

**State of Hawaii - Department of Education  
PARENT and STUDENT ATHLETE HANDBOOK**

**Introduction**

Welcome to the DOE's athletic program! This information is being presented to you because you have expressed an interest in participating in high school athletics.

We appreciate your interest in the athletics program and believe that participation in athletics will provide your child with many gratifying experiences, as well as contribute to your child's physical and emotional maturity.

Our staff is committed to providing your child with proper equipment and facilities, trained and experienced coaches, and athletic contests with skilled officials.

Your child's decision to participate in athletics is a commitment to her or his team. The decision to participate requires a commitment of self-discipline and self-sacrifice on the part of the student. The student must follow the rules for proper training, performance, and conduct.

As a parent or legal guardian, we know that you will ensure that your child will participate in the high school athletics program with the full knowledge that he or she is expected to follow all the rules and regulations of the DOE, some of which are outlined in this handbook.

**Expectations of the Student Athlete**

Being a member of the school's athletic team is a privilege that carries certain expectations and responsibilities. During athletic events, including but not limited to practices and contests, the student represents her or his school and community. The student athlete is therefore obligated to uphold the rules and responsibilities of participation in high school athletics. Some of the expectations that the school staff require of the student athlete are outlined below.

- A. Academic responsibilities:** The student's academic studies and achievement are priorities. Participation in athletics and other extracurricular activities enhances the student's academic achievement by preparing the student for life as an adult. Students are expected to have a well-rounded high school experience that includes a balance of athletics and academic performance.
- B. Respect for one's school responsibilities:** The student's respect for his or her school is another priority. By participating in athletics, the student contributes to the betterment of her or his school's reputation.

Many students who participate in athletics often assume leadership roles as members of their respective teams. Their conduct is judged on and off the playing field by their peers and community members.

Additionally, other students look up to student athletes as role models. Thus, the student athlete should always remember that she or he is in a leadership role, and has the responsibility to make good choices and be a positive contributor to enhancing school spirit and community pride.

- C. Good team player responsibilities:** The student represents her or his family, school, and self when she or he chooses to participate in athletics. The student is expected to follow rules, regulations, policies, and the athletic staff and her or his coach's directives during training, practice, and participation in athletic events.

### **Expectations of the Parent/Legal Guardian**

Being a parent or legal guardian of a student athlete of the school's athletic team carries certain expectations and responsibilities. During athletic events, including but not limited to practices and contests, the parent or legal guardian represents her or his school and community. The parent or legal guardian is therefore obligated to uphold the rules and responsibilities of attending high school athletic events. Some of the expectations that the school staff require of the parent or legal guardian are outlined below.

**A. Parent/Legal Guardian Responsibilities:**

1. Teach your children the value of education and good citizenship.
2. Refrain from criticizing officials, coaches, spectators or the student athletes.
3. Understand and support the BOE policies, school, and athletic department rules.
4. Team selection, playing time, strategy and coaching philosophy must be left to the professional judgment of the coach.
5. Do not smoke or drink alcohol at any high school athletic events.

**B. Steps to Address Parent/Legal Guardian Concerns:** Parents and legal guardians may have concerns dealing with their child's participation on a school athletic team. Certain steps should be followed in addressing these concerns. Parents and legal guardians should not confront the coach before or after a practice session and a game or contest.

1. Have your child speak to the coach about the concern.
2. Make an appointment to meet with the coach about the concern.
3. Make an appointment to meet with the athletic director about the concern.
4. Make an appointment to meet with the principal about the concern.

## **Athletic Philosophy**

An objective of an athletic program is to aid in the student's physical and psychological development, thereby preparing the student for life as an adult. The athletic program conducts itself in compliance with federal and state laws, Board of Education policies, regulations, standards of practice, and school rules.

