2026-2027

Fairfield Union Local Schools

Athletic Participation Handbook

BOARD ADOPTED
APRIL 2026

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ATHLETIC PHILOSOPHY 1
PURPOSE 1
To the Athlete and Parent or Guardian 1
SPORTSMANSHIP EXPECTATIONS 2
GOVERNANCE 3
A. Fairfield Union Local School District Board of Education https://www.fairfieldunion.org/BoardofEducation.aspx 3
B. The Ohio High School Athletic Association www.ohsaa.org 3
SPORTS OFFERED 3
C. The National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) www.nfhs.org 3
D. The Mid-State League (MSL) 3
REQUIREMENTS FOR PARTICIPATION 4
A. PROOF OF HEALTH INSURANCE 4
B. SPORTS PHYSICAL 4
C. ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY 4
D. ATTENDANCE/ELIGIBILITY 6
E. OHSAA PARENT MEETING 6
F. SPORTS FEES 6
G. DENIAL OF PARTICIPATION 6
H. OHIO HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION RULES 6
I. ONLINE REGISTRATION PORTAL - ONEVIEW 7
TRYOUTS 7
TEAM SELECTION 8
SENIORS ON VARSITY/JUNIOR VARSITY 8
SELECTED FOR A TEAM 9
COMMITMENT/MISSING PRACTICE OR GAMES 9
FAMILY VACATIONS/EXTENDED ABSENCES 9
TEAM RULES 9
TRANSPORTATION 9
EQUIPMENT 9
ATHLETIC AWARDS 10
HIGH SCHOOL AWARDS 10
QUITTING OR DROPPING A SPORT 10
HAZING 10
SEASON 11
CONFLICT POLICY (SCHEDULING OF EVENTS) 11
COLLEGE/CAREER GUIDANCE 11
NCAA CLEARINGHOUSE 12
USE OF FACILITIES/SUPERVISION 12
SCHOOL DISCIPLINE OBLIGATIONS 12
CONFLICT RESOLUTION 12
SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDELINES FOR STUDENT-ATHLETES 13
ATHLETIC RULES OF PARTICIPATION 14
CONSENT TO PERFORM RANDOM DRUG TESTING 18

Athletic Directory Information

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6417 Cincinnati-Zanesville Rd. NE
Lancaster, OH 43130
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(740) 536-9132 Fax

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(740) 536-7249
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Mascot: Falcons
Colors: Red, Black and White

Superintendent

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Director of Educational Services

Mr. Matt Destadio - mattdestadio@fairfieldunion.org

High School Principal

Mr. Travis Shaeffer - travisshaeffer@gafe.fairfieldunion.org

High School Assistant Principal

Mr. Trent Johns - trentjohns@gafe.fairfieldunion.org

Middle School Principal

Mrs. Tricia Haughn - triciahaughn@fairfieldunion.org

Middle School Assistant Principal

Mrs. Dawn Rice - dawnrice@fairfieldunion.org

Athletic Director - Grades 7-12

Mr. Scott Harris - scottharris@gafe.fairfieldunion.org

Ohio High School Athletic Association (OHSAA)

www.ohsaa.org

National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS)

www.nfhs.org

Mid-State League (MSL) – Buckeye Division

For complete information including schedules visit
https://www.fairfieldunion.org/athletics_home.aspx

ATHLETIC PHILOSOPHY

The mission of the Fairfield Union Local School District athletic program is to provide an organized, well-planned program of interscholastic athletics that allows the largest number of participants possible while maintaining the ability to develop each athlete. In addition, it shall be the purpose of each coach to create an environment that promotes the ability of student-athletes to reach their full potential as individuals and for each team to be successful. Sportsmanship, ethics, and integrity are key components of these programs. Coaches, athletes, and parents are expected to set an example of sportsmanship that reflects positively on our school and community. The program is progressive in nature in that it stresses the fundamentals of a sport at the middle school level and specific skill development at the higher-grade levels. The athletic program seeks to instill a feeling of pride in skill development and successful competition with students from other schools. The interscholastic athletic program shall be conducted in accordance with existing Board of Education, Mid-State League, Ohio High School Athletic Association, and National Federation of High Schools policies, rules, and regulations.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this handbook is to provide a guide to the policies and procedures of the athletic department. This handbook provides a framework from which coaches, athletes, and their parents can best work together for the benefit of our overall athletic program. Although it is intended to be comprehensive in nature, inevitably situations will occur that are not outlined in this handbook. In addition, all student-athletes are held accountable to consequences in the school handbook. Parents and athletes are required to sign the "Acknowledgement of Athletic Policies Agreement" stating this handbook has been reviewed and understood before athletes can participate in a sport. Please refer to this handbook throughout the year for all sports. Coaches, athletes, and parents are obligated to be knowledgeable and supportive of these policies and procedures.

To the Athlete and Parent or Guardian

It should be understood that participation in athletics is a privilege and not a right and that a student who elects to participate in athletics is voluntarily making a choice of self-discipline. Failure to comply with the rules of training and conduct means exclusion from the team. Being a member of a Fairfield Union athletic team carries with it certain responsibilities and obligations. The most important of these responsibilities is to broaden and develop strength of character from your experiences. Another responsibility you assume as an athlete is the responsibility to your school and community. As a member of an athletic team, you are contributing to the reputation of your school. Fairfield Union Schools cannot maintain its position as having outstanding schools unless you do your best in the activity in which you participate. The student body, the Fairfield Union community, and other communities judge our schools by your conduct and attitude, both inside and outside of competition. Because of this leadership role, you can make a positive contribution to school spirit and community pride. If you consistently demonstrate these ideas, you will make Fairfield Union proud of you. **Beginning with the date that the athlete and guardian(s) sign the "Acknowledgement of Athletic**

Policies Agreement," the policy will be in effect for the athlete for 365 consecutive days. There is no "off-season" as far as adherence to the substance abuse policy is concerned. This policy is in effect 365 days a year / 24 hours a day.

