

STAFFORD STUDENT-ATHLETE HANDBOOK



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STAFFORD INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETICS

It is a privilege to be a student-athlete in the interscholastic program of the Stafford Public Schools. We, who are concerned with the educational development of men and women through athletics, feel that a properly controlled, well-organized sports program meets with the students' needs for self-expression, mental alertness and physical growth. It is our hope to maintain a program that is sound in purpose and will further each student's educational maturity.

A wide variety of sports programs are offered both at the varsity and sub-varsity levels. Thirty (30) teams become involved in interscholastic competition. Because of this high degree of visibility, it is important that you represent your school, your team and most importantly yourself with pride, determination and commitment.

You must be held accountable to provide leadership, to exhibit responsible behavior and to keep the rules of the team, coach, school and conference. When you win, we will share your pride, enjoy your glory. Keep in mind that how you conduct yourselves on and off the playing field is as important to us as how well you play. Win or lose, we will feel equal pride if we know that you have tried your best, that you have always treated your opponents and their supporters with kindness and courtesy, and that you have played fair-always.

Participation in interscholastic athletics is an experience you will never forget. Enjoy it; take pride in your performance and best wishes for a successful season.

Damian Frassinelli
Director of Athletics and Recreation

“PARTICIPATION IN ATHLETICS IS A PRIVILEGE AND NOT A RIGHT”

FORWARD

The purpose of this handbook is to act as a guide for participants, coaches, and parents in order that each may understand the accepted procedures and policies of the Stafford High School in conjunction with the Connecticut Interscholastic Athletic Conference. Described are the procedures, which should bring about a more efficient operation of the interscholastic athletic program. Participation and involvement in the athletic program will contribute to the development of the role students will play in adult life and should help to promote a feeling of pride and school spirit.

Each coach and student-athlete is **required** to read this handbook and acknowledge its receipt before participating in a sport. Student-athletes are **required** to review this handbook with their parents before each sport season.

MISSION STATEMENT

The Stafford Department of Athletics strives for excellence by providing opportunities to student-athletes to participate in programs that are designed to develop meaningful standards of athletic performance, leadership, scholarship, community service and appropriate conduct within the educational and social environments of Stafford High School.

GOALS

1. To encourage student-athletes to achieve success by maintaining academic eligibility rules and to keep athletics in proper perspective.
2. To develop good citizenship, honesty, emotional control, dependability, and respect for rules, property and authority.
3. To provide an opportunity to exemplify and observe good sportsmanship.
4. To maintain a high standard of credible and positive performance and conduct on and off the field.
5. To teach and emphasize the fundamental skills of the various sports as a necessary ingredient in achieving individual and team success.
6. To stress the importance of physical fitness, conditioning, health habits, and safety in athletics.
7. To provide opportunities to develop lasting friendships with teammates and opponents.
8. To teach athletes to work together as a cohesive unit in order to achieve a common goal.
9. To provide a well-planned and well-balanced program of interscholastic athletics for as many secondary school students as possible.
10. To provide high quality leadership for all athletic programs so as to exemplify to student's a desired behavior to be developed from each athletic program.
11. To provide opportunities for the development of a feeling of unity and belonging, team pride, teamwork and commitment.

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR ATHLETES

INTRODUCTION

Recognizing that it is a privilege and honor to represent one's school and community while participating on an athletic team and that it is an athlete's responsibility to conform to those rules and regulations, the following Code of Conduct shall be in effect for the athletic teams.

CODE

1. Athletes shall conform to the school, North Central Connecticut Conference (N.C.C.C.) and Connecticut Interscholastic Athletic Conference (CIAC) Eligibility Rules, including all medical and academic requirements.
2. Athletes shall conform to the behavioral norms of the school and act in a responsible manner with regards to the rules and regulations established in the Stafford Student Handbook.
3. Athletes shall conform to the behavioral norms of society in general and to the specific laws established by the local, state and federal governments.
4. Athletes shall attend and not be tardy for all practices and meets held both during regular school sessions and during vacations. Exceptions shall be subject to the approval of the head coach.
5. Athletes shall get proper amounts of sleep and rest, both of which are recognized as essential for maximum effectiveness and efficiency in athletic participation.
6. Athletes shall maintain a proper, well-balanced and nutritious diet in order to maintain peak effectiveness in their respective sports.
7. Athletes shall abstain from using those substances – drugs, alcohol, steroids, and tobacco – that are deemed harmful to ones athletic performance, health and general well being.
8. Athletes shall, at all times, conduct themselves in a manner that exhibits sound moral character and exemplifies good sportsmanship. Such behavior shall consider the safety and well being of team members, opponents, officials, spectators and the community in general.
9. Athletes shall be held responsible and accountable for all equipment associated with the functioning of the team. Specifically this includes uniforms, sweat suits and equipment related to the performance of their particular event.
10. Athletes shall always conduct themselves with an attitude that is positively stated, exhibits pride and is representative of the Stafford community in general.

