

ATHLETIC HANDBOOK 2023-2024

National Trail Local Schools

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NATIONAL TRAIL LOCAL SCHOOLS ATHLETIC HANDBOOK

I. INTRODUCTION

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I lead to model and inspire a resilience in those I lead with responsibility, integrity and respect.

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Definition of Success:

The National Trail Athletics Department defines success as teams that:

- Develop lifelong relationships
- Create lifelong memories
- Teach, model and learn lifelong lessons

If winning becomes our ultimate goal (our purpose), what's our takeaway after a loss?

II. PHILOSOPHY

To be a member of an athletic squad can be one of the most rewarding experiences a student can have. The great feeling of honor, pride, and personal satisfaction that comes with being a member of a team has no equal anywhere; just anyone can't be in athletics. "It takes something extra." It requires great personal sacrifice, hard work, burning desire, physical and mental courage, and devotion to the common cause.

As a member of a team the athlete must be aware of the important role he/she has in representing the school and community. One un-sportsman like act can neutralize several favorable accomplishments. Team members are recognized outside the school situation. For this reason, students must be willing to accept this unique role as ambassadors of the school. If athletes are truly to accept this role, they will reflect this in their conduct and training all year.

The coaches and school administration in the National Trail Local School District believe certain standards of behavior, scholarship, and citizenship are important to a sound athletic program, and expectations, sometimes beyond those required of non-athletes, may be imposed upon those who present themselves as athletes.

We believe the following objectives show the importance of the established training policies:

1. To help encourage the athlete to recognize the responsibilities to the team, coaches, fellow athletes, and the school.
2. To help encourage the athlete to realize that winning is a team effort and a team concern.
3. To help encourage the athlete to recognize success comes only through self-sacrifice and hard work.
4. To help encourage the athlete to be aware of the value of training rules. A sound mind and body are needed for maximum performance.

For these reasons, the following regulations will be in effect for all athletes upon enrollment at National Trail Local Schools.

III. ATTENDANCE

To participate in an athletic event, athletes must be in attendance by the end of the first block/period or miss any other part of the school day must present a Doctor's note in order to participate in extracurricular events for that school day. If a student signs in after first block, the student must present a physician's note in order to be eligible to participate (As defined by the NT Student Handbook). In cases of hardship or extreme unusual circumstances, the principal or athletic director may waive the attendance requirements. The parent must communicate with the school on the day of the absence or missed time. In doing so, the principal or athletic director shall keep a written record stating the reason and justification of the waiving.

Attendance Probation: A student will be placed on attendance probation when they have 3 unexcused tardies to school per semester. After a student's third (3) unexcused tardy to school a student will miss a game for each additional unexcused tardy to school per semester.

IV. INTERSCHOLASTIC EXTRACURRICULAR ELIGIBILITY

A. All eligibility guidelines established by the OHSAA and the National Trail Local School District are to be strictly enforced.

B. OHSAA Guidelines:

- a. Eligibility for each grading period is determined by grades received the preceding grading period. *Semester and Yearly grades have no effect on eligibility.*
- b. **Grades 9-12:** To be eligible, a student must be currently enrolled in a member school and have received passing grades in a minimum of five one-credit courses, or the equivalent, in the preceding grading period. All beginning 9th graders must have passed a minimum of 5 courses taken in the last grading period of the 8th grade. All students in grades 9-12 must attain a minimum grade point average of **1.4** during the preceding grading period
- c. **Grades 7-8:** To be eligible, a student-athlete must be currently enrolled in a member school and have passed a minimum of 5 subjects in which enrolled the immediately preceding grading period. A student enrolling for the first time as a seventh grader is eligible for the first grading period regardless of previous academic achievement.
- d. At the end of each quarter, student's eligibility will be checked. Students failing to pass 5 full credit courses (or equivalent) become ineligible. Students who are ineligible during this time, will be unable to participate in athletic contests (athletes may practice but not dress in uniform for nor play in games).
- e. For eligibility, summer school grades may not be used to substitute for failing grades received in the final grading period of the regular school year or for lack of enough courses taken the preceding grading period.
- f. A student who is ineligible and becomes eligible does not qualify for participation until classes commence for the next grading period (except in the fall-OHSAA Bylaw 4-4-3).
- g. A student is eligible and becomes ineligible is not denied participation until classes commence for the next grading period (except in the fall-OHSAA Bylaw 4-4-3).
- h. The eligibility of a transfer student does not begin until school records or verification from the sending school is received. If the grades are below a **2.0** for the grading quarter prior to transferring, the student is ineligible.

