

Table of Contents

I.	Introduction	2
II.	Message to Parents of Student Athletes.....	3
III.	Mason City Schools Athletic Philosophy.....	4
IV.	Mason City Schools Athletic Goal and Objectives.....	4
V.	Athletic Council.....	5
VI.	Ten Principles of Parenting an Athlete.....	6
VII.	Parental Procedure for Registering a Concern.....	7
VIII.	Sportsmanship Philosophy and Guidelines.....	9
IX.	Responsibilities of a Mason City Schools Athlete.....	12
X.	Requirements for Participation.....	13
XI.	Academic Eligibility Requirements.....	13
XII.	Conduct of a Mason City Schools Athlete.....	15
XIII.	Training Rules and Regulations.....	16
XIV.	Drug, Alcohol, and Tobacco Policy.....	17
XV.	Financial Obligations and Equipment.....	18
XVI.	Other Athletic Department Policies.....	19
XVII.	Forms.....	Appendix I

I. Introduction

The Mason City School District's Athletic Department retains membership in and abides by the constitutions, by-laws and regulations of the Ohio High School Athletic Association and the Greater Miami Conference. The high school principal or his/her designee shall represent the athletic department in matters concerning the O.H.S.A.A. and G.M.C. while being responsible for communicating recommendations to the Athletic Council. Any student enrolled in Mason City Schools (grades 7-12) who meets the academic eligibility requirements for participation in athletic activities may try out for any interscholastic sport. All student-athletes in grades 7-12 are held to the policies and procedures of this athletic handbook. Consequences to violations of policies contained in this document are cumulative throughout the athlete's career. The athletic department offers the following activities:

HS Boys' Activities:

Baseball	Soccer
Basketball	Swimming
Bowling	Tennis
Cross Country	Track and Field
Football	Volleyball
Golf	Wrestling
Lacrosse	

HS Girls' Activities:

Basketball	Soccer
Cheerleading	Softball
Bowling	Swimming
Cross Country	Tennis
Golf	Track and Field
Gymnastics	Volleyball
Lacrosse	

JH Boys' Activities:

Basketball	Swimming
Cross Country	Tennis
Football	Track and Field
Golf	Wrestling

JH Girls' Activities:

Basketball	Softball
Cheerleading	Swimming
Cross Country	Tennis
Golf	Track and Field
	Volleyball

II. Message to Parents of Student Athletes

This handbook is presented to you because your son/daughter/ward has indicated a desire to participate in interscholastic athletics, and you have expressed your willingness to permit him/her to compete. Your interest in this facet of our school program is gratifying. It is our belief that participation in athletic activities will provide opportunities and experiences to assist the student athlete in personal growth.

The Mason City School District is very proud of the wide variety of opportunities for athletic participation. These opportunities are believed to be a critical part of a student's total development as they assist in the building of positive character and leadership traits.

Mason City School's Athletic Department, concerned with the educational development of boys and girls through athletics, feels that a properly controlled, well-organized sports program meets the student athlete's needs of self-expression, mental alertness, and physical growth. It is the department's hope to maintain a program that is sound in purpose and will further each student athlete's educational maturity.

Likewise, it is felt that you have committed yourself to certain responsibilities and obligations. It is the athletic department's intent through this handbook to acquaint you with policies that are necessary for an organized program of athletics.

It is the role of the Athletic Council to make rules that govern the spirit of interscholastic competition for the Mason City School District and its community. These rules need broad-based community support to be fully effective. This is only achieved through communication amongst all parties involved. It is our hope that this handbook serves as a means to accomplishing this objective.

Respectfully,

Scott Stemple
Director of Interscholastic Athletics

III. Mason City Schools Athletic Philosophy

Interscholastic athletic activities in the Mason City School District are considered to be an integral part of the school's educational program. A variety of experiences should be provided so as to aid the student athlete's mental, physical, social, and emotional development. Development of favorable habits and attitudes will better prepare the student athlete for adult life in a democratic society. Promoting involvement in the interscholastic athletic program at all levels of participation instills pride, reinforces a sound value structure, and enhances the individual's self-image as well as the image of the school district and community.