SPORTSMANSHIP EXPECTATIONS

In keeping with the guidelines of the Ohio High School Athletic Association, the following behaviors are expected of each group as it fulfills its role in providing for an athletic program that is based on exemplary sportsmanship:

Each Student-Athlete is expected to:

- Accept and understand the seriousness of her/his responsibility, and the privilege of representing the school, District, and community.
- Live up to the standards of citizenship, conduct and sportsmanship established by the school administration and the coaching staff.
- Refrain from taunting, trash-talking, and making any kind of derogatory remarks to opponents, officials, coaches, or spectators during the game, especially comments of profanity, ethnic, racial, or sexual nature.
- Wish opponents good luck before the game and congratulate them in a sincere manner following either victory or defeat.
- Respect the integrity and judgment of game officials.
- Win with humility, lose with class and do both in dignity.

As it pertains to athletic contest participation, members of Other Student Groups (Student Section, Band) are expected to:

- Establish themselves as leaders in conduct before, during, and after contests and events. Always provide positive support for the school's team.
- Assist cheerleaders with yells, chants, etc., and be a working part of pep assemblies via preparation, organization, and involvement.
- Treat opposing players, coaches, spectators, and support groups with respect and enthusiasm.
- Refrain from taunting or making any kind of derogatory remarks to opponents during the game, especially comments of ethnic, racial, or sexual nature.
- Conduct themselves in an exemplary manner, remembering they represent the school both at home and at away contests.
- Respect the integrity and judgment of game officials.
- Be exemplary role models by positively supporting teams in every manner possible, including content of cheers and signs.

Each Spectator is expected to:

- Remember that she/he is at a contest to support and cheer for the team and to enjoy the skill and competition; not to intimidate or ridicule the other team, its fans, or the officials.
- Remember that a ticket to a school athletic event is a privilege to observe the contest, not a license to verbally assault others and be generally obnoxious.
- Learn the rules of the game so that she/he may understand and appreciate why certain situations take place.
- Refrain from taunting or making any kind of derogatory remarks to opponents, coaches or officials during the game, especially comments of profane, ethnic, racial, or sexual nature.
- Recognize and show appreciation for outstanding play by either team.

- Refrain from the use of any controlled substances (alcohol, drugs, etc.) before and during games and afterwards on or near the site of the event.
- Be a positive role model through her/his own actions and by censuring those close by whose behavior is unbecoming.

GOVERNANCE

A. Fairfield Union Local School District Board of Education
https://www.fairfieldunion.org/BoardofEducation.aspx

The Board of Education is the ruling agency for the Fairfield Union Local School District and is responsible for evaluating the interscholastic athletic program in terms of its value to the community.

B. The Ohio High School Athletic Association www.ohsaa.org

Fairfield Union High School and Rushville Middle School are voluntary members of the OHSAA and agree to abide by and enforce all rules and regulations promulgated by this association. The primary role of the OHSAA is to maintain rules and regulations that ensure equity in competition for the student-athletes and a balance with other educational programs. The OHSAA solicits input and is responsive to requests for rule modifications from member schools, appointed committees, and coaches associations.

SPORTS OFFERED

Fairfield Union Local Schools offer athletic participation in the following competitive sports and/or spirit groups:

- High School: Baseball, Basketball, Sideline Cheerleading, Competition Cheerleading (Club), Cross Country, Football, Golf, Gymnastics (Club), Soccer, Softball, Swimming, Indoor Track & Field (Club), Track & Field, Volleyball, Wrestling
- Middle School: Baseball, Basketball, Sideline Cheerleading, Cross Country, Football, Golf (Club), Soccer, Softball, Track & Field, Volleyball, Wrestling

C. The National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) www.nfhs.org

The purposes of the NFHS are to serve, protect, and enhance the interstate activity interests of the high schools belonging to state associations; to assist in those activities of the state associations which can be best operated on a nationwide scale; and to sponsor meetings, publications and activities which will permit each state association to profit by the experience of all other member associations. The NFHS is both a service and regulatory agency.

D. The Mid-State League (MSL)

Fairfield Union High School and Rushville Middle School are voluntary members of the Mid-State League Buckeye Division. This league was established for the primary purpose of promoting selected interscholastic activities among member schools.

The conference membership facilitates the arranging of schedules, equalizing competition, conducting league meets and determining league championships.

The Mid-State League provides Fairfield Union High School and Rushville Middle School the opportunity for competition without excessive travel and with schools of similar athletic philosophies. Membership implies abiding by conference schedules, rules, and regulations.

MSL Member Schools:

- **Buckeye Division:** Amanda-Clearcreek (Fairfield), Bloom-Carroll (Fairfield), Circleville (Pickaway), Fairfield Union (Fairfield), Hamilton Township (Franklin), Liberty Union (Fairfield), Logan Elm (Pickaway)
- **Cardinal Division:** Berne Union (Fairfield), Bishop Rosecrans (Muskingum), Fairfield Christian (Fairfield), Fisher Catholic (Fairfield), Grove City Christian (Franklin), Harvest Preparatory (Franklin), Miller (Perry), Millersport (Fairfield), Wellington School (Franklin)

REQUIREMENTS FOR PARTICIPATION

Each athlete must meet the following Ohio High School Athletic Association requirements to be eligible for participation in our athletic department programs. Students cannot practice or participate in practices or scheduled contests until all forms and agreements are signed and completed in the current online-portal (OneView link: https://www.fairfieldunion.org/CurrentStudentRegistration.aspx) and a current Pre-Participation Physical is on file in the office of the athletic director.