CONCLUSION

Athletes failing to conform to and meet the requirements of the contents of the Code of Conduct shall face disciplinary action, on an individual basis, which is to be conducted in accordance with the rules and regulations of due process of the athletic department, school and/or community. **This action could include suspension or expulsion from the team.**

ATHLETIC REQUIREMENTS FOR PARTICIPATION

In order to participate in any sport at Stafford the following requirements must be met:

1. Registration is done exclusively online at;
<https://www.familyid.com/organizations/stafford-high-school>
2. Current Physical or Health Assessment Form (good for 13 months) completed by Physician and Parent/Guardian submitted to the School nurse.

SPORTS HEALTH ASSESSMENTS FOR INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETICS

The Stafford Board of Education requires that all students have a current Doctors Physical *before* being permitted to take part in interscholastic sports. This means they may not participate in try-outs, practices, or contests without the assessment form (signed by both physician and parent/guardian) on file with the School nurse. Medical forms can be downloaded from the school website: <http://shs.stafford.k12.ct.us/>

IMPORTANT: The blue colored State Medical Form is **not acceptable** for athletic participation unless the examining physician specifically states in writing on the form that the athlete is: “physically able to participate in all sports including contact sports during the current school year.”

A Doctors Physical must be obtained for *each* school year and will serve for the entire school year unless the student has been injured after the physical examination. **To return to the team after an injury, the athlete must obtain a note from the attending physician stating that the athlete may continue in the program.** This note must be given to the athletic trainer or coach. Without a reentry slip, the athlete will not be allowed to participate in any practice or contest. If there is a difference of opinion between the doctor, trainer, athlete, or parent, the final decision will be that of the attending physician.

ACADEMIC AND ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

In accordance with the CIAC you are **NOT ELIGIBLE** if:

1. You are not taking at least four (4) units of work or its equivalent; (Rule I.B.)
2. You have not passed at least four (4) units at the end of the last regular marking period as of the official day that grades are issued, with the exception of fall eligibility. * (Rule I. A.)
3. You are nineteen (19) years of age before July 1; Student-athletes will be allowed to compete up *through their 19th birthday, however, if their 20th birthday falls during a season, the student-athlete will not be allowed to start or compete during that season and all eligibility will cease.* (Rule II.B.)
4. You have changed schools without a change of legal residence; (Rule II.C.)
5. You have been in attendance for more than eight (8) semesters (A student has eight (8) consecutive semesters or four (4) consecutive years of eligibility from the date of entry into the ninth grade to be eligible for interscholastic competition); (Rule II. B.)
6. You play or practice with an outside team in the same sport while a member of the school team after the first scheduled game in any season; (Rule II.E.)
7. You play under an assumed name on an outside team; (Rule II.F.)
8. You receive personal economic gain for participation in any CIAC sport. (Rule II.F.)
9. Your work habits or conduct both in and out of school are such as to make you unworthy to represent the ideals, principles, and standards of your school.
10. Local rules may be more restrictive than those of the CIAC. (See additional eligibility requirements under policies and procedures).

The school principal may declare a student ineligible if it is felt that the student is not taking care of his/her responsibilities both as a student and citizen of Stafford High School and the community.

* For fall sports eligibility – student must have received credit for four (4) units or its equivalent towards graduation at the close of the school year preceding the contest.

NOTE: Marking period grades (not semester grades) are to be used in determining scholastic eligibility, except for fall eligibility.

