

**ATHLETIC  
HANDBOOK  
FOR  
STUDENT ATHLETES**

**ONEONTA CITY SCHOOLS**

**2023-2024**

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# ONEONTA CITY SCHOOLS ATHLETIC HANDBOOK

## ATHLETIC STATEMENT

This athletic handbook is designed to inform the student athlete of the rules, regulations, and information that helped develop the rich tradition of competition in Oneonta City Schools athletics. Participation in athletics is a privilege, which carries with it varying degrees of honor, responsibility and sacrifice. Since competition is a privilege and not a right, those who choose to participate shall be expected to follow the rules established by the Athletic Department and other specific coaches' rules for their sport. Each student athlete represents his/her school and student body. It is the student athlete's duty to conduct himself/herself in a manner becoming the student athlete, his/her family, Oneonta City Schools, and the community. While an attempt has been made to answer as many questions as possible and provide information on all aspects of athletic participation, it is possible that there may be some questions that are not answered here. Please contact the principal/athletic director for this information. The Athletic Department will enforce all rules and regulations as described in this Oneonta City Schools' Handbook.

Athletes and parents are asked to sign an acknowledgement document located at the end of this handbook stating that they have read and understand the information included in the Handbook and that the athlete is subject to disciplinary measures should he/she violate the rules and regulations set forth in this Oneonta City Schools Handbook.

## DEPARTMENTAL PHILOSOPHY

The goal of the Athletic Department is to provide the best opportunities for student athletes to excel in teamwork, sportsmanship, self-discipline and character. In addition to developing skill in a sport, the purpose is to provide each participant with experiences that will be positive and memorable and that help develop the capacity for commitment to a cause, acceptance of responsibility and loyalty toward any chosen endeavor.

## SPORTSMANSHIP

A policy statement from the National Federation of State High School Associations expresses the concept of sportsmanship as follows:

*"The ideals of good sportsmanship, ethical behavior, and integrity permeate our culture. The values of good citizenship and high behavioral standards apply equally to all activity disciplines. In perception and practice, good sportsmanship shall be defined as those qualities of behavior which are characterized by generosity and genuine concern for others. Further, awareness is expected of the impact of an individual's influence on the behavior of others. Good sportsmanship is viewed as a concrete measure of the understanding and commitment to fair play, ethical behavior, and integrity."*

We have a duty to teach and equip our young people for the future. Sportsmanship must be taught, modeled, expected and reinforced in the classroom and in all of our Oneonta City Schools' competitive activities. Knowing that athletics has become an integral part of the total educational program in Alabama high schools, we must embrace the concepts of good sportsmanship. Good sportsmanship requires that everyone be treated with respect. This includes members of the opposing team, officials, coaches and spectators. The contest is exciting, but winning at any cost is not the goal. Negative treatment of **any** participant is outside the spirit and interest of the contest.

All AHSAA sanctioned events are a reflection of our community and school. The conduct of the team is extended to parents and fans before, during, and after athletic events.

Expectations of all Oneonta City Schools staff, students, and stakeholders

### **Coaches**

1. Follow the rules of the contest at all times.
2. Accept the decisions of contest officials.
3. Display modesty in victory and graciousness in defeat.
4. Avoid public criticism of game officials.
5. Teach sportsmanship and reward/acknowledge players that display good sportsmanship. 6. Be a role model for our players and the community.

### **Student/Athletes**

1. Show respect for opponents, coaches and game officials at all times.
2. Accept the decisions of contest officials.
3. Avoid offensive language and gestures.
4. Display modesty in victory and graciousness in defeat.
5. Follow the rules of the game. 6. Show respect for public property and equipment.

### **Spectators**

1. Avoid criticism of game officials, players and sideline coaching which may sidetrack athletes from their performance.
2. Work cooperatively with contest officials and supervisors in keeping order.
3. Stay off playing areas while athletic contest is in progress.
4. Show respect for opposing teams, cheerleaders and bands
5. Show respect for public property and equipment.

Assault of sports officials, coaches, or administrators (SB-16): This bill became law on March 31, 2002, and creates new crimes of harassing, menacing, and assaulting sports officials, coaches, and administrators. The punishments are harsher than normal for convictions of harassment, menacing, and assault. For example, a second-degree assault can carry a sentence of up to 10 years in prison, but under the new law, a second-degree assault of a sports official, coach, or administrator could result in a sentence of up to 20 years.

