

CHEROKEE COUNTY SCHOOLS HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETIC CODE

The purpose of the High School Athletic program is to provide students with meaningful experiences in the participation of an athletic event of their choice. Our goal is to be the best that we can be in every aspect of athletic competition and to do so while exhibiting the utmost in sportsmanship, team work and community pride. The following guidelines apply to all athletes in Cherokee County High Schools, keeping in mind that athletic participation is a privilege and not a right. The Athletic Code will govern all sports in the high schools including, but not limited to, cheerleading, golf, football, volleyball, track, cross-country, basketball, softball, baseball, wrestling, swimming and soccer. Athletes are governed by the policies established by the North Carolina High School Athletic Association as well as the policies stated in the *Student's Rights and Responsibilities Handbook for Cherokee County Schools*. We believe that athletic participation teaches some very important values to young people and it provides an opportunity for success at a level which otherwise may not be possible.

1. Athletes are students first. Athletics is an adjunct to academics. Each student/athlete should be at school in each class every day participating in a positive manner, unless (s)he is legitimately excused. Failure to attend class or do your best in class may result in a conference with the coach. If the coach feels that there is a serious problem, (s)he may choose to suspend the player for a game or games until the problem is resolved. All athletes must pass three subjects and must be in attendance 85% of the time during the previous semester to be eligible to participate.
2. High School Interscholastic Athletic Competition Eligibility.
 - Age—A student is eligible to participate in high school athletic contests during a year if the student does not reach the 19th birthday on or before October 16 on that school year. A Junior High student shall not participate on a ninth grade junior high team if the student becomes 16 years of age on or before October 16 of that school year.
 - Eight Semester Rule—No student may participate at the high school level for more than eight consecutive semesters, beginning with the student's first entry into grade nine or participation on a high school team, whichever occurs first.
 - Residency—A student may participate in interscholastic athletics only at the school to which the student is assigned by the LEA. Students must live in the school district to which they have been assigned or officially petitioned the Cherokee County Board of Education for reassignment. Reassignment will be granted only under the conditions prescribed by Cherokee County Board Policy. Documentation (School Assignment Form) of approved school reassignment must be on file in the principals' office of the school of attendance.
 - Academic—The student must pass 75% of courses each semester to be eligible to participate in the interscholastic program. On the block schedule, a student must pass at least three courses to participate in the athletic program.
 - Attendance—A player must have been in attendance 85% of the previous semester to be eligible to participate in high school athletics. (If a student is absent 13.5 days or more, he/she is ineligible to participate in any high school athletic program.)
 - Medical Exam—The student must receive a medical examination each year (365 days) by a duly licensed physical, nurse practitioner, or physician assistant.
3. All athletes are to be present at all required practices unless previous arrangement has been made with the coach or school administration. If an athlete is injured or sick, (s)he should still attend practice and watch and learn if at all possible, unless the student has a legitimate medical excuse. Athletes who have an unexcused absence from practice will be disciplined at the coach's discretion.
4. All athletes are responsible for the care and upkeep of any equipment, uniforms or school property that is issued to them. Any items that are lost, destroyed or damaged beyond repair must be paid for by the athlete at the end of the sport season or before graduation if the sport occurs during the spring of the senior year. Failure to do so will automatically eliminate the athlete from further sports participation until the matter is resolved.