A. PROOF OF HEALTH INSURANCE

a. All students must have proper insurance coverage before participating in practice sessions or try-outs. The school district does not carry insurance to cover students' athletic injuries. A parent/guardian will need to fill in and sign the insurance verification section of the "Acknowledgment of Athletic Policies Agreement" showing they possess a family insurance plan.

B. SPORTS PHYSICAL

a. Each athlete must provide an OHSAA Pre-Participation Physical Evaluation form prior to any tryout, practice or competition. This document must be signed by the parent/guardian, athlete, and by the physician who certifies that the student is physically able to participate. A copy of the forms can be found via the following link: https://www.fairfieldunion.org/FormsLinks.aspx. Only one physical evaluation form is required in a 12-month span.

C. ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY

a. **Ohio High School Athletic Association (OHSAA) Eligibility** - The Fairfield Union Schools comply with the academic eligibility standards set by the OHSAA.
b. Each athlete must meet the Ohio High School Athletic Association and Fairfield Union Local School District eligibility requirements as outlined below:
    i. Eligibility for each grading period is determined by the grades that an athlete receives during the preceding grading period. **Semester averages, exams, or yearly grade averages have no effect on eligibility.**

ii. Grades 9-12: a student must be enrolled in school during the preceding grading period in order to maintain eligibility. During the preceding grading period, the student must receive passing grades in the equivalent of a minimum of **five one-credit courses** that count toward graduation. (NOTE: For the fall quarter, a freshman is eligible as long as passing grades were obtained in five courses during the fourth quarter of the eighth grade year.)

iii. Grades 7-8: a student must receive passing grades in **five courses** carried the preceding grading period in which the student was enrolled. A student enrolling in seventh grade for the first time will be eligible for the first grading period regardless of any previous academic achievement.

iv. Summer school grades/credits may not be used to substitute for failing grades from the last grading period of the regular school year.

v. The eligibility or ineligibility of a student continues until the start of the fifth school day of the next grading period, at which time the grades from the preceding grading period become effective.

c. **Local Eligibility - Policy IGDK**

i. **Weekly Grade Check Grades 7-12 (**Weekly Grade Eligibility) - The following criteria applies for athletes in grades 7-12 when determining weekly eligibility:

1. A student-athlete who has **<u>one</u>** failing grade will be placed on probation. The head coach will be notified and will follow up with the student-athlete.
2. A student-athlete who has **<u>two</u>** failing grades will be denied participation in scrimmages and games until the student-athlete has one or fewer failing grades. The athlete may continue to practice during this time.
3. A student-athlete who has **<u>three or more</u>** failing grades will not be allowed to participate in any team activity until the student-athlete has two or fewer failing grades.

d. Quarterly Grade Point Average (GPA) Eligibility

1. In addition to the weekly and OHSAA standards, and in compliance with State law, students in grades 7-12 must maintain a minimum GPA, with the following stipulations:
    a. Students must have a minimum GPA of 2.0 the previous grading period.
    b. Should a student fall short of the minimum GPA, a total of two waivers may be requested. (Note: Students must still meet the eligibility standard for the weekly and OHSAA requirements.)
    c. All requests for waivers must be submitted in writing to the athletic director. The athlete will then receive the decision of the athletic director in writing within three school days.

d. Progress Toward Graduation

i. Students should make reasonable progress toward graduation in order to be eligible to participate.

1. Beginning of Grade 10 - Credits Required: 4.5

2. Beginning of Grade 11 - Credits Required: 9.0
3. Beginning of Grade 12 - Credits Required: 14.0

ii. If a student received home instruction in the grading period preceding participation, the student must meet any academic requirements established by the State Board of Education for the continuation of home instruction to be eligible to participate in the program.

iii. If a student did not receive home instruction in the grading period preceding participation, the student's academic performance during the preceding grading period must have met any academic standards established by the District for eligibility to participate in the program.

iv. Any student who commences home instruction after the beginning of the school year and at that time was considered ineligible to participate in extracurricular activities for failure to meet academic requirements or any other requirements will be ineligible to participate in the same semester the student was deemed ineligible.

D. ATTENDANCE/ELIGIBILITY

a. In order to participate in a school-day practice or contest, a student-athlete must be in attendance the entire school day. Field trips, medical/dental appointments (with a physician's note), special family situations, or extenuating circumstances may be excused by an administrator. Final judgment rests with the administration. A team member under disciplinary in-school or out-of-school suspension for any reason forfeits his/her participation rights for practices, tryouts, interscholastic contests, or other team functions while suspended.

E. OHSAA PARENT MEETING

a. Student-athletes and their parents/guardians will be required to attend a preseason parent meeting one time per school year. The meeting will cover OHSAA and school policies concerning athletics. The athlete and parent must complete the attendance verification form provided at the time of the meeting.

F. SPORTS FEES

a. After the OHSAA eligibility roster has been set for each sport, coaches will inform student-athletes and parents that sports fees should be paid. Fees should be paid by the deadline issued by the athletic director through the coach in order for student-athletes to continue participation. High School Sports Fees are $50 per sport; Middle Sports Fees are $25 per sport.