## AHSAA ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY

All AHSAA academic requirements for participation in middle school and high school athletics will be followed. Reference comprehensive Eligibility Bylaws at [www.ahsaa.com](http://www.ahsaa.com)

### ***To represent your school in an athletic contest:***

1. Students entering the 10th, 11th and 12th grades must have passed at least six new Carnegie units with a minimum composite numerical average of 70 in those six units during the last two semesters in attendance and summer school, if applicable. Four core courses must be included in those units passed and averaged. English, mathematics, science and social studies are core curriculum courses. Any combination of these courses is acceptable. Only one unit (or subject) of physical education per year may be counted. A maximum of two units (or subjects) earned in an approved summer school may be counted. If a unit (or subject) is repeated in summer school, the higher numerical grade for that unit (or subject) may be used to compute the composite grade average.
2. Students entering the 8th/9th grades must have passed at least five new subjects with a minimum composite numerical average of 70 in those five subjects and must have been promoted to the next grade during the last two semesters in attendance and summer school, if applicable.
3. Students entering the 7th grade for the first time are eligible.
4. Students may regain eligibility at the end of the first term by meeting the same requirements listed above during the last two terms in attendance and summer school.
5. CREDIT RECOVERY: Units earned through credit recovery may also be among the maximum two summer units counted and must be completed before Sept. 1. If credit recovery is used to make up Carnegie units, those units can only be accepted if they are earned through a State Department of Education-approved program. NCAA Clearinghouse **may not** accept credit recovery earned credits for qualification.
6. You must **NOT** have reached your 19th birthday (15th for middle school) prior to August 1 of the current school year in order to be eligible for the entire school year. A student reaching their 19th (15th for middle school) birthday on or *after* August 1 is eligible for the entire school year.
7. A student may be eligible only eight consecutive terms after entering the 9th grade. School attendance of 15 days or more of any semester is counted as a semester.

## ATTENDANCE ELIGIBILITY

Students must be enrolled in the Oneonta City School system in order to tryout or participate in extracurricular activities. Daily attendance at school and practice is expected. In order for an athlete to be eligible to participate in any after-school activity he/she must be present in school on the day of the activity. To be considered in school, a student may be in school at least one-half of the school day. Students are required to be in school a minimum of 3 hours and 30 minutes on said day. If he/she is not in school from that time until the end of the school day, then he/she is not to participate or be involved in any way with the activity. Practices are considered an activity. **Any exceptions must have the approval of the principal.** An athlete must be in school on a regular basis in order to be eligible to participate in athletics. An athlete who accumulates an excessive number of absences or tardies as designated in the student handbook will be placed on probation for a specified time period. If absences continue during this time, the athlete will then be suspended from athletic participation until it is clear that the attendance problem is resolved. An athlete who has excessive tardies to school and/or classes may be subject to restriction from athletic participation.

## RESIDENCY REQUIREMENTS

All student athletes must meet the residency requirements of the Oneonta City School Board of Education as well as the Alabama High School Athletic Association.

A student whose parents' make a bona fide move completely out of one school zone into another may transfer all of his/her rights and privileges to the member school that serves where his/her parents reside.

### Determining a Bona Fide Move

1. Household furniture of the family must be moved.
2. All principal members of the family must reside in the new place of residence.
3. The original residence should be closed, rented or disposed of and not used by the family.
4. Nine months at the new residence will be required to make a bona fide move.

### **Note:**

If a family moves into a new school zone and remains there for less than nine months, the move will not be considered bona fide and the family's child who is enrolled in the new school zone becomes ineligible there the day the family leaves the new school zone.

## CONDUCT ELIGIBILITY

### Rule 1 - Oneonta City Schools Conduct Requirements:

Participating in athletics for Oneonta City Schools is a privilege and should be treated as such. The Oneonta City Schools Athletic Code of Conduct applies to behavior that takes place **ON OR OFF** school grounds when representing Oneonta City Schools in an athletic activity.

Students must display qualities of good citizenship if they wish to participate in extracurricular activities. Failure to be a good citizen at all times may result in probation and/or suspension from all extracurricular activities. This may include inappropriate internet usage, off campus activity, and activities that violate moral turpitude, etc.

Consequences for off campus violations of the Code of Conduct will not be based on hearsay or rumor. When there is reasonable suspicion (a belief or opinion based on the facts or circumstances) or when there is an admission of guilt by the athlete to a violation of the Athletic Code of Conduct the Athletic Handbook rules will be enforced. Penalties for violations take effect immediately upon determination of any violation and will include games in succession; i.e. season schedule, tournaments, and state series, in order of competition.

When serving a school suspension, the student athlete will not be eligible for any contests and/or practices during the suspension period. Attendance at athletic events, whether a participant or spectator, and at practice is prohibited during the suspension period. If school rules are broken, the student athlete will be subject to the normal punishment for such misbehavior as well as subject to penalties under the Oneonta City Schools Athletic Handbook. In no case will athletic rules circumvent or take the place of school rules. Violations of school rules under the Oneonta City Schools student handbook may lead to eligibility restrictions.