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5. All athletes are expected to help in maintaining the cleanliness and care of the athletic facilities. Any athlete caught defacing; damaging or destroying school property will face disciplinary action determined by the coach and/or administration which could include game suspension or dismissal from the team. (See Student's Rights and Responsibilities Handbook.)
6. Stealing will not be tolerated. This includes stealing from teammates, the school, other schools, or other students within the school. First offense will result in a conference with the coach, parent, student, and administration. The athlete will also be suspended for one game. A second offense will result in dismissal from the team. All stolen items will be returned or replaced by the athlete. Failure of the athlete to return or replace stolen items will result in immediate suspension from the team and disciplinary referral to the school administration.
7. If an athlete receives a punishment of game suspension, the athlete will serve the suspension immediately upon completion of the investigation of the violations by the athletic department and/or school administration.
8. Athletes caught using tobacco products at school will face disciplinary action under the guidelines established by the Cherokee County Schools Code of Conduct, contained in the Student's Rights and Responsibilities Handbook. Athletes caught using tobacco outside of school will be subject to disciplinary action set forth by the athletic department of the school at the beginning of the year.
9. Cherokee County Schools has a Zero Tolerance for use of illegal drugs and alcohol. The Cherokee County Code of Conduct, contained in the Student's Rights and Responsibilities Handbook, outlines the disciplinary actions, sanctions and consequences for violating a school rule including those pertaining to alcohol and drugs. Any and all student athletes who violate these rules can expect not only the consequences as prescribed in the Rights and Responsibilities Handbook, but also the following actions by the schools' athletic departments and coaches:
 - **Alcohol**—Students will not use, purchase, sell, distribute, be under the influence of or possess any kind of alcoholic substance or a counterfeit or imitation alcoholic substance. Students in violation of this policy should expect to:
 1. First, satisfy disciplinary consequences as prescribed by the school administration.
 2. Participate in a conference with parent, coach, student and administration.
 3. The student athlete will be placed on suspension of one game for the first offense. A second offense during the school year will result in the student being immediately dismissed from all athletic participation for one calendar year from the date of the offense. If the offense occurs in the summer, or when school is not in session, this same alcohol/drug policy is in effect.
 - **Drug Offenses**—Students will not use, purchase, sell distribute, be under the influence of or possess any kind of controlled substance as defined by state law. This includes, but is not limited to, any narcotic; illegal or controlled drug, marijuana, cocaine, anabolic steroids, counterfeit or imitation controlled substances, and drug paraphernalia. Students in violation of this policy should expect to:
 1. First, satisfy disciplinary consequences as prescribed by the school administration.
 2. Participate in a conference with parent, coach, student and administration.
 3. The student athlete will be placed on suspension for a period of six (6) weeks from any athletic activity. A second offense during the school year will result in the student being immediately dismissed from all athletic participation for one calendar year from the date of the offense. If the offense occurs in the summer, or when school is not in session, this same alcohol/drug policy is in effect. For the third offense, the student athlete is suspended from participation in any interscholastic sport in Cherokee County Schools for the remainder of their school career.
10. Drug Screening—Guidelines established by Cherokee County School Board Policy 4326 (Drug Screening Program for Middle and High School Athletics) will be used for the screening of student/athletes.

