

Evart Public Schools
Interscholastic Athletic and Eligibility Code

I. View of Athletics

A. Interscholastic athletics are a part of the public school program that promotes the total development of our youth. The goal of the athletic program at Evart Public Schools is to build character in youth by teaching the meaning of commitment, loyalty, and sacrifice by developing healthy attitudes about winning and losing, and by fostering positive interpersonal relationships among competitors. Participation as a desirable learning experience should contribute to each individual's health and happiness, sense of self-esteem and spirit of cooperation. Emphasis will be placed on the foundation that athletics can best serve as a primary teaching tool for the youth of today by preparing them to become leaders of tomorrow. It is important to realize that participation in all extracurricular activities is a privilege.

B. Athletic Code Conditions

- 1) A student should realize that the Athletic Code is applicable throughout the 12 month year, not just the school year, beginning with their 1st day as a 6th grade student and continuing through the last contest of their senior year.
- 2) The Athletic Code is not limited to the time period in which a student athlete participates in that sport.
- 3) The Athletic Code is not limited to student behavior at school sponsored activities or on school property.
- 4) A student who violates the Athletic Code, at any time, will be subject to disciplinary action.
- 5) Depending on the offense, the administration reserves the right to assign a more severe penalty than is outlined in this code.
- 6) Each athlete will be required to turn in a completed and signed Parent's or Guardian's Permission and Waiver of Liability and Authorization for Emergency Medical Care form before they can practice or play.

II. Attendance and Academic Requirements

- A. A student must be in attendance the entire day of an event of participate in that event.
- B. A student must be in attendance the entire day to practice that day.
- C. ***In regards to events, a student may prearrange for appointments for the day of an event*** with the approval of the school Principal or Athletic Director. Extenuating circumstances will be considered at the discretion of the Principal or Athletic Director.
- D. Seniors, if not on a senior trip, will be required to attend practices and participate in all scheduled events.

III. Academic Eligibility

- 1) In order to be eligible for interscholastic competition, the student-athlete must maintain a passing grade in all classes (**this includes dual enrolled, college, career center and math-science center classes**). Students are encouraged to strive to exceed this minimum standard.
 - 2) Each student-athlete must be evaluated weekly (**where available**) by Friday afternoon.
 - 3) Eligibility is determined by a cumulative grade in each class at the end of each week, and not an evaluation of a student's performance during any single week alone.
 - 4) Student-athletes receiving a failing grade on Friday will be ineligible for the next week beginning on Monday and ending on Sunday (for example, a student marked ineligible on Friday, January 1 could not compete from Monday, January 4 through Sunday, January 10). If that student is then marked eligible on Friday, January 8, they could start competing again on Monday, January 11).
- ***NOTE***. A student will receive an academic warning for a C- or below. At this point the student will be required to attend tutorial (or specific content teacher) after school for non prescribed time until grade is above C-. For certain electives, which the tutorial teacher is unable to support student and specific teacher is unavailable, the student will have to develop a plan with that

teacher on how to improve grade. This plan will be shared with the coach. If grade falls to failing (F) they go directly to ineligible for the week as described above.

Any athlete that becomes ineligible may be allowed to practice and travel with the team but will not be allowed to dress or participate in the event.

- 5) Pursuant to MHSAA clarification beginning with the 2010-2011 school year, a student-athlete must meet the below listed requirements, regarding passing classes, to be eligible to participate in athletics. The requirement is that the athlete must pass at least 66% of his/her previous semester/trimester classes to be eligible. Specifically, and depending on the number of classes in the semester/trimester, the MHSAA requirement to be eligible is as follows (the athlete must pass):

- 3 of 4 classes
- 4 of 5 classes
- 4 of 6 classes
- 5 of 7 classes
- 6 of 8 classes

Any student-athlete who does not meet this criteria will be ineligible for 60 school days. A student may become eligible when the school accepts the credit made up through night school, summer school, online or other means that follow the school policy. Any student ineligible may continue practicing with the team, but will not be allowed to participate until eligible.