G. DENIAL OF PARTICIPATION

a. The removal of a student-athlete from participation in the athletics program will be considered final unless a hearing has been requested by the student and/or parent. A request for a hearing must be made in writing to the building principal within 72 hours of the date of the denial of participation becoming effective.

H. OHIO HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION RULES

a. To be eligible for interscholastic athletics, students in Grades 7-12 must meet the state regulations as set forth in the OHSAA Eligibility Guides.

b. High School OHSAA Link: https://ohsaaweb.blob.core.windows.net/files/Eligibility/OtherEligibiltyDocs/EligibilityGuideHS.pdf
c. 7th-8th Grade OHSAA Link: https://ohsaaweb.blob.core.windows.net/files/Eligibility/OtherEligibiltyDocs/EligibilityGuideMS.pdf
d. As an overview, these regulations cover the following:
    - Scholarship
    - Semesters of Enrollment
    - Age
    - Enrollment
    - Residence Requirements
    - Non-Enrolled Students
    - Transfers
    - International & Exchange Students
    - Amateurism/Awards
    - Recruiting
    - Open Gyms/Facilities
    - Coaching Instruction Permissions
    - Participation on Non-School Teams
    - Alcohol, Tobacco, Drugs and Steroids
    - Preparticipation Evaluations
    - Concussion and Sudden Cardiac Arrest Mgmt.
    - Expectations on Sporting Behavior

I. ONLINE REGISTRATION PORTAL – ONEVIEW

a. Each parent/guardian and athlete shall read all of the posted material through the OneView Portal (https://www.fairfieldunion.org/CurrentStudentRegistration.aspx) and certify that they understand the athletic eligibility rules and policies of the school district. All forms with the exception of the OHSAA Required Meeting Form and the Athlete Pre-Participation Physical are signed electronically through the OneView Portal.
    i. Forms included in the OneView Portal:
        1. Concussion Information Sheet
        2. Sudden Cardiac Arrest and Lindsay's Law form
        3. Acknowledgement of Athletic, Extra & Co-Curricular Participation Rules
        4. Drug Testing Policy and Expectations form
        5. Proof of Insurance Statement

TRYOUTS

Tryouts for athletic programs are open to all students providing they meet the standards for participation outlined above. In certain sports, more students try out than can be kept on a team. When this situation occurs, roster reduction is necessary. Roster reduction is a difficult process and all coaches should realize that sensitivity and communication are essential. During the tryout period the coach must explain the expectations and criteria used to select players for the team. It is the coach's responsibility to evaluate and communicate with the athletes during the tryout period and decide which student-athletes will be placed on the team roster. Students who do not make the team roster should be informed in person by the coach. Coaches have discretionary authority in choosing their teams.

Coaches and/or Administrators reserve the right to deny any athlete the ability to join a team after the first official OHSAA day of practice has begun. Athletes may not join a team after three (3) days past the official OHSAA start date. The following exceptions may apply:

The following exceptions may apply:

1. Student-athletes who are cut from a team in a sport where tryouts are conducted may join a non-tryout sport with approval from that coach.
    - Student-athletes are required to make contact with the new team's coach immediately following notification they have not made the tryout team's roster.
2. During the fall season, 7th & 9th grade students may join a team during the week school begins provided they have not been a member of another school sports team prior to the start of the school year.
3. If a student moves into the district after the first official day of practice, the student-athlete would be given the opportunity to be evaluated for participation on a team without penalty. They would still be subjected to OHSAA guidelines.
    - Student-athletes are required to make contact with the team's coach or athletic director immediately upon enrollment.
    - Once approved to join the team, OneView registration must be completed immediately.
4. An athlete is considered to join a team when they register online for the sport. If the athlete misses practices after that point, we will treat that as a team issue and should be dealt with by the coach in accordance with team rules.

Any athlete permitted to join a sports team after the deadline utilizing an exception listed in this policy who have completed all eligibility requirements may not compete in a scrimmage or game for a minimum of 14 calendar days to ensure adequate time for conditioning and acclimation to the sport.

TEAM SELECTION

It is reasonable to expect that varsity teams will be composed of the student-athletes who provide the team with the greatest opportunity for success. It is important to recognize that high school athletes who work hard and can contribute to a team's success should be given the opportunity to be on a varsity team.

SENIORS ON VARSITY/JUNIOR VARSITY

Players who have participated as members of junior varsity teams should be given every consideration to be on varsity as a senior; however, a coach must evaluate that player's attitude, effort, character, and skill level against all other candidates for the team. Varsity team membership is an earned privilege, not a guaranteed entitlement for senior student-athletes. Coaches are discouraged from playing seniors on their junior varsity teams.

SELECTED FOR A TEAM

A student must be eligible according to the standards listed in this section in order to be a member of a 7th Grade, 8th Grade, freshman, junior varsity, or varsity team. Head coaches are **required** to conduct a team meeting to include all players, their parents/guardians, and coaches in the program. Program philosophy as well as expectations and specific team rules should be shared. Team rules regarding student-athletes and parents will be discussed at this meeting.

After an athlete is selected to a team - the following rules and obligations are required in addition to the REQUIREMENTS FOR PARTICIPATION OUTLINED EARLIER IN THIS HANDBOOK.

COMMITMENT/MISSING PRACTICE OR GAMES

During tryouts and after team selection, the head coach will explain expectations related to practice times and locations, as well as game schedules. Students should expect to make at least a six-day, two-to-three-hour-per-day commitment to the team each week. An athlete should always consult her/his coach before missing practice. Missing practice or a competition without good reason will be dealt with by the head coach and her/his team rules and consequences.