IV. Mason City Schools Athletic Goal and Objectives

- A. *Goal* - The student athlete will become a more effective citizen in a democratic society.
- B. *Specific Objective* - The student athlete will learn teamwork. To work with others in a democratic society, a person must develop self-discipline, respect for authority and the spirit of hard work and sacrifice. Athletes must place the team and its objectives higher than personal desires.
 - 1. *To Be Successful:* Our society is very competitive. We do not always win, but we succeed when we continually strive to do so. You can learn to accept defeat only by striving to win with earnest dedication. Develop a desire to excel.
 - 2. *To Show Sportsmanship:* Accept success and defeat like a true sportsman. Know we have done our best. We must learn to treat others, as we would have others treat us. We need to develop desirable social traits including emotional control, honesty, cooperation, and dependability.
 - 3. *To Improve As An Individual:* Continual improvement is essential to good citizenship. As an athlete, you must establish a goal and you must constantly try to reach that goal. Try to better yourself in the skills involved and in those characteristics set forth as being desirable.
 - 4. *To Enjoy Athletic Participation:* It is necessary to acknowledge all of the personal rewards we derive from athletics and to give sufficiently of ourselves in order to preserve and improve the program.
 - 5. *To Develop Desirable Personal Health Habits:* To be an active, contributing citizen, it is important to obtain a high degree of physical fitness through exercise and good health habits. Doing this will nurture a desire to maintain a higher than average level of physical fitness after formal competition has been completed.

V. Athletic Council

The Athletic Council shall be established by the Mason City School's Board of Education and operate according to the following adopted guidelines.

A. Purpose:

The purpose of the athletic council is to support a successful, efficient, balanced, and harmonious interscholastic athletic program for the students of Mason City Schools. The council shall organize, supervise, control, and encourage all aspects of the interscholastic athletic program while promoting good sportsmanship, advancement for the common good, and harmony amongst all programs representing any and all parts of Mason City School's Athletic Department.

B. Members of Council:

Superintendent
High School Principal
Middle School Principal
Director of Interscholastic Athletics
Middle School Athletic Director
Representation from the Board of Education
Coaching Representative from the girls' programs
Coaching Representative from the boys' programs

OFFICERS

Chairperson - HS Principal
Secretary - HS Athletic Administrative Assistant
Publicity Chairperson - District Public Information Officer

C. Meetings:

The regular meetings of the Athletic Council shall be held once a month during the months of August, September, October, November, January, February, March, April and May. The chairperson may designate a different time and place for the meetings at his/her discretion.

The chairperson may call a special meeting of Athletic Council at any time.

An administrator, coach, or parent may be placed on the agenda of the Athletic Council upon notification to the chairperson in advance of the regularly scheduled meeting.

D. Duties:

The Athletic Council shall establish the policies and principles by which the athletic department of the Mason City School District is operated. General discussions, considerations and recommendations are essential to the establishment of policy and principles.

The council shall maintain the responsibility of reviewing budgets and financial reports of all athletic support organizations.

VI. Ten Principles of Parenting an Athlete

1. Be positive with your student athlete. Let them know he/she is accomplishing something positive simply by being a part of the team.
2. Avoid offering excuses for the student athlete if he/she is not playing or seeing only limited action. Encourage him/her to work hard, reach his/her potential, and contribute to the team's efforts.
3. Open criticism of the coaches is unnecessary. By openly criticizing the coaches, your student athlete becomes trapped between the coach's authority and the parent's criticism. This situation merely erodes the athlete's effectiveness and affects their contributions to the team effort.
4. Encourage and support your student athlete's efforts to follow the team rules and athletic code. Remember, you sign a parent athletic pledge stating your support of the athletic code, its enforcement, and its penalties. This is a year-round responsibility and not limited to the athletic season.
5. Emphasize the importance of academics and understand the academic requirements necessary for participation in interscholastic athletic activities. With few exceptions, most student athletes do not receive athletic scholarships. Their future as an active, contributing citizen is determined by their academic abilities, not their high school athletic abilities.
6. Criticizing or showing envy in relation to the failures or successes of other student athlete's displays inappropriate behavior to others. Most are trying there hardest on any given day, and they deserve respect for their efforts. Living your life vicariously through your student athlete puts undo pressure on all concerned. Remember, a sport is a game and it is supposed to be fun.
7. The coaches work with the athletes on a regular basis, and they have had the opportunity to evaluate the athlete's strengths and weaknesses objectively. Focus your energy toward being a supporter of the team and do not waste it tearing the team down. Every team is composed of three groups: athletes, coaches, and parents. Be a positive part of the team.
8. Emphasize good sportsmanship with your student athlete. Win or lose, they must show respect for their opponent. Always demonstrate the maturity necessary to show class. In addition, encourage your student athlete to respect the authority of the officials. Remember, self-respect begins with self-control.
9. Emphasize that "team" must take precedence over the individual. Recognition of individual contributions happens at the end of the season. Recognition is directly affected by the success of the team and the individual's contribution to the team's success. There is no "I" in the word team.
10. The lessons learned through athletic competition are lessons for life. The skills learned will maintain a great value in the future. Keep sport in perspective.