C. The National Trail Board of Education has implemented the following eligibility standards for participation in extracurricular activities:

- a. A high school grade point average of **2.0** must be maintained each quarter of eligibility. A student must maintain the required grade average for each grading period. This procedure used to calculate the average will be the same as that used to determine the school honor role.
- b. The athletic director will issue written notification of a GPA lower than the standard.

- c. If an athlete is denied participation for any reason (academic or Discipline), he/she may continue to practice only with the approval of the head coach, athletic director, and the building principal. The athlete may not dress for competition during this period of denial of participation.
 - d. Student grades are final as of 2:30p on the Monday following the last day of the grading period. The only way a student will receive a grade change for eligibility purposes is if a student's grade is listed as Incomplete due to absences or other extenuating circumstances.
- D. All eligibility guidelines established by the OHSAA and the National Trail Local School District are to be strictly enforced

V. CONDUCT

Athletic Code of Conduct applies to all National Trail athletes in grades 7-12 **365 days a year, 24 hours a day.**

Rules found in the current National Trail Student Handbook apply to all students at all school-sponsored activities. In addition, the coach, athletic director, or principal may set additional penalties for unbecoming behavior, which may include a verbal or written reprimand, suspension, or expulsion. Playing time may also be affected for violation of the Athletic Code of Conduct.

The following rules and regulations have been developed to serve as a basis for all athletic programs. Staff members, athletic director, and/or administration must report violations, or information offered by police officers.

An athlete does not have to be convicted in a court of law in order for consequences to be carried out. Remember athletics are a privilege not a right.

1. SPORTSMANSHIP

Recognize that the athlete represents the National Trail Local School District and that any reflection in conduct is a reflection on the school. The actions and performances in a contest are how most people will judge the athlete.

1. Play fair, play your best, and play for the joy of playing.
2. Observe the rules, train faithfully, and follow your coach's instructions.
3. Be respectful to officials; accept adverse decisions graciously.
4. Be modest in victory and gracious in defeat.

Any student 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 two regular season/tournament contest (one in football) are played at the same level as the ejection.

If a student loses playing time the STUDENT-ATHLETE will be granted appropriate time for training purposes to prepare for participation, but their actual level of participation in individual athletic contests will be determined by the coaching staff.

A student who is ejected a second time shall be ineligible for the remainder of the season in that sport. If a student is ejected a second time in the season during the last contest they shall be ineligible for a period of time/number of contests subject to the discretion of the Commissioner of the OHSAA. This period of ineligibility shall commence during the next sport in which the student participates.

It is the responsibility of the local school authorities to ensure this regulation is enforced. When an ineligible student is allowed to participate, forfeiture of the contest is mandatory. This regulation shall

in no way limit the discretionary authority of the commissioner as specified in the OHSA A Tournament Regulations. In accordance with Bylaw 8-3-1, the decisions of contest officials are final.

Additional disciplinary actions are discretionary and will be determined by the building administrator, athletic director, and coach. Possible disciplinary action could include suspension or denial of participation for one or more seasons.

2. CONDUCT UNBECOMING A NATIONAL TRAIL ATHLETE

This includes repeated infractions of school rules, fighting, truancy, immoral conduct, hazing, public profanity, obscenity, vandalism, harassment, and criminal acts.

Additional disciplinary actions are discretionary and will be determined by the building administrator, athletic director, and coach. Possible disciplinary action could include suspension or denial of participation for one or more seasons.

If a student loses playing time the STUDENT-ATHLETE will be granted appropriate time for training purposes to prepare for participation, but their actual level of participation in individual athletic contests will be determined by the coaching staff.

Athletes who do not attend their originally assigned after school punishment will not be permitted to participate in extra-curricular activities until the punishment has been served.

If an athlete is suspended from school, additional consequences may be levied by the athletic director, building administrator and coach.

3. TOBACCO/DRUGS/ALCOHOL

No athlete is to have in his/her possession or use tobacco products; no athlete is to have in his/her possession or consume alcoholic beverages; and no athlete is to possess, use, disperse or sell stimulants, depressants, hallucinogenic drugs, toxic vapors, or counterfeit drugs not prescribed by a physician.