## **Athletic Goals**

Our goal is for student athletes to become effective citizens by learning to:

- A. Work with others:** In athletics, the student will learn the importance of teamwork and that the team is more important than personal desires or performance. Students will learn to work with others by developing self-discipline, respect for authority, and the spirit of hard work and self-sacrifice.
- B. Strive for excellence:** Although the team may not always win, striving for excellence in character must still be demonstrated even in defeat. This means giving one's best effort in practice and at games, and learning to improve from one's mistakes.
- C. Build character:** In athletics, students must learn to be courteous in victory and in defeat. Students will treat others with the same respect that they would want to receive from others.
- D. Enjoy the sport:** Students must acknowledge that after all, it is just a game. A goal of athletics is to nurture students by encouraging them to learn to enjoy their experiences, to have fun with their teammates and opposing players, and to be a contributing member of their team.
- E. Develop good personal health habits:** Physical fitness is a life-long goal. Each student should work towards having a healthy body, mind, and spirit. Students should continue the good habits of physical fitness and healthy living throughout their lives.

## **Governance**

The athletics program is overseen by the Department of Education. Most athletic contests are governed by outside organizations such as the Hawai'i High School Athletics Association (HHSAA), the interscholastic leagues, and the National Federation of State High School Associations (National Federation).

The HHSAA maintains statewide rules and regulations to ensure fairness in the competitions and balance with other educational programs.

The HHSAA is comprised of schools from the Big Island Interscholastic Federation, Interscholastic League of Honolulu, Kauai Interscholastic Federation, Maui

Interscholastic League, and Oahu Interscholastic Association. These individual leagues schedule athletic contests for their member schools, administer league championships, and determine their league rules.

The National Federation consists of individual state high school athletic associations across the country. This group establishes rules committees, formulates and publishes playing rules, and sanctions interstate and international competitions.

### **Requirements for Participation**

#### **A. Physical Examination**

All student athletes must complete the Hawai'i State DOE Physical Examination Form for Athletes, which is valid for one calendar year. Physical examinations may only be conducted by medical doctors, osteopathic physicians, advanced practice registered nurses, and physician assistants. Chiropractic, homeopathy, acupuncture, or herbal healing practitioners do not qualify.

All Physical Examination Forms must be completed and in the possession of the designated DOE administrator for each school before the student can participate in any athletic activity, including practice and try-outs.

#### **B. Parental/Guardian Consent, Release, and Assumption of Risk Form**

Competitive athletics may place students in situations where serious, catastrophic, and perhaps fatal accidents may occur. Despite the best preventative measures, no degree of instruction, precaution, or supervision will entirely eliminate all risk of injury or harm. Students and their parents or legal guardians must assess the risks of athletic participation for themselves, and freely and voluntarily decide whether to participate.

To participate in athletics, students and their parents or legal guardians must sign a form acknowledging these risks and releasing the DOE and the state from any liability. This form will also request emergency contact information, in the event the student requires medical attention. Like the Physical Examination Form for Athletes, this form must be signed and in the possession of the designated DOE administrator for the school before the student can participate in any athletic activity, including practice and try-outs.

Health insurance coverage is not required for participation in athletic activities, but is strongly recommended. The DOE is not responsible for any student's medical costs, including medical costs incurred as a result of injury from participation in any athletic activity or event.

**C. Scholastic Eligibility**

To participate in athletics, student athletes must have (1) at least a 2.0 overall grade point average and (2) receive passing grades in courses required for graduation.

**D. Age Eligibility**

Students in Grades 9-12 or a student, who becomes nineteen on or after September 1 of any given year, are age eligible for sports offered at the public high schools.

**E. Maximum Participation**

Upon entry to the ninth grade, students shall have only four consecutive years of participation eligibility, regardless of a break in school attendance.

**F. Amateur Status**

A student must be an amateur in that sport to be eligible to represent her or his high school. An amateur sports person is one who engages in a sport solely for the pleasure and the physical, mental, and social benefits.

**G. Outstanding Financial Obligations**

A student who fails to make restitution as required shall be prohibited from participating in any athletic activity.

**Athletic Department Rules**

**A. Conduct of Athletes**

Student athletes should display high standards of conduct and citizenship, and comply with the Board of Education's Chapter 19 student misconduct code and all requirements of this Handbook.

**B. Alcohol, Tobacco, and Illicit Drugs Prohibited**

Student athletes may not use, possess, or distribute tobacco, alcohol, and/or illicit drugs. This applies at all times, both during the season and during the off season.

The athletic director and principal may determine the appropriate discipline, if any, for violations of this provision. Depending on the seriousness of the violation, the penalties can range from a game suspension to a permanent denial of participation in athletics.