VII. Parental Procedures for Registering a Concern

Both parenting and coaching are extremely difficult vocations. By establishing an understanding of each position, we are better able to accept the actions of the other and provide greater benefit to children. As parents, when your children become involved in an athletic program, you have a right to understand what expectations are placed on your child. This begins with clear communication from the coach of your child's team.

A. Communication you should expect from your child's coach.

1. Philosophy of the coaching staff.
2. Expectations the coach has for your child as well as all members on the squad.
3. Location and time for all practices and contests scheduled.
4. Team requirements (i.e., fees, special equipment, off-season conditioning).
5. Procedure should your child be injured during participation.
6. Discipline which results in the denial of your child's participation.

B. Communication coaches expect from parents.

1. Concern expressed directly to the coach.
2. Notification of schedule conflicts well in advance.
3. Specific concerns in regard to a coach's philosophy and/or expectations.

As your child becomes involved in the programs at Mason City Schools, he/she will experience some of the most rewarding moments of his/her life. It is important to understand that there may also be times when things do not go the way you or your child may wish. At these times, discussion with the coach first is encouraged.

C. Appropriate concerns to discuss with coaches.

1. The treatment of your child, mentally and physically.
2. Ways to help your child improve.
3. Concerns about your child's behavior.

It is very difficult to accept your child's not playing as much as you may hope. Coaches are professionals. They make judgment decisions based on what they believe to be best for all student athletes involved. As you have seen from the list above, certain things can be and should be discussed with your child's coach. Other things, such as those listed next, must be left to the discretion of the coach.

D. Issues not appropriate to discuss with coaches.

1. Playing time
2. Team strategy
3. Play calling
4. Other athletes

Communication with a coach is important. There are situations that may require a conference between coach and parent. It is important that both parties involved have a clear understanding of the other's position. When these conferences become necessary, please call 398-2798 (High School Voicemail), 398-2513 (High School Athletic Office), or 398-9035 (Middle School Office) to reach the coach to make the necessary arrangements for an appointment.

Please do not attempt to confront a coach before or after a contest or practice. These can be emotional times for both the parent and the coach. Meetings of this nature do not promote resolution.

E. What to do if the meeting with the coach does not provide a resolution to the concern?

1. Call and set up an appointment with the Director of Interscholastic Athletics to discuss the situation.
2. At this meeting the appropriate next step can be determined.

Since research indicates a student involved in athletic activities has a greater chance for success during adulthood, these programs have been established. Many of the character traits required to be a successful participant are exactly those that will promote a successful life after high school. We hope the information provided in this handbook makes both you and your child's experience with the Mason City School's Interscholastic Athletic program less stressful and more enjoyable.

VIII. Sportsmanship Philosophy and Guidelines

The Mason City School District Athletic Department believes that interscholastic competition involving member schools of the Ohio High School Athletic Association should be governed by the basic principles of good sportsmanship. This document has been prepared to insure that all participants have a common understanding of those basic principles.

We believe that participation is more important than winning. We believe that students should be coached to play to the best of their ability and to understand that to play well is to play honorably. The promotion of sportsmanship is the obligation of all school personnel and is directed to the behavior of spectators, coaches, and players. An additional component to consider is coaches' ethics. We believe the development of good sportsmanship through the practice of ethical behavior and moral reasoning is one of the acknowledged objectives of interscholastic athletics. We therefore expect school administrators, coaches, athletes, cheerleaders, and spectators to know and embrace the following fundamentals of sportsmanship.

