each player.

Travel

1. Student athletes are required to travel to and from contests on the team bus under the supervision of a coaching staff member.
2. Proper conduct is expected at all times while riding on school transportation.
3. If a parent wishes to take a student home from an athletic contest, permission must be granted in advance and a written form signed by the parent must be given to the coach. These situations should be rare and emergency type situations.

Academics

Lockport athletes are role models in their school and community. As an athlete, one must plan his/her schedule to give sufficient time and energy to studies to ensure acceptable grades. In addition to maintaining good scholarship, an athlete should give respectable attention to classroom activities and show respect for other students and faculty members at all times. A student athlete should have a good attendance record, should never cut class, or school. All athletes must be passing four subjects and physical education in order to participate in athletics. These procedures are adopted with the hope that continued eligibility for participation will be a strong incentive for these students to improve their academic performance.

I have read and understand all materials with regard to Academics. I am aware of the expectations set forth therein. I agree to support the Athletic Department in its enforcement of these expectations and understand the consequences of my (son/daughter's) failure to do so.

Student Signature _____

Parent Signature _____

Attendance

Attendance is the single most important indicator of an athlete's commitment to a team. Student athletes are expected to make all practices and contests including those scheduled on Saturdays and days when school is not in session. We ask parents to schedule vacations so as not to conflict with an athlete's commitment to a team.

1. Student athletes will provide coaches with *prior* notification of projected absences when possible. Excused absences will be permitted in cases such as medical reasons, religious observance, or personal/family extenuating circumstances approved by the coach.
2. If student athletes do not participate in their regularly scheduled physical education classes, they may not participate in any practice or contest that day.
3. If student athletes are absent from school, they will be ineligible to practice or compete in any contest that day. Extenuating circumstances will be given special consideration by the Athletic Director. Athletes must be present in school for at least 5 periods to be eligible to practice or compete. If a student is absent for 5 periods or more in a school day, they are considered absent for the day and are thus ineligible to practice/compete on that day. If an athlete is absent from school on a Friday, he/she is not eligible to return to practice or play until they return to school on Monday.

I have read and understand all materials with regard to Attendance. I am aware of the expectations set forth therein. I agree to support the Athletic Department in its enforcement of these expectations and understand the consequences of my (son/daughter's) failure to do so.

Student Signature _____

Parent Signature _____

Alcohol, Tobacco and Other Drugs

The avoidance of alcohol, tobacco (including e-cigarettes) and other drugs is a realistic goal that all student athletes must strive to uphold and which parents, teachers, and administrators and the community-at-large should endorse and support. A student athlete's inappropriate behavior, whether in or out of school as it pertains to the possession or use of alcohol, tobacco (including e-cigarettes), or illegal drugs or substances (as defined or described in the District Code of Conduct, and also including any prescription drugs that are not duly prescribed for the student's use) will not be tolerated. If a student athlete is found to have participated in a behavior connected with the illegal or prohibited possession or use of alcohol, tobacco (including e-cigarettes), or other substances, then the student will be subject to discipline under this athletic code of conduct. In addition to any disciplinary action which might be taken for in-school infractions, such as detention, ISS, OSS, etc., the student athlete may be suspended from a sport contest and may lose the privilege to participate in interscholastic sports. These sanctions will be determined by the coach and the administration. Any student (whether or not he or she currently participates in interscholastic athletics) who is found to have engaged in any of the conduct that is referred to in this paragraph, will be subject to discipline under this athletic code of conduct. Disciplinary action may include but not be limited to suspension from current or future participation in interscholastic athletics. While

the role of the school does not extend to the regulation of private activities of the athlete's families, we encourage them to serve as positive role models for their children. Parents and the school must not condone a student athlete's use of alcohol, tobacco (including e-cigarettes) or other drugs.

Training rules and team rules apply to all student-athletes at all times during his/her season. Training rules are in effect from the first day of practice to the first day of classes following the last contest the athlete participates in during that season.

A first offense by an athlete who participates in an illegal or violent acts as referred to in the District and Athletic Code of Conduct including who is found in possession of and/or using alcohol, tobacco (smoke or smokeless), or any other substance (as is listed above) during his/her season will result in the suspension of 25% of the season. A second offense by a student -athlete, previously suspended from a sport, will result in immediate suspension for the remainder of that season. A third offense by a student-athlete will result in removal from all sports for the remainder of the school year. Violations are cumulative.

I have read and understand all materials with regard to Alcohol, Tobacco & Other Drugs. I am aware of the expectations set forth therein. I agree to support the Athletic Department in its enforcement of these expectations and understand the consequences of my (son/daughter's) failure to do so.