FAMILY VACATIONS/EXTENDED ABSENCES

Each parent/guardian and athlete must determine if the athlete will be able to meet the commitment of time for the duration of the sport season. Work and/or vacation are not acceptable reasons for missing practice and/or games during their season of sport as designated by the Ohio High School Athletic Association calendar. Consequences will be determined by the head coach and her/his team rules.

TEAM RULES

Coaches of each sport have the authority to set their own rules and expectations which are approved by the Athletic Director. Coaches have the responsibility and authority to enforce these rules. An athlete and her/his family agree to these expectations by virtue of agreeing to participate on the team. Questions concerning team rules should be addressed with the coach at the pre-season parent meeting.

TRANSPORTATION

Athletes are expected to ride school-provided transportation to and from contests. Exceptions to this are to be made at the discretion of the athletic director and/or building principal. The student's legal guardian must sign-out the student-athlete on the coach's tracking form.

EQUIPMENT

Students have an obligation and responsibility to properly care for and return all equipment issued to them. Students failing to turn in equipment or returning equipment damaged through misuse are responsible to meet the current replacement cost for such equipment. Payment is required at the time of the loss. Payment must be received prior to the next season of athletic involvement or graduation, whichever comes first. Students may not be allowed to try out for an athletic team if they have an equipment obligation.

ATHLETIC AWARDS

Prior to the beginning of each season, coaches should clearly define and communicate criteria for earning varsity letters. These criteria are sport-specific. Student managers are eligible for varsity letters. At seasonal athletic banquets all varsity letter winners will receive recognition. Individual awards may also be given out at the discretion of the coach of each sport.

HIGH SCHOOL AWARDS

1. Certificates of participation will be awarded to all non-varsity letter winners completing a full season.
2. Varsity "F" Letter - Given to an athlete as a first-time letterman. Head Coach's criteria will be used to determine letterman status.
3. Pins & Bars - given to identify earned letters in varsity sports and number of varsity letters earned
4. Scholar Athlete Recognition - awarded to student-athletes who maintain a 3.5 GPA during each sports season they participate
5. Plaques - awarded to 4-year letter winners in the same sport
6. Special Award Plaque- 4 awards provided to each sport for individual accomplishments
7. Patches
    a. Team Patches - MSL Champion, District Champion, Regional Qualifier (if District Champion is not offered in the sport), Regional Champion, State Qualifier, State Champion (*NOTE: Patches may be combined as determined at the athletic director's discretion.*)
    b. Individual Patches - MSL Champion, District Champion, Regional Champion, State Qualifier, State Champion (*NOTE: Patches may be combined at the athletic director's discretion*.)

QUITTING OR DROPPING A SPORT

Quitting is an unacceptable habit. On occasion an athlete may find it necessary to drop a sport for a good reason. If this is the case, the following procedure must be followed:

1. Consult with the head coach.
2. Report the situation to the athletic director.
3. Return any and all equipment.

If an athlete in "Sport A" quits or is barred from participating on that team, he/she is not eligible to join "Sport B" during the same season and may not begin organized practice or conditioning for a sport in the upcoming season until all members of "Sport A" are eligible. This rule may be waived by mutual consent of all coaches involved and the athletic director.

HAZING

No student or group of students shall take part in an act done to haze by way of initiation, or to harass by banter, ridicule, criticism, or derogative racial comment.

SEASON

Once an athlete begins practice for a particular sport, she/he may not participate in another sport for the remainder of that season, unless such participation begins before the first contest and the athlete has permission from the coaches of both sports and the athletic director.

Students are encouraged to get involved in as many school activities as possible. Unfortunately, due to the necessary time commitments for all activities, it is impossible for students to participate in every activity they want to. Along with athletic director approval, each coach will determine the criteria necessary for a student to remain a member of the team. Student-athletes will be made aware of these criteria prior to the selection of the team.

The athletic department and coaches are opposed to specialization in sports. The benefits of extracurricular participation should not be limited to one season per year. Every athlete is encouraged to participate in every sport possible. Every coach in the system will be expected to encourage their athletes to participate in other sports.

Should a student-athlete choose to participate in more than one sport during the same season, the athlete must declare a primary and secondary sport before the seasons begin. When conflicts arise between the primary and secondary sports, the coaches of each sport will work together in an attempt to resolve the scheduling conflict. Should the coaches not be able to resolve scheduling conflicts that arise for shared athletes, the administration will have the final say in the resolution of the conflict. Primary sport designation for the athlete will carry additional weight in the resolution of the conflict, but other factors may be considered by the administration. If a student-athlete decides to quit their primary sport, the rules contained in the "Quitting or Dropping a Sport" section of the Athletic Participation Handbook would apply to the student-athlete.

CONFLICT POLICY (SCHEDULING OF EVENTS)

Fairfield Union encourages students to be active with multiple groups and organizations as part of their educational experience. While the District recognizes the value of students having a broad range of experiences, it is inevitable that conflicts will arise when students are members of multiple student organizations, and thus, efforts will be made to schedule events in a manner so as to minimize conflicts. It is important to note that students share in the responsibility to help avoid and resolve conflicts when possible. When a student does have a conflict, the student should take the responsibility of informing the supervising adults, so the supervising adults can devise a resolution.

When multiple school events are in conflict, the staff members responsible for each event in conflict will work with school administration to determine a resolution to the conflict. Multiple factors will be considered in determining a resolution when events are in conflict with each other. Ultimately, the building principal will have final say in determining a resolution to any conflicts.