1. Respect should be demonstrated for an athletic opponent and for their school at all times. We should treat visiting teams and their supporters as guests and accord them the consideration all persons deserve. Visiting schools should respect the property and dignity of their host school and its athletic teams.
2. Respect should be demonstrated for the officials at all times. Officials must be assumed to be and accepted as impartial arbiters who are trained to do their job, and can be expected to do the job, to the best of their ability.
3. Knowledge of and a proper respect for the current rules of the contest should guide the behavior of all participants. Rules are essential for a fair contest. Good sportsmanship suggests the importance of conforming to the spirit as well as the "letter" of the rules.
4. All participants should strive to maintain self-control at all times. The desire to win should not be accepted as a reason for abandoning rational behavior. A proper perspective must be maintained by all if the potential educational values of athletic competition are to be realized.
5. All participants should learn to recognize and appreciate skill in performance regardless of affiliation. Recognition of the good performance of an opponent is a demonstration of generosity and good will that is encouraged in all member schools. In order for good sportsmanship to prevail, it is essential that all participants understand their individual responsibilities and expected modes of behavior before, during, and after contests.

Coaches:

The coaches bear the greatest responsibility for the development of sportsmanship as they have the greatest influence on the attitudes and behaviors of players, the student body, and the community. Coaches must value sportsmanship and teach it through their words and by example. Therefore, coaches should embrace the following appropriate behavior:

- ◆ Instruct their players in the fundamentals of sportsmanship.
- ◆ Teach the value of conforming to the spirit as well as the letter of the rules.
- ◆ Make sportsmanlike behavior a matter of team discipline, with appropriate consequences for team members who display inappropriate behavior.
- ◆ Remind the student body at every opportunity that visiting teams are guests and, as their hosts, they should be polite and courteous.
- ◆ Respect the officials' judgment and interpretation of the rules.
- ◆ Demonstrate publicly the ideals of good sportsmanship by such acts as shaking hands with officials and opposing coaches before and after contests.

Coaches should avoid the following inappropriate behaviors:

- ◆ Use of profanity.
- ◆ Ejection from contests.
- ◆ Berating officials or players.
- ◆ Inciting spectators/players to inappropriate behavior.

Athletes:

Because athletes are admired and respected, they exert a great deal of influence over the actions and behavior of the spectators. It is important that players:

- ◆ Treat opponents with the respect that is due them as guests and as fellow athletes.
- ◆ Shake hands with opponents and wish them good luck when appropriate.
- ◆ Exercise self-control at all times, accepting the judgment of the officials as just that, the best judgment they could make given what they know and see. Never argue or make gestures indicating lack of respect for the officials' judgment.
- ◆ Accept both victory and defeat with pride and compassion. Congratulate opponents in a sincere manner following either victory or defeat.
- ◆ Accept seriously the responsibility and privilege of representing the school and community.

Athletes should avoid the following inappropriate behaviors:

- ◆ Use of profanity.
- ◆ Ejection from contests.
- ◆ Berating officials or fellow athletes.
- ◆ Inciting spectators and/or other athletes to inappropriate behavior.
- ◆ Leaving the bench area when not competing, or becoming involved in any type of altercation.

It should be noted that coaches and athletes ejected from interscholastic athletic contests will be accountable to the disciplinary procedure in the bylaws of the Ohio High School Athletic Association as printed in the Association's handbook. Further action above and beyond this may be invoked by the school administration.

Cheerleaders:

Cheerleaders are representatives of the student body. By setting a good example, the cheerleaders can influence and control the actions of the student spectators. They should:

- ◆ Establish standards of desirable behavior in keeping with the fundamentals of good sportsmanship for the cheerleaders and student spectators.
- ◆ Use positive cheers to encourage their own team without demeaning their opponents.
- ◆ Use discretion in deciding when to cheer and which cheers to use.
- ◆ Never attempt to distract opposing players or in any way interfere with their performance.
- ◆ Serve as hosts for visiting cheerleaders.

Spectators:

Partisan spectators by their behaviors and reactions determine to a large extent the reputation for sportsmanship of their school. Spectators should be reminded, and should keep in mind, that athletes are friendly rivals as members of opposing interscholastic teams. They expect to be treated in that manner. Spectators should be reminded too, that the contest should be between the teams and athletes engaged in the competition and not between their supporters. It is important that all spectators:

- ◆ Know and demonstrate the fundamentals of good sportsmanship.
- ◆ Respect, cooperate, and respond enthusiastically to the cheerleaders, coaches, and athletes of all teams.
- ◆ Censure fellow spectators whose behavior is inappropriate.
- ◆ Be positive toward players and coaches regardless of the outcome of the contest.
- ◆ Respect the judgment and the professionalism of the officials and coaches.