A monitoring system will be used by coaches with the help of the faculty to track student athletes' academic performance and classroom work habits and behavior. Athletes falling below the accepted standards will be referred to a program that may include, but not limited to: time management remediation, character building activities, and academic tutoring.

Specific team rules may be set forth by the coach of each sport. These rules and the penalties for breaking them will be given to the student athletes by the coach at the first parent/athlete meeting of that sport.

## **Rule 2: AHSAA Sportsmanship Conduct Rule:**

**First Ejection:** A \$300 fine (An athlete's fine can be reduced to \$100 if the athlete being ejected takes the online STAR Behavioral Mode and payment is made within 10 days of the date of the ejection.)

**Second Ejection:** A one-game suspension and a \$500 fine

**Third Ejection:** Minimum penalty of a suspension for the remainder of the season plus a \$750 fine

**Note:** If any of the ejections occur during the last contest of the season, a monetary fine will be placed on the school. **Note:** All fines are due within 30 days.

**All fines/contest suspensions will be reviewed by the school principal to determine consequences and responsibility of payment.**

The Alabama High School Athletic Association Constitution states:

*Any pupil who is under temporary suspension or whose character or conduct is such as to reflect discredit upon the school is not eligible. A student's attendance, attitude and classroom effort must be acceptable to the school in which the student is enrolled.*

### **Additional AHSAA Considerations**

see complete explanations of Eligibility Bylaws at [www.ahsaa.com](http://www.ahsaa.com)

**Enrollment Rule.** A student must be enrolled within the first 20 days of a semester as a regular student in the school system where the student will participate. The 20-day requirement may be waived under extenuating circumstances. Note: A regular student is one who is enrolled at the school and is taking four new subjects of work.

**Participation Rule** No student may participate in any one sport for more than six years (seasons) after entering the seventh grade or for more than three seasons after entering the 10th grade. A student who officially participates in one contest of a sport is credited with one year of participation in that sport.

**Outside Participation Rule.** A student who is a member of any school athletic team (grades 7-12) may not participate (includes practice) on a non-school team in the same sport during the school season of that sport. Also, a member of any school athletic team may not participate in an outside sport activity in the same sport during the school season of that sport.

Private individual instruction is not considered an outside sports activity. A team's season begins the day of that team's first contest and ends when that team's season has been completed. A



student who violates this rule becomes ineligible to compete on that school team or in that school sports activity for the remainder of that school season. Any student who participates on an outside team after the school sport season begins is ineligible to join that school team for the remainder of the season.

**Independent Rule.** A student who is a member of any school swimming, track, cross country or wrestling team may participate as an independent in two outside activities on non-school days during the season of that sport.

The schedule of the school team, including the championship play, takes precedent over any outside participation by an individual. (Members of tennis and golf teams are exempt from this rule.)

A member of a school soccer team may participate in one Olympic Development Program evaluation period per month as long as there is no loss of school time. The evaluation must be under the guidance of ODP.

**Amateur Rule** Only amateurs are eligible. An amateur is one who does not use his/her knowledge or athletics or athletic skill for gain. A student may not receive an award of any kind having a monetary value of more than \$50.00 (fifty dollars)-other than medals, trophies, plaques or championship rings.

## **ONEONTA CITY SCHOOLS POLICIES AND INFORMATION**

### **Team Tryout Policies**

Each coach of varsity sports has his/her policy on how he/she will choose his/her team. Arrangements for tryouts must be made for athletes involved in overlapping sports seasons. It is the responsibility of the student athlete to contact the coach and discuss possible conflicts well in advance of tryouts. A student athlete may be cut from a team anytime during a season for appropriate reasons.

### **Accidents/Injuries**

All accidents or injuries, at home or away, are to be reported to the trainer and/or coach immediately.

### **Doctor Visits**

Medical expenses are the responsibility of the athlete/family. Written verification from the doctor is required when a physician removes an athlete from practices or games. Written verification from the doctor is required to return to athletic competition.

### **Changing a Sport/Quitting a Team**

If a student athlete is cut from a team, he/she may join another team or program in that sport season. A student athlete cannot quit one sport to join another sport until that sport season is concluded. For example, one cannot quit football to participate in basketball until football season is completed. However, athletes will be allowed to transfer from one sport to another during a given season upon mutual agreement of both coaches. Appeal can be made to the athletic director if circumstances warrant consideration.

### **Conflicts Between Activities**

Students are sometimes involved in concurrent activities, and there may be conflicts in schedules. Communication between coaches and sponsors of conflicting activities is vital. Consideration must be given to the importance of the event and the role the student athlete will play in it.