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11. All athletes are fully expected to conduct themselves as ladies and gentlemen at all time during, before, and after Athletic events. No profanity, obscene gesture, inciting of fights or any other less than civil actions will be tolerated. Failure of an athlete to comply will result in a disciplinary action determined by the coach and/or administration.
 12. All athletes are required to compete and participate to the fullest intent of the sport. Making a mockery of the sport or behaving in a manner that brings embarrassment to the school or community will result in immediate dismissal from the team.
 13. All athletes are expected to show respect for all school personnel, coaches, teachers, officials, and administrators. This includes our school and participating schools. Failure of an athlete to comply will result in disciplinary action determined by the coach and/or administration.
 14. All athletes are required to ride to the games with the team, unless permission or exception has been made, such as meeting at the game after a doctor's appointment. Riding home with parents or another adult will be left up to the coach of that sport. (Athletes may ride with another adult only with parental consent as verified by the coach.)
 15. Quitting a team: Once an athlete begins a sport, he/she is committed to that sport for the entire season. An athlete will not be allowed to begin to practice or try out for the next sport session until the current sport is completed. If an athlete quits a sport and wishes to play that sport the following year, the athlete in question will be required to meet with the School's Athletic Grievance Committee (AGC). The AGC will consist of the Principal, Assistant Principal, Athletic Director (if not the coach of-the sports affected), a coach that does not directly coach the student involved, a teacher that does not directly teach the student. If the athletic director is the coach of the sport(s) affected, then another coach will serve on the committee. The principal will select the committee for each sport. The committee will determine the disposition of the athlete's eligibility. Athletes that quit may be subject to disciplinary action set forth by the athletic department of the school at the beginning of the school year. The principal will notify the student athlete of the decision of the AGC within 24 hours when possible. A further appeal to the Cherokee County Board of Education may be made if the student chooses to do so.
 16. If a player is suspended from school (OSS), he/she is automatically suspended from the team for the same number of days. A second out-of-school suspension during the same sports season will result in dismissal from the team.
 - Students placed in ISS, (In School Suspension) may practice with the team but are ineligible to play in any games until the suspension time has been served. Athletes, are eligible to participate in games at the end of the last day of their ISS sentence, (3:00 pm).
 - The student serving an Out of School Suspension will become eligible to participate in a game the day after his/her OSS time has been served.
 - Students assigned to After-School Detention may not practice or play during the detention time. The athlete may report to practice after the detention. The athlete is responsible for any make-up assignments given by the coach.
- (Please remember that our student athletes are held to a higher academic and disciplinary standard than non-athletes. Athletic participation is a privilege, not a right.)**
17. Felony Policy: Any student who is charged and/or arrested for a crime classified as a felony under North Carolina or Federal Law will appear before the schools AGC to determine if the student will retain eligibility status. The AGC will consist of the Principal, Assistant Principal, Athletic Director (if not the

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coach of-the sports affected), a coach that does not directly coach the student involved, a teacher that does not directly teach the student. If the athletic director is the coach of the sport(s) affected, then another coach will serve on the committee. The principal will select the committee for each sport. The committee will determine the disposition of the athlete's eligibility. Each committee member will cast one vote and a simple majority will rule. The principal will notify the student athlete of the decision of the AGC within 24 hours when possible. A further appeal to the Cherokee County Board of Education may be made if the student chooses to do so. (Students are not permitted to practice or participate with any high school sports team during the appeals process.) Students convicted of a felony are not eligible to participate in the North Carolina High School Athletic Association sports program. (See enclosed NCHSAA Felony Policy.)

NCHSAA Felony Policy

"Any student who is subject to the NCHSAA eight semester rule, four years, who (1) is convicted of a crime, classified as a felony under North Carolina or federal law or (2) is adjudicated delinquent for an offense that would be a felony if committed by an adult, is not eligible to participate in the North Carolina High School Athletic Association sports program. Such ineligibility shall be immediate and shall prohibit participation in the NCHSAA sports program from the date of conviction or adjudication of delinquency through the end of the student's high school career. Appellate or other post-conviction review of the conviction or adjudication of delinquency does not affect the student's ineligibility.

Note: "Convicted" and "conviction" for the purpose of this policy, includes the entry of (a) a plea of guilty; or (b) a plea of no contest, nolo contendere, or the equivalent; or (c) a verdict or finding of guilty by a jury, judge, magistrate, or other duly constituted, established; and recognized adjudication body, tribunal, or official, either civilian or military. A person is "convicted" or "adjudicated delinquent" for the purpose of this policy, in North Carolina state courts, the courts of the United States, another state, the Armed Services of the United States, or another country."

(Revised and approved by the Board of Education October 11, 2012)

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Student and Parent/Guardian:

My parents and I have carefully read the rules and regulations contained within the Cherokee County Athletic Code. We fully understand and will adhere to all the prescribed rules and regulations of the Cherokee County High School Athletic Code.

_____	_____
Student	Parent/Guardian
_____	_____
Date	Sport

School	

Nondiscrimination Policy

The Cherokee County Board of Education is committed to a policy of nondiscrimination on the basis of socio-economic status, age, sex, race, religion, national origin, handicapping conditions, and parental or marital status.

Title IX

No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participating in, be denied the benefits of, or be subject to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving Federal assistance. (The rights of individual students to equal opportunities in athletics are protected by the Constitution of the United States.)