Spectators should avoid the following inappropriate behaviors:

- ◆ Verbal/physical abuse of contest officials.
- ◆ Berating athletes, coaches, officials, or other spectators with chants, signs, or cheers.
- ◆ Interruption of contests by throwing objects, entering the area of competition or becoming involved in disruptive behavior.

We believe that each participant should be committed to upholding the ideals of good sportsmanship put forth in this document. In this spirit, it should be understood, appropriate disciplinary action will be taken when incidents of inappropriate behavior occur. We also recognize the importance of communication and co-operation among school officials when incidents of inappropriate behavior arise. The quality of our athletic program depends upon this natural respect. We also believe that being proactive is vital to the education of our students and spectators.

IX. Responsibilities of a Mason Interscholastic Athlete

Being a member of a Mason interscholastic athletic team is the fulfillment of an early ambition for many students. The attainment of this goal carries with it certain traditions and responsibilities that must be maintained. A great athletic tradition is not built overnight. It takes the hard work of many people over many years. As a member of an interscholastic squad, you have inherited a wonderful tradition, a tradition you are challenged to uphold.

Our tradition has been to win with honor. We desire to win, but only with honor to our athletes, our school, and our community. Such a tradition is worthy of the best effort of all concerned. Over many years, our athletic program has achieved more than its share of conference and tournament championships. Many individuals have set records and won All-Conference and other individual honors.

It will not be easy to contribute to such a great athletic tradition. To compete for your school means that you have agreed to abide by a higher code of conduct. You will have to say “no” to temptations an athlete cannot afford. When you wear the Green and White, we assume that you not only understand our traditions, but are also willing to assume the responsibilities that go along with them. However, the contributions you make should be a satisfying accomplishment to you and your family.

A. Responsibilities to Yourself

The most important of these responsibilities is to broaden and develop your strength of character. You owe it to yourself to get the greatest possible good from your school experience. Your studies, your participation in other extra-curricular activities, as well as in athletics prepare you for your life as an adult.

B. Responsibilities to Your School

Another responsibility you assume as a member of an athletic team is to your school. Mason cannot maintain its position as having an outstanding school unless you do your best in whatever activity in which you become involved. By participating in interscholastic athletics to the best of your ability, you are contributing to the reputation of your school.

You assume a leadership role when you are on an athletic squad. The student body and citizens of the community know you. You are on the stage with the spotlight on you. The student body, the community and other communities judge our school by your conduct and attitudes, both on and off the field. Because of this leadership role, you can contribute greatly to school spirit and community pride. Make Mason proud of you and your community proud of your school by your faithful exemplification of these ideals.

C. Responsibilities to Others

As a squad member, you also bear a responsibility to your home and family. You should never give your family anything of which to be ashamed. You must measure up to all of the training rules. You should practice to the best of your ability every day. If you have played the game “all out,” you keep your self-respect and your family can be proud of you.

X. Requirements for Participation

As a student athlete enrolled in Mason City Schools, you are not eligible to participate in any sport until the following items have been completed and submitted to the proper person:

- ◆ Physical Examination Form
- ◆ Risk Waiver Form
- ◆ Emergency Medical Form
- ◆ Handbook Awareness Receipt
- ◆ Code of Conduct Parent/Athlete Pledge Form
- ◆ All academic eligibility requirements have been satisfied.

XI. Academic Eligibility Requirements

Mason High School Academic Eligibility Requirements

To be academically eligible to participate in interscholastic athletics at Mason High School, all student athletes are required to meet a three-fold standard. The standard includes the following:

- A. All high school student athletes must meet the O.H.S.A.A. academic requirement which states that the athlete is required to have passed the equivalent of five credits toward graduation the preceding grading period in order to participate the following grading period. The academic year at Mason High School consists of a block trimester format. This requires a student athlete to pass, each trimester, 4 courses with a credit value of one-half unit each, or 3 courses with a credit value of one-half unit each along with a physical education class in order to retain academic eligibility.

Any change in O.H.S.A.A. eligibility status for a student athlete becomes effective on the start of the fifth school day after the end of the grading period.

