

Kershaw County School District **Student Athlete Handbook**



2011 – 2012 School Year

Kershaw County School District
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EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER

The School District of Kershaw County does not discriminate on the basis of race, gender, disability, age, or national origin in its educational programs and employment practices. Questions pertaining to Title IX or Section 504 may be directed to the Title IX Coordinator, Dr. Connie Long, Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources, School District of Kershaw County, 2029 West DeKalb Street, Camden, South Carolina, 29020, Telephone # 803 432-8416.

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Message to Parents and Students

This handbook is to be used by parents and students to ensure that students will enjoy a safe, successful and memorable experience as a student athlete. It is an extension of the Kershaw County Board of Trustees Policy Manual, The S.C. High School League and established team rules and regulations. We believe coaching leadership is to be of the highest quality and to provide student athletes examples of exemplary behavior, character, courage and integrity.

Thank you for supporting your daughter and/or son as they participate in athletics in the Kershaw County School District.

PHILOSOPHY OF ATHLETICS

Interscholastic Athletics are an integral part of the total education process. Participants gain valuable skills that foster positive attitudes, build self-esteem, create positive relations and develop life-long skills that will serve as a vehicle to enhance total growth and development. The Kershaw County School Board recognizes the value of extracurricular and co-curricular programs as significant tools that enrich the academic experience.

Program Objectives:

- To encourage maximum participation of students in all sports;
- To encourage athletes to display good sportsmanship at all times;
- To instill the desire to prepare for success;
- To encourage participants to react in a positive manner, both in victory and defeat;
- To encourage participants to learn the values of responsibility, dedication, loyalty, teamwork, desire, humility, confidence and other desirable traits of good character and citizenship;
- To encourage participants to attempt to influence younger students in the community in a positive manner;
- To assist participants in learning to set and achieve goals and in building self-esteem.

Participation on an Athletic Team

It is important to understand that participation on an athletic team is a privilege, not a right. Being on and maintaining one's membership on a team means accepting all the responsibilities of an athlete. **Unlike intramural or recreational teams**, equal or guaranteed playing time does not exist. In an effort to present the best possible team to represent the school, the coach will use players best suited for the conditions or demands of the contest at that time.

Dismissal or Quitting a Team

A player who is dismissed or who quits one athletic team may not participate in workouts with any other school team until the subsequent team's season has been completed; unless approved by the Student Activities Director.

Sportsmanship

Since athletics should be educational in nature, it is important that all parents demonstrate good sportsmanship and serve as role models for our athletes and students. Sportsmanship is an overt display of respect for the rules and the sport and for all others - players, coaches, officials, and fans (National Federation News, March 1995). It also involves a commitment to fair play, ethical behavior and integrity.

This means:

1. There should be no inappropriate or vulgar language or gestures from our fans.
2. Taunting or trash talking of our opponents or their cheerleaders will not be tolerated.
3. Spectators may not enter onto the field or court during a contest.
4. Fans should be positive and supportive. Cheering should be done for our team and not against our opponents.
5. We should not interfere with our opponents cheerleaders when leading their cheers.

Sportsmanship Expectations

Acceptable Behavior:

1. Applause during the introduction of players, coaches, and officials.
2. Acceptance of calls/rulings made by the officials.
3. Cheerleaders leading fans in positive school cheers.
4. Handshakes between participants and coaches at the end of all contests, regardless of the outcome.
5. Treat competition as a game, not a war.
6. Coaches and players should search out and congratulate the opposing participant or coach.
7. Everyone must show concern for any injured players on all teams.
8. Encourage only sportsmanship conduct.

Athletic Travel Policy

All athletes must travel to and from out-of-town athletic contests in transportation provided by the school's athletic department with the exception that an athlete may ride with a parent or guardian if permission is granted by the coach.

Officials

There is an age-old refrain often used by irate fans. "How much are you paying the officials?" The home school does not get the officials. The South Carolina High School League and/or the booking office schedules officials and neither team has control of which officials are assigned. Officials agree and follow a code of ethics. They do not care or have a vested interest in which team wins. It is also important to understand that they are a very important part of any sporting event and that the contest cannot be played without them. So while you may not agree with every call they make or their style of officiating, please do not harass or insult them. It is also important to note that they have complete control of the contest and have the authority to eject unruly spectators and or/coaches. Additionally, the same official may draw our team's contest several times over the course of a season. Coaches, administrators, and schools work very hard to establish good rapport with officials and one unruly fan can easily damage this relationship.

Eligibility Requirements by the SC High School League

- A. Birth Certificate: Each student must submit a certified state or local birth certificate to the athletic director. A copy will be made and the original returned. This is only required one time during high school.
- B. Physical: A yearly physical is required. Prior to participation, a student must turn in a South Carolina High School League Physical Form filled out by a medical doctor or nurse practitioner. This form can be picked up in the Athletic Department. The physical covers all sports during the school year provided the examination occurred on or after April 1 of the previous year.
- C. Parent Permission: The reverse side of the physical exam form is a parent's permission form required by the South Carolina High School League. This form must be completed and signed by the parent.