If an athlete violates Rule 3, the following penalties will occur:

➤ 1st Violation:

- **In Season-** denial of participation for 50% of the contests (season or tournament) based on the number of scheduled regular events. Non-participation of contests must be consecutive, not selective. Note: If the violation occurs with less than 50% of the contests remaining of that sports season, the penalty shall carry over to the following chosen sport. Non-participation must be consecutive, not selective. The athlete needs to complete the next chosen sports season or the denial will carry over to the next sport and so on until the athlete completes a full sports season.
- **Out of Season-** Denial of participation in the next chosen sport for 50% of the contests (season or tournament) based on the number of regular season scheduled events. Non-participation must be consecutive, not selective. The athlete needs to complete the next chosen sports season or the denial will carry over to the next sport and so on until the athlete completes a full sports season.
- **Intervention-** All 1st violation athletes have the option of signing up for substance abuse counseling through a ODDAS (Ohio Department of Drug and Alcohol Service) licensed counselor. Completion of the program will reduce the suspension of play from 50% to 30%. The cost of the intervention is the sole responsibility of the family. **Counseling may not guarantee participation in individual athletic contests.**

➤ 2nd Violation:

- Any athlete violating rule 3 for a second time will be denied participation for one calendar year from the date of the imposed athletic suspension for all activities sponsored by the

athletic department. The athlete must attend a licensed official substance abuse counselor to be re-instated to National Trail Athletics. Written and signed notification from the licensed counselor must be presented to the Athletic Director prior to re-instatement. Failure to participate in the licensed counseling service will result in the athlete not being allowed to participate in any other National Trail Athletic event during their remaining athletic career at National Trail.

➤ **3rd Violation:**

- Any athlete violating the Athletic Code will be banned from all National Trail Athletics for the remainder of their career. There will not be an option for counseling or re-instatement.

➤ **Multiple Violations:**

- In case of multiple violations, consequences will be imposed consecutively, not concurrently, i.e., the athlete cannot begin a second penalty until the first penalty has been completed. Disciplinary actions for the Athletic Policy and/or Student Code of Conduct violations which occur at the High School level will carry over each year the student has high school eligibility.

Additional disciplinary actions are discretionary and will be determined by the building administrator, athletic director, and coach. Possible disciplinary action could include suspension or denial of participation for one or more seasons.

If a student loses playing time the STUDENT-ATHLETE will be granted appropriate time for training purposes to prepare for participation, but their actual level of participation in individual athletic contests will be determined by the coaching staff.

➤ **Junior High Athletes:**

- Disciplinary actions for the Athletic Policy and/or Student Code of Conduct violations which occur at the Junior High level will not carry over when the athlete is promoted to the High School.

4. REPORTING VIOLATIONS

Due to the health, safety and welfare of our athletes, we highly encourage members of our community to contact the proper law enforcement agency if an alleged Code of Conduct or Substance Use infraction is or has been committed.

Alleged infractions should be reported to the High School Administration or Athletic Director. When an infraction is reported, the allegation must be accompanied with proof of the infraction as well as the date, time, and place of the alleged infraction in order to initiate an investigation.

5. DRESS CODE

1. Must comply with the National Trail Dress Code Policy.
2. On any trip, activity or day of the event, members will be informed by the coach as to appropriate dress and conduct.
3. Coaches may set reasonable rules and regulations not covered by this code.

6. CURFEW

Coaches may set reasonable curfews.

VI. CRITERIA USED IN TEAM SELECTION

Ability – the ability to perform in the sport.

Attitude – a good attitude is vital in winning a coach's approval.

Classroom achievement – a coach does not want to be constantly concerned about eligibility.

VII. AMATEUR ATHLETES

Athletes must be amateurs. Students' participation in the athletic program must be amateurs. A student is ineligible if a student receives or is promised money or other valuable consideration for competing in a sport recognized by the Ohio High School Athletic Association. This rule applies 12 months a year. A professional in an OHSAA controlled sport is a professional in all OHSAA sports. A student may play with or against those who receive pay without losing amateur standing.

After a student has become a member of a squad, the student shall not take part in a contest on an independent team, or as an individual, in the same sport until the student's squad has closed its season for that sport. Penalty is ineligibility in that sport for the rest of the season. All equipment must be returned after the completion of the season or the athlete is ineligible for a period of one year. Reinstatement must be granted by the OHSAA.

VIII. MISCELLANEOUS

A. NATIONAL TRAIL ATHLETIC CODE OF CONDUCT

All Athletes must have a valid National Trail Athletic Code Agreement Sheet on file for the academic school year in the athletic director's office prior to participation in any athletic program. To be valid the form must have the signature of the athlete, a parent or guardian, and be dated. This may also be completed using FinalForms.