Student Signature _____

Parent Signature _____

Harassment (Including But Not Limited To Sexual Harassment)

Harassment (including but not limited to sexual harassment) will not be tolerated! Sexual harassment consists of unwelcome verbal, electronic or physical interaction between two or more people. Sexual harassment can happen between people of the same gender or people of different genders. Any student (whether or not he or she currently participates in interscholastic athletics) who is found to have engaged in any of the conduct that is referred to in this paragraph, will be subject to discipline under this athletic code of conduct. Disciplinary action may include but not be limited to suspension from current or future participation in interscholastic athletics. A Title IX review will be initiated in all situations where appropriate. An athlete will be suspended indefinitely from all team activities until such review is complete.

Other Conduct

Any student (whether or not he or she currently participated in interscholastic athletics) who engages in any on-campus or off-campus conduct that interferes with, disrupts, or negatively impacts the school environment or educative process, or that can reasonably be expected to interfere with, disrupt, or negatively impact the school environment or educative process, will be subject to discipline under this athletic code of conduct. Disciplinary action may include but not be limited to suspension from current or future participation in interscholastic athletics.

Hazing-Initiation Ceremony

Lockport Athletic coaches will not permit their athletes to stage any type of “initiation” or “hazing” at any time. We respect that there are individual differences in how each of our teammates may react to a designated task, activity, or request. Whereas one teammate may find a team activity entertaining, another teammate may find the same activity humiliating. At no time should a teammate be subjected to a behavior, task, or activity that is physically, psychologically, or emotionally abusive. At no time may an athlete gossip about, disparage, belittle, ridicule, or bully any other person for any reason whatsoever. Causing social or emotional distress to another individual will jeopardize the athlete’s continued participation on the team. Unauthorized, inappropriate use of photo or video of Lockport athletes or teams is prohibited and will result in indiscipline, suspension or removal from the team. It is the right of each teammate to communicate his or her feelings at any point where he or she feels personally devalued or dehumanized. Team members are expected and required to notify a coach or other school official if any such behavior is rumored or observed. The goal of the team is that each member of the team be treated with dignity and respect. Any team member who initiates a hazing incident will be disciplined. The extent of the consequences for the hazing behavior will be determined by the severity of the incident as determined by the coach, administration and district code of conduct. The consequences for the initiation of and/or participation in hazing behaviors will subject the individual(s) to appropriate disciplinary action which may include loss of participation, suspension, exclusion, expulsion in all extracurricular activities, and/or referral to law enforcement authorities.

Uniforms

Only school-issued uniforms may be worn during athletic contests. Athletes cannot compete if they fail to dress appropriately. The expectation is that all team members will remain in their full uniform until the completion of an athletic contest.

Awards/Letters

1. Awards and/or letters will be issued only to those student athletes who complete their season (including post season play-offs) in good standing. Student athletes who are dropped from the team and those who resign before the last contest are not eligible for awards.
2. Student athletes who fail to return their practice/game uniforms and/or any piece of equipment are ineligible for awards and cannot participate in any other sport until the uniform obligation is met.

Behaviors

Foul language and insulting remarks are not permissible. Athletes are expected to obey a coach's directions. Disobedience, unwarranted comments and other subversive behavior are unacceptable since it may interfere with the coach's ability to conduct a practice/contest and may distract from the time a coach should be devoting to the team. Athletes are expected to communicate with coaches before or after practice to avoid detracting from team practices/contests and team goals. Athletes are also expected to follow the rules and protocol of their sport and not intentionally violate the rules of the sport that they are playing during practice or competitions. The coach, building administrator or athletic director will impose all penalties for violations. Penalties will be consistent throughout the athletic program and dependent upon the severity of the violation and behavioral history of the violator.

General Sportsmanship Expectations for All

It is important for all athletes to remember that participation is a privilege that is not to be abused by unsportsmanlike conduct. The Lockport athlete is to demonstrate self-control and respect for teammates, opponents, other athletes, coaches, officials and spectators at all times. Lockport athletes and spectators are expected to follow the SPORTSMANSHIP code:

1. Follow the proper ideals of sportsmanship, ethical conduct and fair play.
2. Make no remarks or gestures at any time toward any other person which would be considered belittling, disparaging, bullying or in any way judgmental or critical of that person.
3. Stress values derived from playing the game fairly.
4. Show cordiality and courtesy to visiting teams, coaches, supervisors and officials.
5. Establish positive relations with visiting teams, coaches, supervisors and hosts.
6. Respect the integrity and judgment of game officials.
7. Follow the Section VI, NYSPHSAA and the school rules of eligibility.
8. Encourage leadership, initiative and good judgment in teammates.
9. Recognize the purpose of educationally based athletics is to promote the physical, moral, social and emotional wellbeing of players.
10. **BE LOUD, BE PROUD, BE POSITIVE!**

Spectator Behavior Expectations

Spectators are expected to:

1. Conform to accepted standards of good sportsmanship and behavior.
2. Respect officials, coaches, and players and refrain from disrespectful remarks.
3. Obey the regulations of the site authorities, whether home or away.