COLLEGE/CAREER GUIDANCE

One of the most important decisions facing high school students is what to do with their lives after they graduate. The members of the Fairfield Union High School athletic staff are eager to assist all student-athletes with this extremely important decision. They may be able to answer questions, contact schools and/or coaches, send videos, and write letters of recommendation. If

a student's goal is to compete athletically at the collegiate level, it is important to be aware of the ever-changing National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) regulations.

NCAA CLEARINGHOUSE

The NCAA Clearinghouse is a central repository for information on high school curricula. The NCAA maintains this information to conduct evaluations of incoming freshmen. The NCAA evaluates high school graduates' academic records in light of current NCAA initial-eligibility requirements. A prospective collegiate athlete needs to apply and receive a final certification by the Clearinghouse in order to participate in college athletics at the Division I or II levels. A student does not need to apply if he/she will attend a junior college, NAIA, or NCAA Division III institution. Students can pick up Clearinghouse forms in the high school Student Success Center.

USE OF FACILITIES/SUPERVISION

Students are expected to treat all facilities, both home and away, with proper care. Fairfield Union Local School District has some excellent facilities and only proper care and respect will keep them this way. Vandalism is cause for dismissal from a team and further disciplinary action by the administration. Athletes using any facility must be under the direct supervision of a **Board of Education Approved Coach**. Under no circumstances should any workout be unsupervised.

SCHOOL DISCIPLINE OBLIGATIONS

A student-athlete with a school disciplinary obligation is expected to fulfill the disciplinary obligation before reporting to an athletic practice and/or game. Suspensions, including those that begin on a Friday, shall render a student ineligible for competition over the weekend or until the regular classes resume. Students cannot expect, and should not request, disciplinary action to be postponed or canceled for any athletic reason. The athletic department reserves the right to remove a student from a team for excessive disciplinary problems. It is expected that our athletes be model citizens both in and out of school.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Athletic involvement is highly emotional and very time-consuming. Sometimes conflicts arise between students, coaches, and parents; however, the student's interest is best served when each participant understands the position of the other. This understanding can only be accomplished by open and honest communication. When conflicts or issues arise, it is important that they may be addressed immediately, and as directly as possible, so that they can be promptly resolved.

Issues which are not appropriate to discuss with a coach:

1. Team Strategy
2. Playing Time
3. Other Student-Athletes

Issues which are appropriate to discuss with coach:

1. The treatment of your child physically and mentally

2. Ways to help your child improve
3. Concerns about your child's behavior
4. College options and recruiting

Students and their parents should use the following process as a guideline when seeking resolution to conflicts or issues between an athlete and a coach:

1. **Step #1: Contacting the Coach**
    a. The best solution is to ask the coach, either over the phone, via email, or in person, if an appointment could be made to discuss the issue. The athlete should present the conflict/issue to the coach as soon as possible. Contact may be made by the athlete's parent, **but not prior to 24 hours** following a contest. In order for the contact to be as productive as possible, times that athletes and parents **should avoid** are:
        i. Immediately prior to, during, or following a contest
        ii. During an active practice session
        iii. When other students are present or when it would be readily visible to others that the discussion is taking place
        iv. When it is apparent that there is not sufficient time to allow for a complete discussion
2. **Step #2: Contacting the Athletic Director**
    a. If a satisfactory solution is not reached through direct contact with the coach, the student and/or parent should contact the athletic director. The coach should be informed that this contact is going to be made.
    b. If this discussion does not result in a satisfactory conclusion, then a meeting will be scheduled involving all parties in an attempt to reach a satisfactory resolution.
3. **Step #3: Contacting the Principal**
    a. If there is still not a satisfactory resolution, the student or parent may contact the high school principal. The athletic director should be informed that this contact is going to be made.

SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDELINES FOR STUDENT-ATHLETES

We recognize and support the student-athletes' rights to freedom of speech, expression and association, including the use of social networks. In this context, however, each student-athlete must remember that playing and competing for Fairfield Union Local Schools is a privilege. As a student-athlete, you represent Fairfield Union Local Schools and the communities within our district. You are expected to portray yourself, your team, and the School District in a positive manner at all times.

Here are some guidelines for social networking site usage:

1. **Everything you post is public information**. Any text or photo placed online is completely out of your control the moment it is placed online, even if you limit access to your site. Information (including pictures, videos, and comments) may be accessible even after you remove it. Once you post a photo or comment on a social networking site, that photo or comment becomes the property of the website and may be searchable even after you remove it.
2. **What you post may affect your future**. Many employers and college admissions officers review social networking sites as part of their overall evaluation of an applicant. Carefully consider how you want people to perceive you before you give them a chance to

misinterpret your information (including pictures, videos, comments, and posters).

3. Similar to comments made in person, the Fairfield Union Local Schools Athletic Department will not tolerate disrespectful comments and behavior online, such as:
    a. Derogatory language or remarks that may harm: the District, teammates or coaches; other Fairfield Union student-athletes, teachers, or coaches; student-athletes, coaches, or representatives of other schools, including comments that may disrespect opponents.
    b. Incriminating photos, videos or statements depicting: violence; hazing; sexual harassment; full or partial nudity; inappropriate gestures; vandalism; stalking; underage drinking; selling, possessing, or using controlled substances; or any other behaviors deemed inappropriate.
    c. Creating a serious danger to the safety of another person or making a credible threat of serious physical or emotional injury to another person.
    d. Indicating knowledge of an unreported school or team violation, regardless if the violation was unintentional or intentional.