B. PHYSICAL

All athletes must have a current physical on file before they will be allowed to participate in any athletic program. A physical is valid for 13 months from the date of the physical.

C. ACCIDENT INSURANCE

The Board assumes no legal or financial responsibility in providing student accident insurance. Students shall show proof of medical insurance coverage before being permitted to participate in any athletics. Additionally, parents who do not have insurance coverage may file claims through the Baker Insurance Agency. Claims forms can be picked-up in the Athletic Office or can be found in the appendix section of the Athletic Handbook.

D. OHSAA CATASTROPHIC INSURANCE POLICY

The OHSAA provides a catastrophic insurance policy that contains a deductible and benefits program for injuries exceeding \$25,000. Contact your school administrations for instructions on filing claims. Eligible insureds are covered while participating in interscholastic competition as authorized, sanctioned or scheduled by the OHSAA and governed by the regulations of the OHSAA in sports in which the OHSAA conducts tournaments. Covered events also include: school supervised tryouts, practice, pre and post-game related activities (including award banquets), tournaments, and covered travel between the starting date and ending date of the respective sports season as determined by the OHSAA.

E. EMERGENCY MEDICAL FORM

All athletes must have a current Emergency Medical Form on file before they will be allowed to participate in any athletic program. This form will be done on FinalForms.

F. QUITTING A SPORT

If an athlete quits a team or is released for disciplinary reasons, he/she, may not participate in another sport or training sessions until the completion of the original season.

G. PREREQUISITE

Participation in one sport shall not be a prerequisite for participation in any other sport.

H. INTERSCHOLASTIC SPORTS

From the time an athlete's name appears on the official eligibility list for an interscholastic sport, he/she may not join another team or compete in another non-interscholastic sport until after the last scheduled practice/game of the first sport.

I. PRACTICE ATTENDANCE

Attendance at all practice sessions and games is required unless prior permission has been obtained from the coach or athletic director. Absence from school because of illness is a valid excuse. Repeated violations may result in dismissal. Consequences for missing practice are at the discretion of each head coach.

J. DUAL SPORTS

If an athlete wishes to participate in two potentially conflicting activities during the same season, written approval must be secured by both coaches and submitted to the athletic director for approval. The written notification must be signed by the parent and indicate which activity takes precedence should a conflict arise.

K. ATHLETIC AWARDS PROGRAM

Attendance at the Athletic Awards Program is required unless prior permission has been obtained with the coach or athletic director. The banquet is the official end of the season with the exception of teams advancing in the post-season. Any violation prior to the Athletic Awards program will be an "in-season" offense. If an athlete is denied participation in the Athletic Awards Banquet (academic, discipline, etc.) he/she forfeits any and all awards.

L. DENIED PARTICIPATION

If an athlete is denied participation for any reason (academics, discipline, etc.), he/she may continue to practice only with the approval of the head coach, athletic director, and building principal. They may not dress for competition during this period of denial of participation.

M. TRANSPORTATION

All athletes will ride to and from away contests on Board of Education approved transportation. The only exception will be if the parent contacts the coach before the event about an extenuating circumstance. Any extenuating circumstance that warrants an athlete traveling to or from an away contest in a vehicle other than that which is transporting the remainder of the squad must also be approved by the athletic director and/or principal.

N. DUE PROCESS

The due process for any student is stated in the school's Student-Parent Handbook. It can be explained upon request by the appropriate building administrator in his/her office.

O. OHSAA Parents' Meetings

The OHSAA requires each school district to have three (fall, winter, and spring) Parents' Meetings each school year. Items discussed include Sportsmanship, Eligibility, and the Athletic Code of Conduct. Each athlete and his/her parent or guardian must attend this meeting prior to participating in any games. Once a parent or guardian attends one meeting, he or she will not need to attend another one for the rest of the school year unless directed to attend by the head coach.

P. WEIGHT ROOM

The weight room is only available for students in grades 7-12 with proper school approved supervision.

Q. ATHLETIC INJURY PROCEDURE

No matter how small the injury, athletes are expected to report their injury to the head coach and athletic trainer. If a student is treated for an injury, the athlete must be released by a family physician or athletic trainer before athletic activities may resume.

R. STUDENT TRANSFER

Students who transfer into the school district at any point must meet all requirements of the OHSA Bona Fide Legal Change of Residence Policy before being allowed to participate in any interscholastic sports activity at National Trail High School.