Failure to abide by the above items and/or behavior deemed inappropriate by district administration could result in a suspension.

Parent/Coach Relationship

Both parenting and coaching are extremely difficult vocations. By establishing an understanding of each role, we are better able to accept the actions of the other and provide greater benefits to athletes. As parents, when your children become involved in our program, you have the right to understand what expectations are placed on your child. This begins with clear communication from the coach and your child's program.

Communication to Expect from Coaches to Parents

1. Philosophy of the coach.
2. Expectations the coach has for all players on the squad.
3. Locations and times of practices.
4. Team requirements, team rules, special equipment, off-season recommendations for improvement of skills.

Communication to Expect from Parents to Coaches

1. Concerns expressed directly to the coach; in private, away from team members.
2. Notification of any schedule conflicts well in advance.
3. Specific concern in regard to a coach's philosophy.

Appropriate Concerns to Discuss with Coaches

1. The treatment of your child, either mentally or physically.
2. Ways to help your child improve.
3. Concerns about your child's behavior.

It is very difficult to accept your child not playing as much as you hoped. Coaches are professionals....they make judgments based on what they believe to be the best for all student-athletes involved. As you have seen from the list above, certain topics can and should be discussed with your child's coach. Other topics, such as those described in the next segment, must be left to the discretion of the coach.

Issues Not Appropriate To Discuss With Coaches

1. Playing time
2. Team strategy
3. Play calling
4. Other student-athletes

Procedures for Discussing a Concern with a Coach

1. Contact the coach to set up a meeting to discuss your concerns. Contact should be initiated via school email or school phone extension.
2. Please do not attempt to confront a coach before or after a practice or contest. These can be emotional times and may not benefit either party to attempt to resolve concerns at these times.
3. If the meeting with the coach did not provide a satisfactory resolution, contact the Athletic Office to set up an appointment with the Director of Athletics.

Coaches are making decisions that are in the best interest of all members of the team or program. Please be supportive of their decisions.

Positive Parenting

1. Be a positive role model.
2. Be a "team" fan not a "my kid" fan.
3. Show respect for the opposing players, coaches, spectators, and support groups.
4. Be respectful of all officials' decisions.
5. Gain an understanding and appreciation for the rules of the sport.
6. Avoid instructing one's child/teammates during a game, because it conflicts with the coach's plans and strategies.
7. Help your child learn that success is experience in the development of his/her skills, and that he/she can feel positive about their skill development during the season, regardless of the team's record.
8. Support the alcohol, tobacco, and other drug-free policies of the school by refraining from the use of any such substances before and during athletic contests. Support your child and hold him/her accountable for his/her commitment to non-use of substances.
9. Take time to talk with coaches in an appropriate manner, including proper time and place, if there is a concern. Respect the coach by following the designated chain of command.

LOCKPORT CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

ATHLETICS

Please return this page signed by all parties to your coach.

I have received and read all of the materials contained in the Lockport School District Athletic Handbook for Parents and Athletes. I am aware of the expectations set forth in the handbook, including behavior/expectations inside and outside of school including bullying, harassment, hazing, alcohol, tobacco and other substance use. I am aware that participating in any sports can be a dangerous activity involving MANY RISKS OF INJURY. I understand that these risks may include death, neck and spinal injuries, complete or partial paralysis, brain damage, injury to the muscular-skeletal system, as well as injury to other parts of the body.

CONCUSSIONS- A concussion is a common but serious traumatic brain injury that alters the way the brain functions. Effects are usually temporary but can sometimes result in prolonged difficulties with headache, memory, concentration, balance and other symptoms. ***NYS Law requires return to play clearance following a concussion to be provided by the school's appointed official.*** Lockport City School District Concussion Management and important additional information regarding concussion symptoms and safety can be found under the Athletics' section of the schools website: www.lockportschools.net

I agree to support the Athletic Department in its enforcement of these expectations of conduct and understand the consequences of my son/daughter's failure to do so.

Student Name (Print): _____

Athletic Team: _____

Student Signature: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Date: _____

Lion Pride!

BE LOUD, BE PROUD, BE POSITIVE, BE LION STRONG!