INSURANCE FOR ATHLETES

Students participating in interscholastic sports are automatically covered under the school's athletic insurance program. The athletic insurance program does not cover any medical expense that is paid or payable under any other insurance policy. Therefore, a family's regular insurance policy (Blue Cross/Blue Shield, etc.) will cover the student athlete initially. The school's athletic insurance will take effect when the individual's insurance is exhausted, up to the limits contained in the school's athletic insurance policy, which is on file in the Business Office. **PLEASE TAKE NOTICE THAT, IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS ABOUT COVERAGE OR PARTICULAR TREATMENT UNDER THE SCHOOL'S ATHLETIC INSURANCE POLICY, YOU SHOULD INQUIRE ABOUT SUCH COVERAGE BEFORE YOU REQUEST OR AUTHORIZE SUCH TREATMENT.** Athletes who are injured may obtain a claim form from the school nurse who will review the original accident report and sign the claim form.

ATHLETIC INJURIES

REPORTING OF INJURIES

All injuries that occur while participating on an athletic team are to be reported to the Athletic Trainer who will fill out an injury form and turn it in to the Athletic Department Office. This report should be completed the day of the injury or as soon thereafter as possible. The Athletic Trainer will then submit the report to the Business Office.

Head Injuries

Head injuries may not become evident until some time has passed since the actual incident. In addition, many athletes participate in weekend activities without medical coverage. For these reasons, it is important to be aware of the signs, symptoms, and appropriate treatment for head injuries. The injured athlete should **never be left alone for the first 24 hours** after the injury. The athlete **should be awakened every two hours** in the evening to establish arousability and alertness.

While a *mild* headache may be expected, it is still important to monitor the athlete. If any of the following symptoms occur, please seek medical attention immediately.

- ⇒ Increasing or severe headache
- ⇒ Dizziness
- ⇒ Vomiting or nausea
- ⇒ Loss of memory
- ⇒ Poor concentration
- ⇒ Confusion
- ⇒ Change in personality
- ⇒ Unequal or dilated pupils
- ⇒ Double or blurred vision
- ⇒ Blood or watery fluid coming from the ears or nose
- ⇒ Weakness or clumsiness in arms or legs
- ⇒ Slurred or garbled speech
- ⇒ Difficulty with speech

- ⇒ Asymmetry of the face
- ⇒ Increased swelling along the scalp
- ⇒ Hard to arouse or irritable
- ⇒ Convulsions and/or awkward movements

STAFFORD HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETIC TEAMS

Fall

BOYS

Football (V, JV)
Soccer (V, JV)
Cross Country

GIRLS

Field Hockey (V, JV)
Soccer (V, JV)
Cross Country
Cheerleading

Winter

Basketball (V, JV, F)
Wrestling (V, JV)
Indoor Track

Basketball (V, JV, F)
Indoor Track
Cheerleading

Spring

Baseball (V, JV)
Outdoor Track
Golf (V, JV)

Softball (V, JV)
Outdoor Track

Selection of team members is subject to the discretion of the coaching staff and nature of the sport. Student/athletes are encouraged to refer to the coach for the selection process of a particular sport and for the levels of participation offered in that sport. Not everyone who tries out for a team will make that team or level of team but all eligible students are encouraged to tryout. Seniors that are not selected as a varsity level Athlete are not entitled to a roster spot on a team and may be cut from the program. All decisions are made by the Coach after a tryout or evaluation period, usually days 1, 2 or 3.

DESCRIPTION OF PROGRAM LEVELS

Varsity Athletics: Varsity athletic programs afford opportunities to those athletes who exhibit the greatest skills in their chosen sport. These athletes will compete against equally talented athletes from opposing schools. The skills of varsity athletes will be evaluated by the coaching staff and utilized at the coaches discretion to provide Stafford with the best possible win-loss record. Playing time will not be equal at the Varsity level.

NOTE: Decisions concerning how much playing time and what position a player may play are made by the coaching staff only and may/will vary from game to game, season to season.

Junior Varsity Athletics: Junior Varsity athletic programs afford those students who do not yet possess the skills required of varsity athletes an opportunity to participate in a competitive setting. Junior Varsity athletes are in the process of gaining the valuable knowledge, skill and experience required for varsity competition. Junior Varsity athletes may, on occasion, participate in varsity contests. Decisions of this nature are based on the evaluation of the athletes' abilities by the coaching staff and are not absolute.

NOTE: Decisions about playing time and player positions are made only by the coaching staff.