- B. Student athletes attending Mason High School must achieve a 1.51 grade point average in course work taken the preceding interim grading period in order to maintain interscholastic athletic eligibility in good standing. Grade point averages will be checked at each interim report period (fourth and eighth week of each grading period). If a student athlete's G.P.A. is below the 1.51 requirement at interim reporting time in courses which the athlete is currently enrolled, he/she will be ineligible during the upcoming interim period. The student athlete may have this ineligibility waived by filing an academic probation petition with the athletic office. This will establish an academic intervention plan for the upcoming interim period. If, however, at the end of the next interim report period the student athlete's G.P.A. has not met the required standard, the student athlete will become ineligible for the next four weeks of the academic calendar. The student athlete may request a review of academic progress at this time. The Principal or designee, after consulting the Director of Interscholastic Athletics or designee, may reinstate an individual's academic eligibility provided significant academic progress has been demonstrated. This process does not apply to O.H.S.A.A. rules and regulations.

- C. Mason High School students receiving a failing grade in any course at the time interim reports are distributed must follow the same procedure as in Article B above to establish an academic intervention plan. Failure to develop and follow an intervention plan will result in denial of participation in the athlete's respective activity.

Mason Middle School Academic Eligibility Requirements:

To be academically eligible to compete in interscholastic athletics at MMS, all students are required to meet the following three-fold standard:

- A. All MMS student-athletes must meet the O.H.S.A.A. academic requirement which states:
- A student in grade 7 or 8 must be currently enrolled and must have been enrolled in school the immediately preceding grading period and received passing grades during that grading period in a minimum of five of those subjects in which the student received grades.
 - Consequence: If the student fails to meet the O.H.S.A.A. academic requirement of passing 75% of the subjects in which they were enrolled, the student will be ruled ineligible to compete in interscholastic athletics for the duration of the next grading period. (O.H.S.A.A. Policy)
- B. All MMS student-athletes must achieve a minimum Grade Point Average requirement which states:
- A student enrolled in grade 7 or 8 must achieve a 1.75 grade point average in those subjects in which the student receives grades from the immediate preceding grading period.
 - Consequence: If the student fails to achieve a 1.75 grade point average during the preceding grading period, the student will be ruled ineligible to compete in interscholastic athletics for the duration of the next grading period. (Mason City School District Policy)
- C. All MMS student-athletes must be passing all subjects currently enrolled in during the immediate grading period in which they are competing interscholastically.
- A student must be passing all subjects enrolled in during the immediate grading period in which they are participating. All grades will be evaluated by use of the interim reports during the 4th and 8th week of the trimester.
 - Consequence: If a student has one or more failing grades in any course at the time interim reports are distributed, the student will be ruled ineligible to compete in interscholastic athletics for 5 academic calendar days. If, at the end of the 5 day suspension, the student has raised all subject grades above failure, the student will be ruled eligible to compete. If, however, the student maintains a failing grade(s), the student will continue to be ruled ineligible for 5 calendar days. This cycle will continue until the student is passing all subjects currently enrolled in. (Mason City School District Policy)

XII. Conduct Expectations and Code

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

A. At school

In the academic area, a good athlete becomes a good student. A person cannot be a classroom laggard and think he/she can be an outstanding athlete. If you are lazy in class, you will be lazy at practice and during competition and will never reach your full potential. As an athlete, you must plan your schedule so that you give sufficient time and energy to your studies to insure acceptable grades.

In addition to maintaining good scholarship, an athlete should give respectful attention to classroom activities and show respect for other students and faculty at all times. Horseplay and unnecessary boisterousness are not appropriate habits of behavior.

Any student referred to the office for a school rules violation may be denied the privilege of participation in all athletic activities for a period determined by either the coach and/or a school administrator. Any infraction resulting in suspension from school will include denial of participation from all interscholastic athletic activities for the same duration of time as the suspension from school. Additional consequences are at the discretion of the coach.

B. At athletic events

In the area of athletic competition, a true athlete does not use profanity or illegal tactics, and learns fast that losing is part of the game. You should be gracious in defeat and modest in victory. It is always courteous to congratulate the opponent on a well played game after the contest, whether in defeat or victory.

C. Code of Conduct

A firm and fair policy of enforcement is necessary to uphold the regulations and standards of the Athletic Department. The community, school administrators, and the coaching staff feel strongly that high standards of conduct and citizenship are essential in maintaining a sound program of athletics. The welfare of the student is our major consideration and transcends any other consideration.

All athletes shall abide by a code-of-conduct that will earn them the honor and respect that participation and competition in the interscholastic program affords. Any conduct that results in dishonor to the athlete, the team or the school will not be tolerated. Examples of unacceptable conduct are, but not limited to, theft, vandalism, disrespect, immorality or violations of law. Tarnishing the reputation of those associated with the school and the athletic programs will not be tolerated.