### **Playing Above Grade Level**

At the varsity coach's direction and in consultation with the principal/athletic director, a student may participate on a team above their grade level. In some situations, but not limited to, an athlete may participate on a team above grade level to fill open positions on a team roster, to equate skill level or physical characteristics, or when the opportunity for participation at grade level is unavailable.

### **Equipment**

Equipment checked out by the athlete is his/her responsibility. It is to be kept clean and in good condition. Loss of issued equipment will be the athlete's/parent's financial obligation. The athlete will not be allowed to participate in other athletic programs or receive awards until this obligation is met. Equipment includes any issued supplies from the training room.

### **Dress**

Participation in Oneonta athletics is a privilege, not a right. To be successful, the participant must be well disciplined and willing to put aside individualism for the benefit of the team. Conforming to a dress code is part of this process. It is very important to our team/school reputation that our student athletes dress appropriately during the school day and at all school functions. An individual coach may add additional rules related to the dress code outside of the school handbook for his or her team.

The student athlete's hair will be fashioned so that all equipment will fit properly. Hair shall be presentable and maintained in a way that safety is not a concern for the student athlete.

### **Parent Volunteers**

It will be necessary for coaches and the athletic department to call on parents to volunteer in concession stands and other similar activities in order to adequately fund our programs. We thank you in advance for your understanding and cooperation.

**PARTICIPATION REQUIREMENTS**  
**CONDITIONING, PRACTICE, COMPETITION**

1. The following items are required before participation (including practice) **one time only** during grades 7-12.
  - Certified birth certificate - AHSAA requirement
  - Star Sportsmanship - will be accepted if on file. Or NFHS Sportsmanship Course.
  
2. The following items/forms are required by the student athlete before the first **practice** with any team ***each school year.***
  - Meet academic eligibility requirements AHSAA
  - Take and pass physical examination (administered/signed by a MD or a DO), complete with parent and student signature form AHSAA
  - Concussion form AHSAA
  - Student Release form AHSAA
  - Student in Good Standing form (applicable to transfers only) AHSAA
  - Athletic Handbook acknowledgement form

## **COMMUNICATION**

For our athletic teams to be successful, all involved must work together to ensure proper communication. The following information is intended to help our Oneonta student/athletes have a positive experience in our program. Each coach will conduct a pre-season parent meeting to discuss issues specific to his or her sport. General guidelines for all sports are as follows:

### **Coach's Communication to Parents Will Include:**

1. Information on coach's philosophy
2. Location and times of practices and games
3. Coaches expectations for players
4. Team requirements
5. Team fees
6. Request for parental support in helping the student/athletes succeed in the program

### **Parent's Communication to the Coach Will Include**

1. Individual concerns expressed directly to the coach: This shall include the treatment of their child, areas that the student/athlete can improve and concerns of their child's behavior. It is not appropriate to discuss playing time, team strategy or other student/athletes.
2. Advance notification of any schedule conflict

### **Procedure to discuss a Concern with a Coach**

1. Make appointment with the coach.
2. If this is unsuccessful, contact the athletic director's office to allow the athletic director to help facilitate a meeting.
3. Please do not attempt to confront a coach before, during or after a game/practice. This can be an emotional time for both the parent and coach.
4. Please adhere to the 24-hour rule when attempting discussions with the coach.

I acknowledge access to the athletic handbook and have read the rules concerning eligibility and conduct for Oneonta City Schools student athletes. I understand the rules and realize that I am subject to disciplinary measures should I violate them. I do agree to participate and conduct myself in accordance with the rules of our athletic program, school rules as addressed in the student handbook and with any other specific rules of my coaches.

**Student Athlete**

I have read this athletic handbook and agree to abide by all regulations set forth. I understand participation in athletics is a privilege and agree to represent Oneonta City Schools with character, integrity and sportsmanship on and off the field or court.

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SIGNATURE OF STUDENT ATHLETE

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DATE PRINTED NAME OF STUDENT

**Parent/Guardian**

I have read this Athletic Handbook and understand the policies and regulations of Oneonta City Schools will be enforced.

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SIGNATURE OF PARENT/GUARDIAN

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DATE PRINTED NAME OF PARENT

**EMERGENCY INFORMATION**

Please Print

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Father's Cell \_\_\_\_\_ Mother's Cell \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

Family Doctor \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Preferred Hospital \_\_\_\_\_

In EMERGENCY, if parents cannot be contacted, notify:

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: Home \_\_\_\_\_ Cell \_\_\_\_\_

**MEDICAL HISTORY** List any allergies or medical conditions: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**MEDICATIONS** List any medications you are taking: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**REQUIRED HEALTH INSURANCE INFORMATION**

Carrier: \_\_\_\_\_ Policy No. \_\_\_\_\_ Group No. \_\_\_\_\_

Policyholder's name \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship \_\_\_\_\_