

Student-Parent Activity Handbook

Section 1 Extracurricular Activity Philosophy

Extracurricular activity programs enrich the curriculum of the school by making available a wide variety of activities in which a student can participate. Extracurricular activity programs are considered an integral part of the school's program of education that provide experiences that will help students physically, mentally and emotionally.

The element of competition and winning, though it exists, is controlled to the point it does not determine the nature or success of the program. This is considered to be educationally and psychologically sound because of the training it offers for living in a competitive society. Students are stimulated to want to win and excel, but the principles of good sportsmanship prevail at all times to enhance the educational values of contests. Participation in activities, both as a competitor and as a student spectator, is an integral part of the students' educational experiences. Such participation is a privilege that carries with it responsibilities to the school, team, student body, community and the students themselves. In their play and their conduct, students are representing all of these groups. Such experiences contribute to the knowledge, skill and emotional patterns that they possess, thereby making them better individuals and citizens.

Safety

The District's philosophy is to maintain an activities program which recognizes the importance of the safety of the participants. To ensure safety, participants are required to become fully familiar with the dangers and safety measures established for the activity in which they participate, to adhere to all safety instructions for the activity in which they participate, to inform their coach or sponsor when they are injured or have health problems that require their activities be restricted, and to exercise common sense.

Warning for Participants and Parents

The purpose of this warning is to bring your attention to the existence of potential dangers associated with athletic injuries. Participation in any intramural or athletic activity may involve injury of some type. The severity of such injury can range from minor cuts, bruises, sprains and muscle strains to more serious injuries to the body's bones, joints, ligaments, tendons, or muscles, to catastrophic injuries to the head, neck and spinal cord. On rare occasions, injuries can be so severe as to result in total disability, paralysis or death. Even with appropriate coaching, appropriate safety instruction, appropriate protective equipment and strict observance of the rules, injuries are still a possibility.

Section 2 Extracurricular Activity Code of Conduct

Purpose of the Code of Conduct. Participation in extracurricular activities is a privilege. The privilege carries with it responsibilities to the school, team, student body, and the community. Participants are not only representing themselves, but also their school and community in all of their actions. Others judge our school on the student participants' conduct and attitudes, and how they contribute to our school spirit and community image.

The student participants' performance and devotion to high ideals and values make their school and community proud. Consequently, participation is dependent upon adherence to this Code of Conduct and the school district's policies, procedures and rules.

Scope of the Code of Conduct.

Activities Subject to the Code of Conduct: The Code of Conduct applies to all extracurricular activities. Extracurricular activities means student activities or organizations which are supervised or administered by the school district which do not count toward graduation or grade advancement and in which participation is not otherwise required by the school.

Extracurricular activities include but are not limited to: all sports, cheerleading, dance team, Pep Club, Pep Band, vocal, band, speech and drama, One-Act, FBLA, FCCLA, Spanish Club, Art Club, Student Council, Student Advisory Board, National Honor Society, and other school sponsored organizations and activities. The Code of Conduct also applies to participation in school sponsored activities such as school dances and royalty for such activities.

A participant means a student who participates in, has participated in, or will participate in an extracurricular activity.

When: The Code of Conduct rules apply to conduct which occurs at any time during the school year, and also includes the time frame which begins with the official starting day of the fall sport season established by the NSAA and extends to the last day of the spring sport season established by the NSAA, whether or not the student is a participant in an activity at the time of such conduct.

The rules also apply when a student is participating or scheduled to participate in an extracurricular activity that is held outside the school year or the NSAA season. For example, if an FBLA or FCCLA student plans to participate in a conference in July and commits a Code of Conduct infraction in June, the student may be suspended from participating in the conference. Conduct during the summer months may also affect a student's participation under the team selection and playing time guidelines.

Where: The Code of Conduct rules apply regardless of whether the conduct occurs on and off school grounds. If the conduct occurs on school grounds, at a school function or event, or in a school vehicle, the student may also be subject to further discipline under the general student code of conduct. A student who is suspended or expelled from school shall not be permitted to participate in activities during the period of the suspension or expulsion, and may also receive an extended activity suspension.