IV. Definitions

A. Performance: A performance, as mentioned in rules violation, shall be considered as follows:

- 1) Junior Varsity and Varsity Volleyball and Wrestling 1 date
- 2) Middle School and High School Track (boys and girls) 1 meet
- 3) Cross Country 1 meet
- 4) All other activities 1 game or competition
- 5) All fractional games will be rounded down to the next full game for the penalty (for example: 2.25 games round down to 2 games).

B. Acceptable Evidence: *The following are considered as acceptable evidence for triggering further investigation or possible disciplinary action:*

- 1) Reports of code violations in writing and proven and / or witnessed by an adult with 1st hand knowledge. This includes school officials and non school reporters.
- 2) Any law enforcement report or other legal court document is considered official.
- 3) *Incriminating photo's or other evidence whether obtained 1st hand or via social media.*

C. Eligibility Period: Consists of one full week, Monday through Sunday.

D. Athlete: Any student participating in any of the following:

- 1) Junior Varsity and Varsity Football
- 2) Junior Varsity and Varsity Boys and Girls Basketball
- 3) 7th and 8th Grade Boys and Girls Basketball
- 4) Junior Varsity and Varsity Volleyball
- 5) Varsity Track – Boys and Girls
- 6) Varsity Cross Country
- 7) 6th, 7th and 8th Grade Cross Country
- 8) Junior Varsity and Varsity Softball
- 9) 6th, 7th and 8th Grade Boys and Girls Track
- 10) 6th, 7th and 8th Grade **Competitive Cheer**
- 11) Junior Varsity and Varsity Cheer (**both Sideline and Competitive**)
- 12) Junior Varsity and Varsity Baseball
- 13) 7th and 8th Grade Volleyball.
- 14) 7th and 8th Football
- 15) Varsity Wrestling

V. Rules Governing The Conduct of Athletes

- A. A student shall not possess, conceal, distribute, sell or be under the influence of:
 - 1) Tobacco or tobacco products (as outlined in handbook) in any form.
 - 2) Alcohol or alcoholic beverages in any form.
 - 3) Illegal drugs, including but not limited to, those substances defined as “controlled substances” pursuant to federal and/or state statute.
 - 4) Steroids, human growth hormones or other performance enhancing drugs.
 - 5) Substances purported to be illegal, abusive or performance enhancing, i.e. “look-alike” drugs.
 - 6) Possession of drug paraphernalia.
- B. A student shall not be involved in stealing, be in possession of stolen items, or assist in the theft or vandalism of property, including any athletic uniforms, practice uniforms, and/or equipment.
- C. No student shall be involved in the concealment or withholding of information which hinders an investigation.
- D. When an athlete violates sections A, B, or C above, they must serve an athletic suspension according to the following guidelines:

Athletic suspensions are separated into two sections, those being ***Same Season Suspensions*** and ***Varying Season Suspensions***. ***Same Season Suspensions*** are those that occur when an athlete is suspended more than once during the same sports season (e.g. multiple suspensions occurring during the 2002 Football season, or the 2002-2003 Boys Basketball season, etc). ***Varying Season Suspensions*** are those that occur when an athlete is suspended once during a sports season or multiple times during various seasons (e.g. once during the 2002 Football season, and then not again until the 2002-2003 Boys Basketball season or the 2003 Football season, etc).

Same Season Suspensions:

First Offense – Results in suspension of the athlete from participating in 25% of that season’s performances.

Second Offense – Results in the athlete being removed from the team, as well as a 50% suspension from the next sport the athlete participates in.

Varying Season Suspensions:

First Offense – Results in suspension of the athlete from participating in 25% of that season’s performances.

Second Offense – Results in suspension of the athlete from participating in 50% of that season’s performances.