D. Academic Eligibility: To participate in athletics, students in grades 9-12 must achieve an overall passing average in addition to the following:

1. To be eligible in the first semester a student must pass a minimum of five Carnegie units applicable toward a high school diploma during the previous year. At least two units must have been passed during the second semester or during summer school.
2. To be eligible during the second semester the student must meet one of the following conditions:
 - a. If the student met first semester eligibility requirements then he or she must pass the equivalent of four, $\frac{1}{2}$ units during the first semester.
 - b. If the student did not meet first semester eligibility requirements then he or she must pass the equivalent of five, $\frac{1}{2}$ units during the first semester.
3. Middle school students including first semester 9th graders are eligible to participate on the high school teams during the first semester if they were promoted academically (not by social promotion). Students in the 7th and 8th grades must be doing satisfactory work at the end of the first semester in order to be eligible second semester.

E. Age Limitations: A student, who becomes 19 years of age prior to July 1 of the school year, will not be allowed to participate.

NCAA Eligibility Requirements

Most college athletic programs are regulated by the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA), an organization that has established recruiting and financial aid. The NCAA has three membership divisions: Division I, Division II, and Division III. Institutions are members of one or another of these according to the size and scope of the athletic programs and whether they provide athletic scholarships.

Athletes planning to take an official visit to any Division I or Division II institution must be certified by the NCAA-Initial-Eligibility Clearinghouse. The Clearinghouse was established as a separate organization by the NCAA member institutions to ensure consistent interpretations of NCAA initial-eligibility requirements for all prospective student athletes at all member institutions. Parents or students may find this information at www.ncaaclearinghouse.net.

Athletes who want to participate in Division I or Division II sports in college should start the certification process in their junior year (11th) in high school. Check with your guidance counselor to make sure you are taking the core curriculum that meets NCAA requirements. Also, register to take the SAT or ACT tests as a junior. Submit the

Student Release Form (available in the Guidance Office) to the Clearinghouse by the beginning of your senior year.

Athletic Scholarships

Applying for athletic scholarships has become an important area of college preparation because these scholarships are a way of earning tuition in return for your competitive abilities. Whether you're a male or female, interested in the sports at your school, there may be scholarships available for you.

At the beginning of your junior year, ask your guidance counselor to help you make sure you take the required number and mix of academic courses and to inform you of the SAT and ACT score minimums that must be met to play college sports. Also, ask your counselor about academic requirements, because the NCAA Initial-Eligibility Clearinghouse must certify you, and you must start this process by the end of your junior year.

Training Rules and Regulations

It is the overwhelming opinion of health educators and coaches that athletes perform their best when they follow training rules that include restrictions on tobacco, alcohol and drugs. Medical research clearly substantiates the fact that these substances may lead to harmful effects on humans.

The coaches of the Kershaw County School District, concerned with the health habits of the student-athlete of this community, are convinced that athletics and the use of these substances are not compatible. It is also a fact that when students have a strong interest in athletics, their desire to use these substances is greatly reduced.

Students have to decide if they want to be athletes. If this is the case, the student has to "pay the price" in order to be a competitor. A big part of this price is following a simple set of training rules which includes not using these substances.

Medical Attention for Athletes

Unfortunately injuries do occur during athletic competition. Certified Athletic Trainers and team Physicians have the best expertise in this area. Coaches are trained to coach. Physicians and Certified Athletic Trainers are educated to handle injuries.

Because of this, it is the policy of all sports programs in Kershaw County that a team Physician or Certified Athletic Trainer cannot be over-ruled by a coach of a particular sport or the parent or guardian of an injured athlete when it comes to participation. If the team Physician or Certified Athletic Trainer deem an athlete not to participate because of an injury or any medical problem associated with participation, then that athlete must not participate until cleared by the team Physician or Certified Athletic Trainer.

Parents are encouraged to be proactive in the health and well-being of their child by making sure that they contact the School's Certified Athletic Trainer or team Physician if they have any questions concerning the health of their child. Coaches and Certified Athletic Trainers should always be notified by parents regarding any health related issues such as and not limited to new medications, allergies, any new diagnosis of the student-athlete. Parents are encouraged to seek the advice of their school's Certified Athletic Trainer for any non-life threatening athletic injuries of their child.

Responsibilities of the Athlete

Citizenship

The privilege to represent any school in Kershaw County on an athletic team should be on the basis of good citizenship as well as a minimum scholastic achievement. In a specific athletic endeavor, the athlete must be capable of representing Kershaw County in the fullest meaning of the term "Good Citizenship" by his or her manners, appearance, dress, conduct and sportsmanship. Only those students who are capable of assuming these responsibilities and of being official representatives of our schools will be permitted to be members of any athletic squad.

Conduct

The conduct of an athlete is closely observed in all areas of life. It is important that your behavior be above reproach in all of the following areas:

In the Classroom

In the academic setting, a good athlete becomes a good student. As an athlete, you must plan your schedule so that you give sufficient time and energy to your studies. In addition to maintaining good scholarship, an athlete should give respectful attention to classroom activities and show respect for other students and faculty at all times. A healthy athlete should have a good attendance record. Never cut classes or school.