Grounds for Extracurricular Activity Discipline. Students who participate in extracurricular activities are expected to demonstrate cooperation, patience, pride, character, self respect, self-discipline, teamwork, sportsmanship, and respect for authority. The following conduct rules have been determined by the Board of Education to be reasonably necessary to aid students, further school purposes, and prevent interference with the educational process. Such conduct constitutes grounds for suspension from participation in extracurricular activities and grounds for other restrictions or disciplinary measures related to extracurricular activity participation:

1. Willfully disobeying any reasonable written or oral request of a school staff member, or the voicing of disrespect to those in authority.

2. Use of violence, force, coercion, threat, intimidation, bullying, harassment or similar conduct in a manner that constitutes a substantial interference with school or extracurricular activity purposes or making any communication that a reasonable person would interpret as a serious expression of an intent to harm or cause injury to another.
3. Willfully causing or attempting to cause substantial damage to property, stealing or attempting to steal property, repeated damage or theft involving property or setting or attempting to set a fire of any magnitude.
4. Causing or attempting to cause personal injury to any person, including a school employee, school volunteer, or student. Personal injury caused by accident, self-defense, or other action undertaken on the reasonable belief that it was necessary to protect another person shall not constitute a violation.
5. Threatening or intimidating any student for the purpose of, or with the intent of, obtaining money or anything of value from a student or making a threat which causes or may be expected to cause a disruption to school operations.
6. Knowingly possessing, handling, or transmitting any object or material that is ordinarily or generally considered a weapon or that has the appearance of a weapon, or bringing or possessing any explosive device, including fireworks, on school grounds or at a school function or event, or in a manner that is unlawful or contrary to school activity rules.
7. Selling, using, possessing or dispensing alcohol, tobacco, narcotics, drugs, a controlled substance, or an inhalant; being under the influence of any of the above; possession of drug paraphernalia, or the selling, using, possessing, or dispensing of an imitation controlled substance as defined in section 28-401 of the Nebraska statutes, or material represented to be alcohol, narcotics, drugs, a controlled substance or inhalant. (Note: Refer to “Drug and Alcohol Violations” for further information).
8. Public indecency.
9. Sexual assault or attempting to sexually assault any person. Engaging in sexual conduct, even if consensual, on school grounds or at a school function or event.
10. Engaging in any activity forbidden by law which constitutes a danger to other students, interferes with school purposes or an extracurricular activity, or reflects a lack of high ideals.
11. Repeated violation of any of the school rules.
12. Truancy or failure to attend assigned classes or assigned activities; or tardiness to school, assigned classes or assigned activities.
13. The use of language, written or oral, or conduct, including gestures, which is profane or abusive to a school employee, school volunteer, or student. Profane or abusive language or conduct includes, but is not limited to, that which is commonly understood and intended to be derogatory toward a group or individual based upon race, gender, national origin, or religion.
14. Dressing or grooming in a manner which is dangerous to the student’s health and safety or a danger to the health and safety of others or repeated violations of dress and grooming standards; dressing, grooming, or engaging in speech that is lewd or indecent, vulgar or plainly offensive; dressing, grooming, or engaging in speech that school officials reasonably conclude will materially and substantially disrupt the work and discipline of the school or of an extracurricular activity;

- dressing, grooming, or engaging in speech that a reasonable observer would interpret as advocating illegal drug use.
15. Willfully violating the behavioral expectations for those students riding Sargent Public School buses or vehicles used for activity purposes.
 16. Failure to report for the activity at the beginning of the season. Reporting for one activity may count as reporting on time if there is a change in activity within the season approved by the coach or the supervisor.
 17. Failure to participate in regularly scheduled classes on the day of an extracurricular activity or event.
 18. Failure to attend scheduled practices and meetings. If circumstances arise to prevent the participant's attendance, the validity of the reason will be determined by the coach or sponsor. Every reasonable effort should be made to notify the coach or sponsor prior to any missed practice or meeting.
 19. All other reasonable rules or regulations adopted by the coach or sponsor of an extracurricular activity shall be followed, provided that participants shall be advised by the coach or sponsor of such rules and regulations by written handouts or posting on bulletin boards prior to the violation of the rule or regulation.
 20. Failure to comply with any rule established by the Nebraska School Activities Association, including, but not limited to, the rules relating to eligibility.