Third Offense – Any time a 3rd offense occurs involving an athlete, whether during the same season or during various seasons, that athlete is suspended from participating in athletics for a minimum of 1 year. Additionally, just prior to the end of the 1 year suspension, the athlete, the parents/guardians and the Athletic Council shall meet to determine if the suspension should be terminated after the 1 year, or if the suspension should be continued, and how long it should be continued.

Common Suspension Stipulations – The following conditions are in effect for all suspensions imposed on an athlete:

- 1) Suspensions include state sponsored events, and athletes may not participate in state sponsored events while on suspension. Once the suspension is complete, the athlete may compete in state sponsored events.
- 2) If a sports season ends prior to the athlete completing his/her suspension, the suspension will carry over to the next sport he/she participates in to the point in that season where the suspension percentage is reached within the two seasons.
- 3) Suspended athletes are expected to practice and travel with the team, but they may not dress in uniform or play.
- 4) If an athlete is not actively competing or the school year ends, the suspension will carry over to the next season that the athlete participates in, even if it were a subsequent school year.
- 5) A suspension is not considered complete unless the athlete completes the season in which the suspension is being served. And if the athlete does not complete the season, the suspension time

served to that point is not counted, and the athlete must complete the entire suspension in his/her next season of participation.

- 6) Athletes with a suspension can have that suspension reduced by half by enrolling in and completing an approved rehabilitation type class relating to the violation, not at district expense. Example : A student is caught smoking and must sit out 25% of the basketball season which is equivalent to 5 games. A student would still have to sit out 2 games and complete a smoking cessation class to become eligible again.
- E. Students who display misconduct, including but not limited to, poor sportsmanship or improper behavior such as fighting, defiance of a coach's decision, abusive behavior with teammates, swearing or profanity, refusal to follow coaching directions, etc., will be disciplined. The penalty will be determined by the Principal, Athletic Director, and Coach involved. The penalty may be handled in practice, a game suspension, with a maximum penalty of dismissal from the team.
- F. Students who are suspended from the regular academic program may not participate in the athletic program during the period of suspension. Once the student-athlete has been suspended, he/she is to be barred from games and practices for the duration of the suspension. Athlete becomes athletically eligible the morning of the next scheduled school day and after a meeting has been held with principal or designee reinstating student in school..

NOTE: Rules governing athletes will also apply to athletic team managers and trainers.

VI. Transportation

- 1) All athletes must travel to and from away contests with the team on school provided transportation where school transportation is provided.
- 2) A parent/guardian is allowed to transport their son/daughter home from an away contest, provided that parent/guardian personally gives a note to the coach, *at the away site*, signifying they will be taking the athlete home (***coaches should note that if the parent gives a note to the coach at the away site permitting their son/daughter to ride home with someone other than themselves, this is permissible***).
- 3) If a parent/guardian wishes for someone other than themselves to transport their son/daughter home from an away contest, that parent/guardian must receive permission from the Athletic Director, ***prior to the school transportation leaving Evert***. The parent/guardian must also see to it that the coach receives a note of this wish.
- 4) Under extenuating circumstances, a parent/guardian may transport their son/daughter to an away contest in the event a scheduled appointment prevents the athlete from riding the school transportation, provided the parent/guardian receives permission from the Athletic Director prior to the school transportation leaving Evert. The ***parent/guardian*** must then notify the coach upon arrival, in person, that their son/daughter is at the away site.
- 5) Violation Penalty: Students will be barred from the next athletic contest. Repeated violations may lead to a maximum penalty of suspension from the athletic team for the remainder of the season.

VII. Participation

- 1) Spring athletes are allowed to dual sport. They must follow dual sport guidelines.
- 2) An athlete who quits one sport may join another in the same athletic season if both coaches recommend the change to the Athletic Director and the Athletic Director agrees.
- 3) An athlete may not switch sports in the same season if 25% of either sport has been completed, unless extenuating circumstances exist, and then only with permission of both coaches and the Athletic Director.
- 4) An athlete must pay a participation fee prior to the first competition of that season. Fees are as follows: \$25 per season, \$50 individual cap per year, \$100 family cap per year. A waiver may be obtained for fees by contacting the superintendent.