### **C. Hazing Prohibited**

The DOE strictly prohibits hazing. Hazing is any conduct or method of initiation into any student group that endangers a student's physical or mental health. Examples of hazing include but are not limited to: whipping; beating; branding; forced calisthenics; exposure to weather; forced consumption of any food, alcohol, beverage, drug or other substance; indecent exposure; or extreme mental stress such as deprivation of sleep or rest, extended isolation, or personal humiliation. Students found to be in violation of this policy will be subject to counsel and/or disciplinary action in accordance with Chapter 19.

### **D. Dropping a Sport**

Although students are encouraged to participate throughout the athletic season, some students may find it necessary to drop a sport. In such a case, the student athlete must (1) consult with her or his coach, (2) report the situation to the athletic director, and (3) return all equipment issued prior to quitting the team. The parent or legal guardian and student shall be responsible for the replacement cost of all equipment not returned in the same or substantially similar condition, with the exception of normal wear and tear; it was in at the time of issuance.

### **E. Squad Selection and Cut Guidelines**

Coaches are encouraged to keep as many students on a team as possible, without affecting the integrity of the sport. Time, space, facilities, equipment, and other factors will place limitations on the most effective squad size for any sport.

Before team selections are made, the coach should notify all candidates of the (1) length of the try-out period, (2) criteria for team selection, and, if the student makes the team, (3) practice commitments, (4) game commitments.

If a candidate attends all required meeting(s) and tryout sessions, a coach may cut a candidate after the candidate: (1) competed in a minimum of two tryout sessions, (2) performed in at least one intra-squad game, and (3) was personally informed of the cut by her or his coach.

Although the coach should generally follow this squad selection and cut guideline, some procedures may not be practical due to the unique nature of each individual sport. In such case, the coach may deviate from the selection procedure. Still, a cut list shall not be posted.

## **F. Reporting of Injury**

All injuries that occur during participation in athletics should be immediately reported to the athletic trainer and/or coach. An Injury Report Form must be completed by the athletic trainer or coach.

Student athletes who are required to sit out of athletics due to illness or injury and who received treatment from an athletic trainer must get written permission from the same athletic trainer or designee athletic trainer clearing the student athlete to once again participate in athletic activities. If a licensed family physician initially treats an ill or injured student athlete, then that same physician must provide written permission in order for the student athlete to once again be eligible to participate in athletic activities. The school's athletic trainer, however, will have the ultimate discretion as to whether a student athlete may resume participation in athletic activities.

## **G. Travel to Athletic Events**

All athletes must travel to and from athletic events in transportation provided by the athletic department, unless the student's parents or legal guardians make alternative arrangements that are approved by the coach.

Athletes will remain with their team and under the coach's supervision when attending away contests.

Athletes who miss the bus may not be allowed to participate in the contest at the coach's discretion.

All regular school bus rules will be followed.

Athletes should dress appropriately while traveling on athletic trips.

In addition, the use of private vehicles driven by athletic department employees to transport students is only permissible when (1) the principal has determined that circumstances make it impractical to charter a bus to transport students on trips, and (2) written approval forms are secured from the administration and the student's parents or guardians.

In cases where private vehicles are used, the vehicle driver, the vehicle's registered owner, student-passengers, and any other party shall release the state from all liability resulting from the use of the private vehicles. Insurance coverage shall be limited to the private vehicle's no-fault policy.

Approval for use of private vehicles driven by athletic department employees shall be limited to trips (1) when the volunteer or school employee is acting in an official capacity on behalf of the school by providing transportation for students for athletic purposes; or (2) when the school accepts responsibility to provide transportation to the activity.

The DOE discourages the use of student drivers to transport other students. Parents or legal guardians are responsible for arranging the student athlete's transportation to and from the event when transportation is not provided by the school. If a student is transported in another student's private vehicle, the school will not assume any liability resulting from such transportation.

**H. Athletic Equipment**

All athletes are responsible for the proper care and security of equipment issued to them. School-issued equipment should be used only for games and practices, and should be kept in good condition. The parent or legal guardian and student shall be responsible for the replacement cost of all equipment not returned in the same or substantially similar condition, with the exception of normal wear and tear; it was in at the time of issuance.

**I. Class Attendance**

Students missing school for reasons other than illness must have an excused absence to participate in events or practices.