All terms used in the Code of Conduct have a less strict meaning than under criminal law and are subject to reasonable interpretation by school officials.

Drug and Alcohol Violations.

Meaning of Terms.

Use or consume includes any level of consumption or use. Use of a controlled substance in the manner prescribed for the student by the student's physician is not a violation.

Under the influence means any level of impairment and includes even the odor of alcohol on the breath or person of a student, or the odor of an illicit drug on the student. Also, it includes being impaired by reason of the abuse of any material used as a stimulant.

Possession includes having control of the substance and also includes being in the same area where the substance is present and no responsible adult present and responsible for the substance. Possession includes situations where, for example:

- (1) Alcohol is in a vehicle in which the student is present. The student is considered to be in possession if the student is aware that the alcohol is in the vehicle, even though the student has not touched or consumed the alcohol; and
- (2) Alcohol is present at a party attended by the student. The student is considered to be in possession if the student is aware that alcohol is at the party and fails to immediately leave the party, even though the student has not touched or consumed the alcohol.

In these situations, a violation would not exist if the alcohol is in the control of a parent or guardian or other responsible adult (age 21 or older) such that students are not allowed to access the alcohol. A violation would also not exist if the student did

not know or have a reasonable basis to know that alcohol would be present, and the student leaves the location where the alcohol is present as soon as the student could safely do so. (Students are expected to leave immediately, but are not to do so in a manner that would endanger them. For example, you are not to leave in a car being driven by a person who has been drinking just to get away from the alcohol party immediately when there is no other way to get home. Instead, you should call for a safe ride home and, while waiting, clearly distance yourself from the alcohol).

Consequences.

Students may be suspended from practices or participation in interscholastic competition or participation in co-curricular activities for violations of the Code of Conduct. The period of suspension or other discipline for such offenses shall be determined by the school administration.

The disciplinary consequence will be determined based on consideration of the seriousness of the offense, any prior violations, the student's compliance with the self-reporting obligations, the student's level of cooperation and willingness to resolve the matter, and the student's demonstration of a commitment to not commit future violations.

Because of the significance of drug and alcohol violations on the student participants, other students and the school, the following consequences are established for such violations:

Drugs and Alcohol.

An activity participant who violates the drug or alcohol rules (other than steroids) shall be prohibited from participating in any extracurricular activity for the following minimum periods:

1. First Violation: 28 days
2. Second Offense: 42 days-The student will be suspended from participation in the activity program for 42 calendar days. Before being allowed to return to practice the student will volunteer to complete a drug/alcohol counseling program (at their own expense.)
3. Reduction for Self-Reporting: If the student has self-reported within 48 hours of the offense, the violation shall be reduced to ~~21~~ 14 days for the first violation only. The student may be allowed to practice during the time of suspension.
4. Third Offense: 90 days-The student will be suspended from participation and practice in the activity programs for 90 calendar days.
5. Fourth Offense - The student will forfeit his or her eligibility for the rest of their high school career at Loup County or Sargent Public Schools.
6. More Serious Violations: In the event of more serious drug or alcohol violations, such as students engaging in use of especially serious drug offenses (cocaine, meth, etc.) or procuring alcohol for minors, the consequence of the violation is not limited by the foregoing, and may be established in the good discretion of the administration.