VIII. **Equipment and Uniforms**

- 1) It is the responsibility of the athlete to properly care for all equipment and uniforms issued by the Athletic Department. If any issued items are lost, stolen, damaged or destroyed, the athlete will be charged for its replacement cost(s). The athlete will not be able to practice for the next season until complete reimbursement has been made.
- 2) Any person(s) not connected with athletics found in possession of athletic department equipment and uniforms will be considered in possession of stolen property and appropriate action will be taken.
- 3) No athlete shall wear any game equipment or uniform for practice or elsewhere, except when authorized by the coach and Athletic Director.
- 4) Athletes may not begin practice for the next athletic season until they have turned in all school issued equipment and uniforms from the previous athletic season in which they participated.

IX. **Required Parent/Guardian and Athlete Acknowledgement**

Before the start of each season, the Athletic Director will be required to assure that a signed acknowledgement of the Athletic Code is on file. The acknowledgement signifies that the parent/guardian and athlete understand that the athlete must abide by these rules. An athlete may not participate in contests until this acknowledgement has been given to the Athletic Director. In addition, the coach will be required to obtain a signed acknowledgement of his/her rules, expectations, etc. before the athlete may participate in any contests. The coach will turn this into the Athletic Director.

X. **Awards**

- 1) All awards will be given to athletes at an awards ceremony following the sports season.
- 2) All athletes who successfully complete a season will be eligible for the appropriate awards, and will be allowed to attend the awards ceremony.
- 3) Varsity coaches are allowed to present up to 4 awards, the titles of which are their choice (no more than 4 awards may be presented). Selection is to be at the discretion of the coach(s) involved in that sport.
- 4) Senior Awards are to be given to all seniors who have received letters during their junior and senior years in cheerleading and/or sports.
- 5) *Freshmen* are awarded numerals of the year the athlete is to graduate. An athlete will receive only one such award.
- 6) *Sophomores* will receive a Wildcat. An athlete will receive only one such award.
- 7) Only one letter may be awarded to an athlete throughout their athletic career. Once an athlete has received a letter, pins will be awarded to qualifying athletes in place of the letter.
- 8) If a student earns a letter before their junior year, they will earn the numbers and / or wildcat head they have yet to earn.
- 9) Certificates will be awarded to all who have participated and finished a respective sport.
- 10) Scholar Athlete Awards will be awarded to Sophomores, Juniors and Seniors who meet the following criteria: A cumulative grade point average of 3.3 or better and sophomores having successfully competed on 3 teams, juniors on 5 teams and seniors on 7 teams. The awards to be received are a certificate each time an athlete qualifies, and a Scholar-Athlete t-shirt, which an athlete may receive only once per year.

XI. **Due Process Procedure**

- A. The coach of a team may temporarily suspend an athlete for a violation of the Athletic Code of which he/she has personal knowledge. The coach shall then promptly report such suspension and the charges upon which it is based, in writing, to the Athletic Director who shall conduct an investigation as outlined below.

In the event of an allegation of a violation of the Athletic Code being made by someone other than the coach, the charges shall be made to the Athletic Director in writing and signed. The Athletic Director then may, after consultation with the coach, order a temporary suspension of the athlete pending investigation of the charges, if he/she believes there is reasonable grounds to pursue the investigation.