Freshmen Athletics: Freshmen athletic programs are designed to provide ninth-grade students with the opportunity to participate in an instructional yet competitive setting. These programs will teach the basic skills of the sport and afford athletes an opportunity to gain valuable knowledge and experience, as well as the skills necessary for Junior Varsity competition. Freshmen athletes may, on occasion, participate in Junior Varsity or Varsity contests, respectively. Decisions of this nature are based on the evaluation of the athlete's abilities by the coaching staff. These decisions should not be misinterpreted as an absolute to move to the next level of competition.

NOTE: Decisions about playing time and player positions are made only by the coaching staff.

TRAINING ROOM SERVICES/COVERAGE

Medical services are available at Varsity sports games and the majority of practices. On-field game coverage is limited primarily to varsity sports, due to the number of games. The Medical personnel will also provide care for teams visiting SHS.

SUBSTANCE USE, POSSESSION, OR DISTRIBUTION

Use, possession, or distribution of illicit drugs, including anabolic steroids, alcohol, drug paraphernalia or the misuse of other drugs/medications will result in the **immediate dismissal** from the team for the season. The student-athlete shall report any use of medication(s) prescribed by a physician to the coach. The student-athlete may regain athletic eligibility for the next season after completing a planned assistance program.

When a drug dependency problem is identified with use of the above substances by the student-athlete through self-referral or by a parent's referral, and is being monitored by a physician, the student-athlete **WILL NOT** be immediately dismissed from the team, however,

1. The student-athlete and present coach will collaborate with the appropriate certified personnel and develop a program of assistance utilizing the schools resources and outside agencies. The assistance team will then monitor and report progress.
2. Dismissal from the team will result if the student-athlete fails to complete the program of assistance.
3. The student-athlete **WILL BE** immediately dismissed from the team upon the next incident of any substance abuse violation.
4. Self-referral will be held in confidence if desired by the student-athlete.

A. OTHER REFERRALS

When a substance problem is identified by a team member, teacher, coach, administrator, or concerned person:

1. The student-athlete is referred to appropriate coach, athletic director, and school administrator.
2. The principal or designee holds a due process hearing.
 - a. The student-athlete is informed of the charges.
 - b. The student-athlete is given an opportunity to tell his/her side of the story and parent contact is made.

- c. The principal or designee will make a decision within a reasonable period of time.
3. The student-athlete and parent/guardian will be notified of the decision in writing.
4. If the principal or designee determines a violation exists, the student-athlete is **IMMEDIATELY DISMISSED** from the team for the season.
5. The administration will refer the student-athlete for an assessment by a qualified professional, which may include the family care physician or other persons, approved by the principal or his/her designee.
6. After assessment is completed, a planned program of assistance will be prescribed if needed. Such programs will be conducted by a qualified health care professional.
7. The student-athlete may regain athletic eligibility for the next season after completing a planned assistance program, and the athletic office is informed by administration of eligibility.
8. The student-athlete who refuses to participate in the assessment or the recommended planned program of assistance (if specified) will not regain eligibility for a sport until the planned program is completed.

TERMS:

Drugs: Any alcohol, tobacco products, controlled drugs, illegal substances, substance facsimile, inhalants or any medication for which the student does not have a prescription from a licensed health care professional, or a substance or medication which is misused.

Controlled Drug(s): Are those drugs which contain any quantity of a substance which has been designed as subject to the federal Controlled Substance Act, or which has been designated as a depressant or stimulant drug pursuant to federal food and drug laws, or which has been designated by the commissioner of consumer protection pursuant to Section 21a-243 of the Connecticut General Statutes as having a stimulant, depressant or hallucinogenic effect upon the higher functions of the central nervous system and as having a tendency to promote abuse and/or psychological or physiological dependence. Such controlled drugs are classified as amphetamine-type, barbiturate-type and other stimulant and depressant drugs.

Drug Paraphernalia: Refers to equipment, products and materials of any kind which are used, intended for use or designated for use in planting, propagating, cultivating, growing, harvesting, manufacturing, compounding, converting, producing, processing, preparing, testing, analyzing, packaging, repackaging, storing, containing, or concealing or, injecting, ingesting, inhaling, or introducing into the human body controlled substances (e.g. bong, pipes, roach clips, miniature cocaine spoons, crack vials, tobacco rolling papers) or any object or container used, intended for use, or designed for use in storing, concealing, or distributing controlled substances.