Steroid Offenses. A student who possesses, dispenses, delivers, or administers anabolic steroids shall be prohibited from participating in any extracurricular activity for the following minimum periods:

1. First Violation: 30 consecutive days.
2. Second or Any Subsequent Offense: One calendar year.

When Suspensions Begin. All suspensions begin with the next scheduled activity in which the student is a participant, after the determination by school officials of the sanction to be imposed; provided that the school officials shall have the discretion to establish a time period for the suspension that makes the suspension have a real consequence for the student. During a suspension, participants may be required or permitted to practice at the sole discretion of the coach or activity sponsor. Suspensions in the Spring will be carried over to the Fall when the suspension has not been fully served or when determined appropriate for the suspension to have a real consequence for the student.

Letters and Post-Season Honors. A student who commits a Code of Conduct violation is:

1. Eligible to letter, provided the student meets the criteria of the coach or sponsor.
2. Not eligible to receive honors during the sport or activity in which they are participating at the time of the offense and/or in sports or activities in which they have been suspended due to a code violation. The coach/sponsor, with the Athletic Director's approval, may make an exception where the student has self-reported or otherwise demonstrated excellence in character allowing for such honors.

Self-Reporting. A student who violates the Code of Conduct must self-report. A failure to self-report will lead to a longer suspension or other discipline. The self-report must be made to the principal, athletic director, or the head coach or sponsor of an activity in which the student participates. The student's parent or guardian may initiate the self-reporting process, but the student will be later required to give a written statement of the self-report. The self-report must be made the earlier of: (1) before the end of the next school day after the conduct occurred and (2) before participation in an extracurricular or co-curricular activity.

In making a self-report, the student must identify the events that took place, what conduct the student engaged in, and any witnesses to the student's conduct, and will be required to put this information in a written statement. In the event the student has received a criminal citation, charge, or ticket, and proclaims innocence of a violation, the student will be required to self-report such offense and provide information as to why they should be found innocent, not as it relates to the criminal offense, but as it relates to the Code of Conduct.

All students are expected to be honest and forthright with school officials. In the event the coach or activity sponsor or any school administrator asks a student participant for information pertaining to compliance (or lack of compliance) by the student or other student participants with the Code of Conduct or eligibility conditions for participation in activities, the student is expected to fully, completely, and honestly provide the information. Students may be disciplined for a failure to be honest and forthright.

Determining a Violation Has Occurred. A violation of the Code of Conduct will be determined to have occurred based on any of the following criteria:

1. When a student is cited by law enforcement and school officials have a reasonable basis for determining that grounds for the issuance of the citation exist.

2. When a student is convicted of a criminal offense. Conviction includes, without limitation, a plea of no contest and an adjudication of delinquency by the juvenile court.
3. When a student admits to violating one of the standards of the Code of Conduct.
4. When a student is accused by another person of violating one of the standards of the Code of Conduct and school officials determine that such information is reliable.
5. When school officials otherwise find sufficient evidence to support a determination that a violation has occurred.

Procedures for Extracurricular Discipline. The following procedures are established for suspensions from participation in extracurricular activities:

1. Investigation. The school official(s) considering the suspension will conduct a reasonable investigation of the facts and circumstances and determine whether the suspension will help the student or other students, further school purposes, or prevent an interference with a school purpose.
2. Meeting. Prior to commencement of the suspension, the school official considering the suspension or their designee will provide the student an opportunity to give the student's side of the story. The meeting for this purpose may be held in person or via a telephone conference.
 - a. The student will be given oral or written notice of what the student is accused of having done, an explanation of the evidence the school has, and the opportunity to explain the student's version. Detail is not required where the activity participant has made a self-report or otherwise admits the conduct. Names of informants may be kept confidential where determined to be appropriate.
 - b. The suspension may be imposed prior to the meeting if the meeting can not reasonably be held before the suspension is to begin. In that case the meeting will occur as soon as reasonably practicable. The student is responsible for cooperating in the scheduling of the meeting.
3. Notice Letter. Within two school days (two business days if school is not in session), or such additional time as is reasonably necessary following the suspension, the Athletic Director or the Athletic Director's designee will send a written statement to the student and the student's parents or guardian. The statement will describe the student's conduct violation and the discipline imposed. The student and parents or guardian will be informed of the opportunity to request a hearing.
4. Informal Hearing Before Superintendent. The student or student's parent/guardian may request an informal hearing before the Superintendent. The Superintendent may designate the Athletic Director or another administrator not responsible for the suspension decision as the Superintendent's designee to conduct the hearing and make a decision.
 - a. A form to request such a hearing must be signed by the parent or guardian. A form will be provided with the notice letter or otherwise be made available by request from the Principal's office.
 - b. The request for a hearing must be received by the Superintendent's office within five days of receipt of the notice letter.
 - c. If a hearing is requested:

- i. The hearing will be held within ten calendar days of receipt of the request; subject to extension for good cause as determined by the Superintendent or the Superintendent’s designee.
 - ii. The Superintendent or the Superintendent’s designee will notify the participants of the time and place of the hearing a reasonable time in advance to allow preparation for the hearing.
 - iii. Upon conclusion of the hearing, a written decision will be rendered within five school days (ten calendar days if school is not in session). The written decision will be mailed or otherwise delivered to the participant, parents or guardian.
 - iv. A record of the hearing (copies of documents provided at the hearing and a tape recording or other recordation of the informal hearing) will be kept by the school if requested sufficiently in advance of the hearing by the parent/guardian.
5. No Stay of Penalty. There will be no stay of the penalty imposed pending completion of the due process procedures.
6. Opportunity for Informal Resolution. These due process procedures do not prevent the student or parent/guardian from discussing and settling the matter with the appropriate school officials at any stage.

Section 3 Attendance

Student participants are expected to meet the following attendance expectations:

1. Attend school regularly. Students who have “excessive absences” as determined under the school’s attendance policy are ineligible to participate in extracurricular activity contests or performances.
2. Be on time for all scheduled practices, contests and departure for contests. In the event a participant is unable to attend a practice or contests the participant should contact the coach or sponsor in advance.
3. On the day of a contest, performance or other activity, be in attendance for the full day. A student who is not in attendance the full day is ineligible for the contest, performance, or activity.

Exceptions may be made for extenuating circumstances, such as doctor/dentist appointments or family emergencies. The exception must be approved by the Principal or Athletic Director.

Every attempt should be made to be in attendance the day of a contest. Sleeping in to rest up for the game will not be considered an extenuating circumstance, nor will going home ill and then returning to play in the contest later that day.

Section 4 Academic Standards

Participation in extracurricular school activities is encouraged and desirable for all students. At the same time, the primary mission and responsibility for each student is to establish a firm academic foundation. A student participating in extracurricular school activities show evidence of sincere effort towards scholastic achievement. To be eligible for participation in extracurricular activities students must:

1. Be enrolled in at least 20 credit hours in the semester of participation.
2. Maintain passing grades in all courses. A student who is not passing one or more classes at progress reporting times will be ineligible to participate in extracurricular activity contests or performances if the grade remains below passing one week after progress reporting time. The student will remain ineligible until the student is passing all classes.
3. Academic requirements do not apply to:
 - (A) Instructional field trips which are a part of the scheduled course learning experience; or
 - (B) Activities or events which are a part of the student's grade requirements.

Section 5 “Team Selection” and “Playing Time”

“Team selection” and “playing time” decisions are the responsibility of the individual coach or sponsor of the activity. Consistent, however, with the purposes of the activities program, the coaches and sponsors shall follow the following established guidelines for team selection and playing time decisions, along with such other guidelines as each individual coach and sponsor may develop which are not inconsistent with these established guidelines:

1. School Representative. Student participants must demonstrate that they can and will represent themselves and their school in a manner which reflects the development of high ideals and appropriate values, which shall include good citizenship in the school and in the community.
2. Success. Student participants must demonstrate that they can make the activity program more successful, both from a standpoint of competitive success and success in promoting a positive school spirit. Characteristics for purposes of these criteria include the student's: (1) talent or skill, (2) desire to improve the student's own skills or talents as well as those of others in the activity, and (3) attitude of respect towards teammates, the coach, the school, and the community.