- B.** The Athletic Director shall promptly conduct such an investigation as is necessary, to confirm or refute the charges. The investigation may include consultation with the student under investigation, the parents/guardians, the charging party, any witnesses, and/or members of the athletic department staff involved.
- C.** If a violation is found to exist, the Athletic Director shall consult with the coach to determine the appropriate penalty within the limits defined in this Athletic Code.
- D.** The student and/or parents/guardians will be given written notice by the Athletic Director of the violation, the evidence in support of the finding, and the penalty involved.
- E.** The student and/or parents/guardians may request a review as follows:
 - 1) Upon notification of penalty or suspension of the student-athlete and parents/guardians by phone and/or letter, they will be given 48 hours (not including weekends or holidays) to notify the Athletic Director in writing of their decision to appeal the ruling involving the student-athlete. The student and/or parents/guardians shall be afforded an opportunity to present their position on the violation itself, and to present any evidence in extenuation or mitigation of the penalty. Upon conclusion of the hearing, the Athletic Director may then affirm, modify, or vacate the violation and/or the penalty in whole or in part within 48 hours (not including weekends and holidays).
 - 2) Upon rendering the decision by the Athletic Director, an appeal may be made to the Athletic Council (which consists of the Athletic Director, school principal, all head coaches and the athlete's coach) within 48 hours (not including weekends and holidays) in writing to Principal. Upon notification of appeal in writing to the Principal, a hearing will be held involving the Athletic Council, and the athlete and parents/guardians. The Athletic Council shall conduct a hearing within 48 hours (not including weekends and holidays) of appeal notification, if at all possible. The student and/or parents/guardians shall be afforded an opportunity to present their position on the violation itself and to present any evidence in extenuation or mitigation of the penalty. The coach of the sport involved will also be afforded an opportunity to present his/her position. Upon conclusion of the hearing, the Athletic Council shall recommend that the violation and/or penalty be affirmed, modified, or vacated in whole or in part. The Principal shall enforce the recommendation. At the conclusion of the hearing, the suspension, penalty, etc. will be in effect. If an evening meeting is held, the penalty may be enforced the following day. A majority vote of the Athletic Council shall determine the action that is taken.
- F.** The student and/or parents/guardians shall have the right of appeal of the Athletic Council's decision to the Superintendent of Schools and the Board of Education.
- G.** The M.H.S.A.A. handbook is available for review from the high school Principal or the Athletic Director, if anyone desires.

**TEN BASIC BELIEFS FOR INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETICS IN MICHIGAN
AS ENDORSED BY THE MICHIGAN HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION**

- 1) Interscholastic athletics were begun outside the school day and curriculum and remain there as voluntary, extracurricular programs in which qualifying students earn the privilege of participation.
- 2) Interscholastic athletics are not courses offered by schools but are tools used by schools to reach and motivate students and to rally support within the community for schools' academic and activity programs.
- 3) In order to justify school sponsorship, interscholastic athletics must be compatible with the academic mission of schools, giving priority deference to the academic schedule and requiring proper decorum at athletic events.
- 4) Interscholastic athletics are secondary to the academic program of schools and are partners with schools' non-athletic activities in providing students opportunities to develop loyalty and school spirit, to practice teamwork, hard work, discipline, sacrifice, leadership and sportsmanship and to gain lifetime appreciation for the arts, sports and healthy lifestyle.
- 5) There is equal potential to achieve these objectives in every sport and on the subvarsity as well as varsity level.
- 6) A proper philosophy of interscholastic athletics emphasizes participation by many, not for few, and academic scholarship in school, not athletic scholarships to college.
- 7) To promote competitive equity and a program that is educational in both its means and its ends, the policies and procedures of interscholastic athletics must be determined by school representatives, not by courts, legislators or commercial interests.
- 8) Schools, through their elected boards or education and their appointed administrators, are solely responsible, legally and practically, for governing and conducting interscholastic athletics at the local and league levels.
- 9) Any statewide organization which schools join to assist their administration of interscholastic athletics must be independent of outside interests and guided exclusively by the direct input of its member schools.
- 10) Interstate competition in interscholastic athletics is unnecessary in most situations; regional and national events are harmful to the purposes of interscholastic athletics in Michigan.