Possession: Any possession, which is unlawful under Connecticut State Law or Stafford Board of Education Policy.

Distribution: Giving possession of a drug to another person, whether or not for compensation.

Use: Ingesting, injecting, inhaling, or otherwise causing a drug to reach the bloodstream or digestive tract.

CHEMICAL HEALTH POLICY

The CIAC expects member schools to monitor their student athletes to assure that they are free of performance enhancing substances and to report any violations in a timely manner.

Any student athlete who refuses to submit to testing as part of a member school's Board of Education-approved random drug testing policy shall be ineligible to participate in any CIAC-controlled activities.

Performance enhancing substances and practices subject to this policy include but are not limited to, the following:

- a. Anabolic Agents, Diuretics, Peptide Hormones and Analogues.
- b. Blood doping (the intravenous injection of whole blood, packed red blood cells, or blood substitutes).
- c. Substances and practices identified as banned by the NCAA and the USOC.

The CIAC allows member schools to make exceptions for those student-athletes with a documented medical history demonstrating the need for regular use of substances that are banned in this policy. These identified substances shall be medically prescribed by the student-athlete's doctor for therapeutic purposes. The documentation should contain information as to the diagnosis, medical history and dosage prescribed.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION

1. An athlete and coach should first attempt to resolve any issues.
2. If the conflict cannot be resolved between the athlete, and coach. The athlete, parent and coach will meet at an appropriate time.
3. If the problem is still unresolved, the athlete, parent and coach should contact the Director of Athletics.
4. These are the steps to be followed for conflict resolution:
 - a. Athlete – Captain
 - b. Athlete – Coach
 - c. Athlete, Parent – Coach
 - d. Athlete, Parent, Coach – Director of Athletics
 - e. Parent, Director of Athletics – Principal

Areas that will not be discussed include the following: Playing time, discussions about other student athletes, and game strategies.

SPORTSMANSHIP

The Stafford Public Schools conducts an athletic program to enhance the personal and educational growth of its participants by providing healthy and challenging competition. All spectators and participants are asked to contribute to these goals by supporting vocally the efforts of our athletes and by refraining from any actions toward our opponents and officials, which interfere with the realization of our stated goals.

Ways to Promote and Show Good Sportsmanship

- ◆ Exhibit spirit of benevolence and genuine concern for the opponent.
- ◆ Accept the results gracefully and act fairly and courteous at all times.
- ◆ Maintain self-control in all circumstances.
- ◆ Applaud during the introduction of players, coaches, and officials.
- ◆ Accept all decisions of officials.
- ◆ Cheerleaders lead fans in positive school cheers.
- ◆ Shake hands between participants and coaches at end of contest, regardless of outcome.
- ◆ Treat competition as a game, not a war by always keeping contest in perspective.
- ◆ Coaches and players should seek out opposing student-athletes and coaches to recognize them for outstanding performances.
- ◆ Applaud at the end of contests for performances of all participants.
- ◆ Everyone should show concern for injured players, regardless of team.
- ◆ Encourage surrounding spectators to display only good sportsmanship conduct.

ATHLETIC AWARDS

At the conclusion of each sports season, student athletes will be presented letters, numerals, metal insignias, and certificate awards according to their participation level. These awards will be presented at a Sports Award Assembly in the Stafford High School Auditorium. The Stafford High School athletic department also presents patches or plaques to letter winners of League and State Championships.

AWARD REQUIREMENTS:

a. Varsity

Varsity letters will be awarded to athletes upon the successful completion of an athletic season and the recommendation of the head coach. Specific guidelines will be developed by each coach and clearly defined to all athletes. A player shall have conducted themselves in an exemplary manner both on and off the field, exhibiting good sportsmanship to his /her opponents, teammates and coach.

b. Junior Varsity

All members of a sub varsity team who have successfully completed an athletic season in a particular sport are to be awarded a Junior Varsity insignia.

c. Freshman

All members of the freshman athletic squads who successfully complete an athletic season for a particular sport are to be awarded a Freshman Award Certificate and year of graduation numerals.

d. Manager

Manager awards will parallel the regular awards system and will be made only upon the recommendation of the coach.