IX. FAN EXPECTATIONS

Please, let the players play; let the coaches coach; let the officials officiate; and let the fans be positive!

A. Behavior of Spectators at Athletic Events

We believe that being a spectator is a “privilege” and not a “right.” It is a privilege to watch an educational process where teams demonstrate what they have learned in the athletic classroom. Spectators will be held accountable for good sportsmanship.

B. Spectators Removed From an Athletic Event

Spectators removed from an athletic event by school personnel, security personnel, or contest officials for inappropriate behavior and/or poor sportsmanship will lose the privilege of attending the next scheduled contest (home or away). Policy will carry over into the next season or school year if the removal occurs on the last game of the season or school year. Any spectator who is removed from a second contest will lose the privilege of attending home AND AWAY contests for the-remainder of the school year. The administration has the right to extend the length of non-attendance at home or away athletic contests on a case by case basis.

C. Fans OHSA Fair Play Code

I will remember that young people play sports for THEIR enjoyment, not to entertain me.

I will not have unrealistic expectations and will understand that doing one’s best is as important as winning. I understand that ridiculing an athlete for making a mistake is not acceptable behavior.

I will respect the official’s decisions and will encourage all participants to do the same.

I will respect and show appreciation for the coaches and understand that they have given their time to provide sport activities for our young people.

I will encourage athletes and coaches to play by the rules and to resolve conflicts without resorting to hostility or violence.

I will show respect for my team’s opponents because I realize there would be no game without them.

I will not use bad language and will not harass athletes, coaches, officials or other spectators.

I will always show good sportsmanship since young people learn best by example.

D. The Role of Parents in Athletics - Communicating With Your Children

Make sure your children know that win or lose, scared or heroic, you love them, appreciate their efforts and are not disappointed in them. This will allow them to do their best without fear of failure. Be the person in their life they can look to for constant positive reinforcement.

Try your best to be completely honest about your child’s athletic ability, competitive attitude, sportsmanship and actual skill level.

Be helpful but don’t coach them. It’s tough not to, but it is a lot tougher for the child to be flooded with advice and critical instruction.

Teach them to enjoy the thrill of competition, to be “out there trying,” to be working to improve their skills and attitudes. Help them develop the feeling for competing, for trying hard, for having fun.

Try not to relive your athletic life through your child in a way that creates pressure. You were frightened, backed off at times and were not always heroic. Athletic children need their parents, so do not withdraw. There is a thinking, feeling, sensitive, free spirit in that uniform who needs a lot of understanding, especially when their world turns bad. If they are comfortable with you win or lose, then they are on their way to maximum enjoyment.

Don’t compete with the coach. If your child is receiving mixed messages from two different authority figures, he or she will likely become disenchanted.

Don’t compare the skill, courage or attitude of your child with other members of the team.

Get to know the coach(es). Then you can be assured that his or her philosophy, attitudes, ethics and knowledge are such that you are happy to have your child under his or her leadership.

Always remember that children tend to exaggerate, both when praised and when criticized. Temper your reaction and investigate before overreacting.

Make a point of understanding courage and the fact that it is relative. Some of us climb mountains and are afraid to fly. Some of us will fly but turn to jelly if a bee approaches. Everyone is frightened in certain areas. Explain that courage is not the absence of fear, but a means of doing something in spite of fear and discomfort.

X. PARENTAL CONCERNS

A. Communication You Should Expect From Your Child’s Coach

Philosophy of the coach.

Expectations the coach has for your child as well as all players on the squad.

Locations and times of all practices and contests.

Team requirements (fees, special equipment, off-season conditioning).

Procedure should your child be injured.

Discipline that results in the denial of your child’s participation.

B. Communication Coaches Expect From Parents

Concerns expressed directly to the coach.

Notification of any schedule conflicts well in advance.

Specific concerns in regard to a coach’s philosophy and/or expectations.

C. Appropriate Concerns To Discuss With Coaches

The treatment of your child, mentally and physically.

Ways to help your child improve.

Concerns about your child’s behavior.

D. Issues Not Appropriate To Discuss With Coaches

Playing time

Team strategy

Play calling

Other student-athletes

E. Appropriate Procedures For Discussing Concerns with Coaches

Call to set up an appointment with the coach (contact the Athletic Director to set up the meeting if unable to reach the head coach). Do not confront a coach before or after a contest or practice (these can be emotional times for all parties involved and do not promote resolution). If the

meeting with the coach does not provide a satisfactory resolution, then contact the Athletic Director.