**J. Release From Class**

Athletes are responsible for requesting make-up work from their teachers for lessons missed due to an athletic activity. All class work shall be made up at the convenience of the teacher.

**K. Missing Practice**

Athletes should consult his or her coach before missing practice. Unexcused absences from a practice or contest may result in suspension or dismissal from the team.

**L. Suspension**

Suspension means exclusion from school for a specific period during the school year. Suspended athletes shall not participate with their respective team in practice or in a contest on the day(s) of the suspension period. When reinstated from the suspension, the athlete will then be eligible to resume participation.

**M. Conflicts With Extracurricular Activities**

Students participating in several extracurricular activities may be in a position of conflicting obligations. The athletic department recognizes that students should have a broad range of experiences and, as such, will attempt to schedule events to minimize conflicts. However, students may be required to make choices in the event of conflicting activities which may

affect her or him to get the most benefit from all aspects of the educational experience.

**N. Vacations During the Sports Season**

If an absence during a sports season due to vacation is unavoidable, the athlete must (1) notify the coach prior to the vacation, and (2) be willing to accept the consequences related to playing time in future contests.

**O. Locker Room Regulations**

1. Only coaches and assigned players are allowed in the locker room.
2. Rough-housing and throwing towels or other objects are not allowed. Hazing is strictly prohibited.
3. All showers must be turned off after use.
4. All spiked or cleated shoes may not be worn inside the locker room.
5. Equipment must be removed from all lockers by the end of the first day following the conclusion of each respective sports season.

**P. Protection Against Communicable Diseases**

The DOE has concern for the health and safety of each student. As such, the athletic director and athletic trainer shall ensure that:

1. Coaches and athletic staff are trained with regard to (a) communicable diseases, including bloodborne pathogens; (b) appropriate care in the event of blood-injuries, or circumstances with a communicable disease risk; and (c) appropriate measures to take to protect other individuals from exposure.
2. Appropriate precautions, protective gloves, and sanitary measures should be used at athletic events (including games and practices).
3. All wounds, cuts, and abrasions are to be covered to prevent infection.
4. Coaches inform students (a) not to share equipment, water, clothing, towels, soap and other personal items; (b) to clean their practice and game uniforms after each use; and (c) to shower with soap as soon as possible after practices and competitions to decrease exposure to bacteria.
5. Surfaces that are frequently touched should be cleaned and disinfected regularly (i.e. benches, athletic training room tables, weight room equipment, wrestling mats, chairs, etc.).
6. Coaches and students are made aware of the potential risk of skin

infections caused by staph bacteria and should seek immediate medical attention in the event of such infections.

7. Coaches and athletic staff view the most current bloodborne pathogen video.

**Q. Weight Room Regulations**

1. Proper shirt, shorts, and covered shoes are required at all times. Shoes with metal or hard-plastic spikes or cleats are not allowed.
2. Student athletes may not be in the weight room without authorized supervision by either a coach or the athletic director.
3. All students must be under the supervision of an authorized coach. Anyone using the weight equipment must work with a partner.
4. Students should replace all weights on racks immediately following use.
5. Students should work with the coach to determine their limits and train accordingly.
6. Students should use proper weight lifting techniques and warm-up with proper stretching exercises.
7. Students who engage in strength training must be guided by a coach with the proper background and experience. Strength training is a highly skilled activity, not merely a supplement to other athletic programs

**NCAA Eligibility Center**

If an athlete is personally contacted by a college recruiter, she or he should inform and work with the coach and athletic department. Student athletes must be aware of academic requirements for college admissions by the end of their ninth grade year. The student athlete and parent/legal guardian are responsible for Eligibility Center registration, which should be completed before the beginning of the athlete's junior year.

**A. Registration**

Any student athlete who may desire to participate in NCAA Division I or II competition must register with the Eligibility Center.

**A. Information**

Eligibility Center information is available at the athletic department or post-graduate counselor's office.

**B. Recommendations**

1. The student athlete should take the PSAT during his or her sophomore year.

2. The student athlete should take the SAT during her or his junior year, and then register with the Eligibility Center when test results are known.
3. Registering with the Eligibility Center and taking exams early will allow ample time for students to improve test scores during their senior year to fulfill academic requirements.

### **Conclusion**

Thank you for your interest in DOE athletics. We hope your experience will be a rewarding one. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact your athletic director or coach.