In review, students should not have a false sense of security about the rights to freedom of speech. Understand that freedom of speech is not unlimited. The online social network sites are **NOT** a place where you can say and do whatever you want without repercussions. The information you post on a social networking site is considered public information. Protect yourself by maintaining a self-image of which you can be proud of for years to come.

***Violation of this policy can result in punishment including, but not limited to, dismissal from a team or further involvement in Fairfield Union athletics.**

ATHLETIC RULES OF PARTICIPATION

Students participating in extra-curricular and co-curricular activities are in a select group. You are some of Fairfield Union's very best! Students who participate in extracurricular activities make a major commitment in terms of time and energy to the team or group, to the school and to yourselves. It is the intent of the Board of Education and staff that this experience be as positive for you and other students as possible; therefore, certain standards of conduct are expected. The following rules have been adopted for high school and middle school (Grades 7-8) athletic, music, and all other extra-curricular activities.

A. General

1. Participants will be advised in writing of all rules and regulations prior to and as a condition of their participation.
2. Participants will be expected to pay their mandatory sports fees by the date set by the athletic director before participation is denied. Sports fees are non-refundable unless the student was cut during tryouts and the fee was already paid.
3. The individual activity season is defined as all phases of student participation beginning with any organized pre-season conditioning/activity until the conclusion of participation with their presence at the designated activity awards program.
4. These rules become effective at the time of signing and remain in effect one year from the day of signing, and they apply 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

5. Students who become members of extra-curricular/co-curricular activities are expected to avoid gatherings and activities which may lead to a violation of existing rules or cause undue criticism of the team/organization of which they are members.
6. Parents/Guardians may appeal the administrative ruling to these rules of participation. The appeal must be submitted in writing to the building principal within 5 school days of initial notification of suspension.
7. When an appeal (or test of sample "B" relating to drug testing) is requested the athlete will remain ineligible until the appeal ruling is made or "B" sample results are received.
8. The administration reserves the right to address situations or procedures not specified within the Athletic Participation Handbook.

B. Substance Use/Possession/Abuse Rules

1. Participants shall not possess, use, transmit, conceal, sell or show evidence of illegal use of narcotics, alcohol, drugs or drug paraphernalia.
2. Tobacco and tobacco products, including, but not limited to vaping and vaping devices, are prohibited, regardless of the age of the participant.
3. Use of any substance legal or illegal in such a manner as to cause intoxication is also prohibited.
4. A student who has been found to have been present at a location where legal or illegal substances have been used illegally will be subject to disciplinary actions.
5. Disciplinary action will be determined by the type of offense and such action will be based upon the number of rule violations that the student has had previously.
6. A violation of one of the tobacco, alcohol, legal or illegal controlled substance provisions of these rules will be cumulative. However, violations will reset when a student-athlete transitions from Grade 8 to Grade 9.
7. All students violating the alcohol, legal or illegal controlled substance provision of these rules will be recommended for counseling.

C. Administrative Guidelines

1. A participation day is defined as any day the activity is in season according to OHSAA rules and in which a practice, contest or performance is or may be scheduled. For the purpose of athletics, participation days will extend from one sport season to another. The following will be observed:
2. **Tobacco, Vaping, E-Cigarettes**
    i. Repeated violations of these rules will be cumulative.However, violations will reset when a student-athlete transitions from Grade 8 to Grade 9.
    ii. **First offense**
        1. Will result in loss of 10% of regular season and/or playoff contests as defined by the OHSAA.
        2. The student-athlete may continue to practice; however, the student-athlete will not be permitted to participate in scrimmages.
        3. Scrimmages will not count toward the suspension total.
    iii. **Second offense:**
        1. Will result in loss of 40% of regular season and/or playoff contests as defined by the OHSAA.

2. The student-athlete may continue to practice; however, the student-athlete will not be permitted to participate in scrimmages.
3. Scrimmages will not count toward the suspension total.
4. The student-athlete will have an appointment with a Certified Chemical Dependency Counselor (or at an agency certified by the Ohio Department of Health or the Ohio Department of Alcohol and Drug Addiction Services) for a chemical dependency assessment and then follow the recommendations of the counselor. (If treatment is recommended, it must be with an Ohio Certified Chemical Dependency Counselor).
5. **Failure to complete all steps will result in the student-athlete being denied membership in athletics for one calendar year.**

iv. **Third offense:**

1. The student athlete will be denied the privilege of participation in athletics at Fairfield Union Local Schools for the remainder of their high school career.

3. **Use or Possession of Alcohol/Narcotics or other legal or illegal substances:**

i. Repeated violations of these rules will be cumulative. However, violations will reset when a student-athlete transitions from Grade 8 to Grade 9.

ii. **First offense:**

1. Will result in being denied participation for 20% of regular season and/or playoff contests as defined by the OHSAA.
2. The student-athlete will have an appointment with a Certified Chemical Dependency Counselor (or at an agency certified by the Ohio Department of Health or the Ohio Department of Alcohol and Drug Addiction Services) for a chemical dependency assessment and then follow the recommendations of the counselor. (If treatment is recommended, it must be with an Ohio Certified Chemical Dependency Counselor).
3. The student-athlete shall submit to weekly drug tests for the next (6) six weeks, if requested by the Athletic Director, at the parents' expense.
4. The student-athlete may continue to practice; however, the student-athlete will not be permitted to participate in scrimmages.
5. Scrimmages will not count toward the suspension total.
6. **Failure to complete all steps will result in the student-athlete being denied membership in athletics for one calendar year.**

iii. **Second Offense:**

1. For the second offense, the student athlete will be denied membership in athletics for one calendar year.
2. The student-athlete will have an appointment with a Certified Chemical Dependency Counselor (or at an agency certified by the

Ohio Department of Health or the Ohio Department of Alcohol and Drug Addiction Services) for a chemical dependency assessment and then follow the recommendations of the counselor. (If treatment is recommended, it must be with an Ohio Certified Chemical Dependency Counselor.)