Section 7 Relationships Between Parents and Coaches/Sponsors

Both parenting and coaching are very difficult vocations. By establishing an understanding between coaches and parents, both are better able to accept the actions of the other and provide a more positive experience for everyone.

Parents have the right to know the expectations placed on them and their children. Coaches and sponsors have the right to know that if parents have a concern, they will discuss it with the coach at the appropriate time and place.

Parents' Role in Interscholastic Athletics and Other Extracurricular Activities

Communicating with your children

- Make sure that 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. 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.

Communicating with the coach

- Communication you should expect from your child's coach includes:
 - Philosophy of the coach
 - Expectations the coach has for your child
 - Locations and times of all practices and contests
 - Team requirements
 - Procedure should your child be injured
 - Discipline that results in the denial of your child's participation
- 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
- 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
 - Injuries or health concerns. Report injuries to the coach immediately!! Tell the coach about any health concerns that may make it necessary to limit your child's participation or require assistance of trainers. Students are sometimes unwilling to tell coaches when they are injured, so please make sure the coach is told.
- Issues not appropriate to discuss with coaches:
 - Playing time
 - Team strategy
 - Play calling
 - Other student-athletes (except for reporting activity code violations)

- Appropriate procedures for discussing concerns with the coaches:
 - Call to set up an appointment with the 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).
- What should a parent do if the meeting with the coach did not provide satisfactory resolution?
 - Call the athletic director to set up a meeting with the athletic director, coach, and parent present.
 - At this meeting, an appropriate next step can be determined, if necessary.

Section 8 Good Sportsmanship—Behavior Expectations of Spectators

Good sportsmanship is expected to be exhibited by all coaches, sponsors, students, parents and other spectators. The school can be punished by NSAA for a lack of good sportsmanship at NSAA sanctioned events. More importantly, activities are more enjoyable for the students when good sportsmanship is displayed.

Responsibilities of Spectators Attending Interscholastic Athletics and Other Extracurricular Activities

1. Show interest in the contest by enthusiastically cheering and applauding the performance of both teams.
2. Show proper respect for opening ceremonies by standing at attention and remaining silent when the National Anthem is played.
3. Understand that a ticket is a privilege to observe the contest, not a license to verbally attack others, or to be obnoxious. Maintain self-control.
4. Do not “boo,” stamp feet or make disrespectful remarks toward players or officials.
5. Learn the rules of the game, so that you may understand and appreciate why certain situations take place.
6. Know that noisemakers of any kind are not proper for indoor events.
7. Obey and respect officials and faculty supervisors who are responsible for keeping order. Respect the integrity and judgment of game officials.
8. Stay off the playing area at all times.
9. Do not disturb others by throwing material onto the playing area.
10. Show respect for officials, coaches, cheerleaders and student-athletes.
11. Pay attention to the half-time program and do not disturb those who are watching.
12. Respect public property by not damaging the equipment or the facility.

13. Know that the school officials reserve the right to refuse attendance of individuals whose conduct is not proper.
14. Refrain from the use of alcohol and drugs on the site of the contest.

RECEIPT OF TWIN LOUP
2023-2024 STUDENT-PARENT ACTIVITY HANDBOOK

We acknowledge receipt of the 2023-2024 Student-Parent Activity Handbook.

We agree to abide by the extracurricular activity code of conduct set forth in the handbook and the other rules and regulations set forth in the handbook.

We agree to read the handbook. In the event we have a question on the meaning of any of the material in the handbook, we understand that we can request a conference with the Principal or the Athletics Director to get an explanation.

Date: _____

Date: _____

Student's Signature

Parent or Legal Guardian's Signature