Students participating in interscholastic athletics must conduct themselves as mature young men and women. Participation in interscholastic athletics is a privilege and not a right. An interscholastic athlete involved in conduct construed to reflect discredit upon a team and/or the school, will be subject to disciplinary action as determined by the coach and/or administration. Issues of misconduct not addressed within this document will be dealt with on an individual basis. This is an extension of the Mason City Schools Student Code of Conduct.

D. Individual Coach's Rules and Expectations

Each coach is encouraged to set team rules in addition to the rules in the Code of Conduct. Rules and penalties for tardiness, curfew violations, inappropriate practice/game dress, and misconduct are examples of acceptable coach's guidelines. These rules should be given in writing to all athletes, parents, and the Director of Interscholastic Athletics at the beginning of each season.

XIII. Training Rules and Regulations

A. Statement

Medical research clearly substantiates the fact that the use of tobacco, alcohol, or any type of mood modifying substance produces harmful effects on the human body.

You cannot compromise athletics with substance abuse. The student who wishes to experiment with such substances should remove himself/herself from the team before he/she jeopardizes team morale, team reputation and team success, and does physical harm to himself/herself and/or other participants.

The Mason City School District and its Athletic Department are concerned with the health habits of student athletes and is convinced that athletes and the use of these substances are not compatible. It is also a fact that when students have a strong interest to participate in athletics, their desire to use substances is reduced.

Students have to decide if they want to be athletes. If they wish to be athletes, they must make a commitment to become competitors. A large part of this commitment is to follow a simple set of training rules the Athletic Department believes to be fair.

B. Simple Training Rules

No Use of Tobacco, No Alcoholic Beverages, No Use of Drugs

C. Principle Belief

It is the belief of the Mason City School District and its Athletic Department that there is no such thing as responsible use of controlled substances/mood-altering chemicals, alcohol, or tobacco by any high school student. Adolescent use is not only against the law - it jeopardizes the student's health and safety, and it inhibits attainment of individual potential. Therefore, any use of controlled substances/mood-altering drugs, alcohol, or tobacco by student athletes will not be tolerated.

It is further believed that participation in interscholastic athletics is a privilege, not a right. Student athletes are in a highly visible setting of leadership and/or competition/performance. Therefore, student athletes will be held to a higher accountability of conduct and behavior than the student who chooses neither to participate nor to represent Mason City Schools.

XIV. Drug, Alcohol, and Tobacco Policy

Refer to Mason High School Student Handbook.

XV. Financial Obligations and Equipment

- A. Mason City School District's Athletic Department does not have a pay to participate policy. However, due to the fact that the athletes often times wish to keep practice or game uniform items, some sports require the purchase of those items. Those items would then become the athlete's property at the end of the season.
- B. All athletes are responsible for the proper care and security of equipment issued to them. Equipment, including uniforms, furnished by the athletic department is to be worn only for contests and practice. All equipment not returned in good condition at the end of the season will be subject to an appropriate financial penalty. If athletic department equipment is lost, the responsible athlete shall make restitution to the athletic department in order to replace what was lost.

XVI. Other Athletic Department Policies

A. Travel

All athletic participants or those associated with the activities are required to ride transportation provided by the school district to and from all contests or events. The only exception is advance written permission, received from the parent/guardian in person, for the student to be released to their legal guardian. (A Mason City School travel form, # MSC-705A, must be completed and filled out prior to the contest). No student is permitted to drive unless there are extenuating circumstances. The athletic participant is expected to exemplify good manners while traveling with

the group. This includes all bus conduct in accordance with state codes of transportation. Exceptions to this policy must have approval of the principal or designee.

B. Attendance

Attendance and punctuality are essential for an athlete to receive maximum benefit from his/her participation in interscholastic athletics.