On the Campus

The way we act and look on campus is of great importance. Athletes should be leaders in every aspect of the educational process. Remember, respect is not given, it is earned.

On the Field

All school rules are carried over to the field of competition. Sportsmanship is of the utmost importance to everyone representing our programs.

Code of Conduct for Kershaw County Athletes

1. Improper Conduct

All athletes are expected to follow the Kershaw County School District Code of Conduct. Conduct that results in dishonor to the athlete, the team, or the school will not be tolerated. Acts of unacceptable conduct such as, but not limited to theft, vandalism, disrespect, immorality, or violations of the law while on campus or at a school sponsored event could result in the termination from a team depending on the seriousness of the offense. The Student Activities Director and the school Principal will determine the consequences for improper conduct by a student/ athlete following an examination of the evidence presented and the seriousness of the offense committed; all in accordance with the discipline rules and regulations of the Kershaw County School Board of Trustees.

2. Substance Abuse

Any student using or possessing alcohol or tobacco or using, possessing, buying, or selling illegal controlled substances on campus or at a school related event may be denied participation in interscholastic athletics or face suspension of games or contests. The rules of the Kershaw County School Board will be used for in-school infractions and will be adhered to concerning Board Policy. First time offenders of tobacco or alcohol abuse will be punished and possibly suspended from athletic events, and may have the opportunity to redeem themselves during the same school year depending on the nature of the offense. This may be done through an approved drug rehabilitation program such as offered through the Alpha Center. Offenders of selling illegal controlled substances on campus or school related events will be immediately dismissed from athletic participation for the remainder of the school year in accordance to Kershaw County School Board Policy. Off-campus violators of substance abuse will be suspended from athletic activities until resolved by school or law enforcement officials.

3. Felony Conviction

Any student who has been convicted of a felony in criminal court will be dismissed from the athletic program upon notification to the athletic department.

4. Attendance at Practice

Students who miss more than 2 unexcused absences will be dismissed from a team. Athletes who miss school or who get sick at school should notify their coach when they are to miss practice or a game. Even if the absence is excused, the athlete may at times be held out of a contest due to the lack of practice time. Students who miss practice without just cause will be handled appropriately by their coach. Students who are constantly late to practice will be warned by their particular coach and could be dismissed from a team if the problem is not corrected.

5. **Equipment**

School issued equipment is the responsibility of the student to whom it was issued. The student is expected to keep it in good condition. Loss or damage may result in a financial obligation by the student.

6. **Grooming and Dress Policy**

A member of an athletic team is expected to be well groomed. Appearances, expression, and actions always influence people's opinions of athletes, the team, and the school. Good grooming and dress rules will further good sportsmanship; reinforce good health habits, good performance, respect for rules and authority; help establish leadership, team pride and discipline. With this belief in the necessity of good grooming and dress, the following rules will be adhered to by team members:

- a. While on campus, the school dress code will be adhered to at all times.
- b. No jewelry will be worn while participating in athletics.
- c. All uniforms will be worn as prescribed by the coaches.
- d. When traveling, teams will wear either uniforms or clothing prescribed by the coaches.
- e. No athlete is to wear any clothing that advertises or promotes alcohol, illegal substances, sex, profanity, or that is objectionable to the coach or administrators.
- f. Hair length cannot jeopardize the safety of the athlete while participating.

7. **Disciplinary Measures**

Misbehavior by an athlete will not be tolerated. He or she must conduct themselves in a manner that exemplifies good citizenship and self-control. In the event that an athlete has to be disciplined at school, his or her membership on a squad may be in jeopardy. If such discipline requires a suspension from school, the athlete will be suspended from both practice and games that occur during the suspension period. More than one suspension may warrant the removal of the athlete from the squad. In the event that a coach has to discipline an athlete, the degree of discipline shall be in accordance with the Kershaw County Athletic and School District policies.

8. **Communication with Coaches**

It is important that parents have the opportunity to meet with and communicate with the coach, however there are a few rules that must be adhered to:

- a. **Parents should never approach a coach to discuss a playing issue about their son or daughter, coaching strategy or play calling during or immediately after an athletic event.**
- b. Parents who are unhappy about playing time should first allow their son or daughter to discuss this matter with the coach first, before contacting the coach. If a resolution to this problem has not been met after the player/coach meeting, then the parent may contact the coach. The parent

should always talk to the coach before contacting the Activities Director or Principal. Parents should always schedule an appointment with the coach to discuss such matters.

- c. Parents who are concerned about any health or safety issue regarding their student/athlete are always asked to please call the coach or the school administration.

9. **Lettering and Awards**

Each school will establish its own guidelines concerning lettering and individual awards.

10. **Participation Fees**

Any fee associated with the participation of athletics for Kershaw County Schools will be determined by the Kershaw County School Board of Trustees. These fees must be paid before participation occurs.

Student Athlete Contract

Signing this page states that I have read and understand
the Kershaw County School District Athletic Handbook.

Print Player's Name

Player's Signature

School

Parent's Signature