3. The student-athlete shall submit to monthly drug tests for the next year, if requested by the Athletic Director, at the parents' expense.
4. Failure to complete all steps will result in the student-athlete being denied membership in athletics at Fairfield Union Local Schools for the remainder of his/her career.

iv. Third Offense:

1. On the third offense, the student athlete will be denied the privilege of participation in athletics at Fairfield Union Local Schools for the remainder of his/her high school career.

4. Use of alcohol/narcotics or other substances prior to or during athletic practice or contests:

i. The student shall be denied participation for a period of 15 to 90 days as recommended by the athletic director with input from the head coach.

5. Selling or Distribution of Other Substances:

Repeated violations of this rule will be cumulative in Grades 7-12.

i. First offense:

1. Will result in denial of participation not to exceed 90 days.

ii. Second offense:

1. Will result in denial of participation for the remainder of the student-athlete's career at Fairfield Union Local Schools.

6. Coaches are authorized and encouraged to investigate any allegations of substance use or other violation of this policy.

i. Violation of any one or more of the following rules may result in immediate denial of participation from the activity for as long as 90 days.

ii. If a violation of these rules occurs, the coach will notify the Athletic Director who will inform the parents/guardians of the action taken as well as any other pertinent information.

7. Any student-athlete who is denied the privilege of participation in athletics at Fairfield Union Local Schools for the remainder of his/her career, may submit an appeal to the Superintendent no later than 14 calendar days from the date of the suspension.

i. An appeal panel consisting of the Athletic Director, High School Principals, Middle School Principals, and/or the Superintendent may hear the case and notify the parents of a decision.

CONSENT TO PERFORM RANDOM DRUG TESTING

SCHOOL YEAR: 2026-2027 FOR GRADES 9-12

We hereby consent to allow the student-athlete to undergo random drug testing for the presence of illicit drugs or banned substances in accordance with the Policy and Procedure for Drug Testing of Students in Interscholastic Athletics as approved by the Fairfield Union Local School Board.

We understand that the collection process will be overseen by a qualified vendor.

We understand that any random drug testing samples will be sent only to a certified medical laboratory for actual testing, and that the samples will be coded to provide confidentiality.

We hereby give our consent to the medical vendor selected by the Fairfield Union Local School Board, their laboratory, doctors, employees, or agents, or together with any clinic, hospital or laboratory designated by the selected medical vendor to perform random drug testing for the detection of illicit drugs or banned substances.

We further give permission to the medical vendor selected by the Fairfield Union Local School Board, its doctors, employees, or agents to release all results of these tests to the Medical Review Officer (MRO) working for the medical vendor. We understand these results will be forwarded to the Athletic Director and will also be made available to us upon request.

We understand that consent pursuant to this **Informed Consent Agreement** will be effective for all athletic sports in which this student athlete might participate during the current school year.

We hereby release the Fairfield Union Local School Board and its employees from any legal responsibility or liability for the release of such information and records.

This will be deemed a consent pursuant to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, 20 U.S.C. 1232g as amended, and Ohio Revised Code 3319.321, for the release of the test results as authorized by this **Informed Consent Agreement** or as required by law.

INFORMED CONSENT AGREEMENT
ATHLETIC CODE OF CONDUCT

AS A STUDENT:

- I understand and agree that participation in athletic activities is a privilege that may be withdrawn for violations of the Athletic Code of Conduct.
- I have read the Athletic Code of Conduct and thoroughly understand the consequences that I will face if I do not honor my commitment to the Athletic Code of Conduct.
- I understand and realize that there is risk of injury in participating in athletic activities.

- I understand that when I participate in any athletic program, I will be subjected to random drug testing, and I refuse, I will not be allowed to practice or participate in any athletic activities. I have read the consent and agree to its terms. (Grades 9-12)
- I understand this is binding while a student at Fairfield Union Middle School or High School (grades 7-12).

AS A PARENT/GUARDIAN/CUSTODIAN:

- I have read the Athletic Code of Conduct and understand the responsibilities of my son/daughter/ward as a participant in athletic activities in the Fairfield Union Local Schools.
- I pledge to promote healthy lifestyles for all student athletes of the Fairfield Union Local Schools.
- I understand and realize that there is an assumed risk of injury involved for my son/daughter/ward as a participant in athletic activities.
- I understand that my son/daughter/ward, when participating in any athletic program, will be subjected to random drug testing, and if they refuse, will not be allowed to practice or participate in any athletic activities. I have read the consent and agree to its terms. (Grades 9-12)
- I understand this is binding while my son/daughter/ward is a student at Fairfield Union Middle School or High School (Grades 7-12).

I have read and agree to follow all the rules listed in the training rules, athletic code of conduct, and drug testing procedures (Grades 9-12), and have reviewed the athletic accident insurance statement. Further, I understand that participation in an extra-curricular activity is a privilege and not a right and as such I recognize that I have a responsibility and an obligation to my supervisors and fellow students to set a good example for my school and community.

*** DIGITAL SIGNATURES COLLECTED DURING ONLINE REGISTRATION ***