1. Attendance at school

To be eligible to participate in an interscholastic event or practice, an athlete must be at school the entire day of the event or practice. Exceptions to the rule are only for unavoidable appointments such as doctor, dentist, optometrist, and other such commitments. These appointments require one day advance notice, unless for an emergency situation, to the attendance office. Exceptions to attendance will be dealt with at the discretion of the Principal or his/her designee. Documentation of any absence must be submitted to the attendance office the day after the absence. *An entire day of school consists of attending all scheduled classes.*

2. Attendance at practices

Absence from practice may cause the athlete to miss necessary preparation for an upcoming contest. This could result in non-participation in that contest.

a. Excused absence

An excused absence requires advance notice from the athlete to the appropriate coach, preferably in writing. The reason for the absence must be considered unavoidable if the coach is to consider it an excused absence. It is understood that sudden illness and emergency situations do occur from time to time. Exceptions will be dealt with at the discretion of the appropriate coach.

b. Unexcused absence

An unexcused absence is considered to be any absence not falling into the excused category. First unexcused absence will result in denial of participation in the next interscholastic event. Second unexcused absence will result in denial of participation in the next two interscholastic events. The third unexcused absence will result in denial of participation the remainder of the interscholastic athletic season.

3. Attendance at interscholastic contests (including weekends)

a. Excused absence

An excused absence requires advance notice from the athlete to the appropriate coach, preferably in writing. The reason for the absence must be considered unavoidable if

the coach is to consider it an excused absence. It is understood that sudden illness and emergency situations do occur from time to time. Exceptions will be dealt with at the discretion of the appropriate coach.

b. Unexcused absence

An unexcused absence is considered to be any absence not falling into the excused category. First unexcused absence will result in denial of participation in the next two interscholastic events. Second unexcused absence will result in denial of participation the remainder of the interscholastic athletic season.

4. Vacations/Holidays

a. Vacations

Vacations by athletes during their sports season are discouraged. Those wishing to schedule a vacation during a sports season need to evaluate the commitment necessary to participate on an interscholastic athletic team. If an athlete does plan to go on a family vacation with a parent/guardian/custodian or is attending a school-related activity during a school recess, advance notice must be given the appropriate coach by the first day of official team practice. Each day of participation missed requires a day of practice before the athlete may resume participation in interscholastic athletic events. For each interscholastic event missed, participation will be denied for an equal number of interscholastic events. If more than three interscholastic events are missed, participation for the remainder of the interscholastic season will be denied.

b. Unexcused absence

Not going with a parent/guardian/custodian or with a school-related group is an unexcused absence. If the athlete wishes to continue participation, he/she will be denied participation immediately upon return in a minimum of two interscholastic athletic contests. If more than two interscholastic events are missed due to this absence, participation for the remainder of the interscholastic season will be denied.

C. Athlete Activity Termination

When an athlete quits a sport activity prior to the conclusion of the sport season, the student must obtain written permission from the coach/advisor before permission will be granted to join another sport in that same season. If permission is granted, participation may not begin in the new sport until all obligations to the previous sport have been met.

D. Conflicts in extra-curricular activities

An individual attempting to participate in too many extra-curricular activities or trying to work, undoubtedly, will be in a position of a conflict of obligations. The Athletic Department recognizes

that each student athlete should have the opportunity for a broad range of experiences in the area of extra-curricular activities, and to this end the department will attempt to schedule events in a manner so as to minimize conflicts.

The student athlete has the responsibility to do everything they can to avoid continuous conflict. This should include being cautious about belonging to too many activities where conflicts are bound to occur. It also means notifying the activity sponsors immediately when a conflict does arise. When conflicts happen, it is up to the appropriate coach to determine resolution of the conflict and any consequences the athlete may incur.

E. College Recruitment Policy

In the event an athlete should be contacted personally by a college recruiter, he/she has an obligation to work through his/her coach and the athletic department. Inform your coach of such a contact as soon as possible. If college recruitment information is needed, please contact your coach or the athletic office.

F. Awards

Awards are meant to signify notable accomplishments by athletes. The athletic department sponsors a program to appropriately recognize athletes for their participation in interscholastic sports at each level of competition. The responsibility for determining the qualification for these and other special awards lies with the coaching staff of each specific sport.

G. MHS Athletic Complex Security Issues

- ◆ When school is in session, all visitors to the athletic area of the high school need to sign-in at the main office or student services window to be issued a badge to be worn while visiting the high school.
- ◆ At 4 p.m., on days school is in session, the gates to the academic end of the complex will be secured. Athletes will not be permitted back into this area unless accompanied by a staff member.
- ◆ Students participating in or attending athletic functions (i.e., practice or contests) are instructed to be picked-up from the arena/stadium concourse area.
- ◆ Use of any of the athletic facilities at Mason High School must be under the supervision of a staff member or have received the proper permission from the school district facility coordinator or they will be asked to leave the premises. The only area that can be used without supervision is the running track.