ADDITIONAL AWARDS:

1. Beckwith-Green Sportsmanship Award – Qualities of performance, leadership, sportsmanship and dedication are criteria used in making the decision. This award is not necessarily given to the most outstanding athlete.
2. Virginia Rafetto Sportsmanship Award- Qualities of performance, leadership, sportsmanship and dedication are criteria used in making the decision. This award is not necessarily given to the most outstanding athlete.
3. Varsity “letter” – Awarded to varsity participants completing the designated standards for any sport. Awarded one (1) time only.
4. Sports Insignia (Specific Pin) - Appropriate metal sports insignia awarded to letter winners in any sport.
5. Chevron (bar) – Awarded to varsity participants that have previously letter in that specific sport.
6. NCCC Minds in Motion Awards - Awarded to those who achieved an 88 or better grade point average while participating in Interscholastic Athletics.
7. Special certificates are given in recognition of special categories such as Most Valuable Player; Coach’s Award, Most Improved, etc.

AWARD RECIPIENTS:

All recipient award/letter/certificate winners **MUST** be present to receive their awards. Failure to attend may result in the forfeiture of awards. Players may receive permission from their coaches to be absent and remain eligible to receive awards.

Athletes **MUST** have completed the season in good standing to be eligible to receive any such awards.

SPORTS INFORMATION

Athletic Schedules, results and sports information can be found in two areas:

1. The Stafford High School website <http://stafford.k12.ct.us/departments/athletics/>
2. The Connecticut Interscholastic Athletic Conference – C.I.A.C. (the governing body of high school athletics). Website – www.casciacs.org (on this site you will find athletic schedules and directions to all schools as well as off site facilities, game results and post season tournament information. You can also register to receive schedule updates).

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR ALL STUDENT/ATHLETES

- A. **Substance Abuse Policy** – Use, possession, or distribution of illicit drugs, including anabolic steroids, alcohol, drug paraphernalia or the misuse of other drugs/medications will result in the **immediate dismissal** from the team for the season. The student-athlete shall report any use of medication(s) prescribed by a physician to the coach. The use or possession of tobacco (including smoking,

chewing, or use of snuff) will result in the **immediate dismissal** from the team for the season.

B. Appropriate Behavior

1. Any student/athlete who initiates a fight will be dismissed immediately from the team.
2. Verbal and/or physical abuse of officials or coaches by student/athletes will result in immediate dismissal from the team.
3. The following behaviors will be considered serious violations of the athletic code and school rules and will result in disciplinary action:
 - a. Civil law and criminal infractions.
 - b. Theft or malicious destruction of individual, private or school property.
 - c. Misconduct by an athlete that is potentially detrimental to the athletic program, school or school district.

C. School Attendance

1. Athletes will be allowed to participate in practice or contests only if they are in school by 9:00 am on that day. Students who are absent from school may not participate in any athletic event during that afternoon or evening. Individual exceptions may be approved by the athletic director when arranged in advance.
2. Unexcused single period absences during a given day may cause an athlete to be withheld from practice or contests on that day.

D. Absence from Scheduled Practice – A team will only function effectively when all participants are present. Any player who skips practice is hurting themselves and the team. A player must notify the coach in person of any practice he or she is required to miss. The coach will determine if the excuse is acceptable.

E. Locker Rooms

1. It is the student/athlete's responsibility to:
 - a. leave all your valuables at home
 - b. keep your locker locked at all times

Note: The school will not be responsible for personal property.

F. Athletic Equipment

1. The student/athlete is responsible for all uniforms and equipment that is assigned to him/her.
2. All equipment will be returned when the athlete completes the sport, either at the end of the season, or on leaving the team.
3. If items are lost or abused, the student/athlete will be required to pay for a replacement.
4. Uniforms are to be worn only at scheduled practices, contests or on game days.

Note: Athletes who do not return equipment/uniforms are ineligible to participate on additional athletic teams throughout the year. In addition, spring athletes will not receive their class schedules for the following school year until all items are returned or replacement costs have been submitted. Graduating seniors will not receive their cap and gown until they too have met the above responsibilities.

G. Vacations – Team members are expected to attend practices and contests during vacations that fall within the team season. Parents should make family vacation plans with the student/athletes commitment in mind. However, athletes who have family vacation plans must furnish the coach notification of vacation plans the day after the team has been selected. A parent or guardian of the athlete must sign the written notification. No team member will be removed from a team for missing practice or games during vacations for which they have notified the coach as previously stated. However, the athletes who did not miss because of vacation or

other will be rewarded with a greater percentage of playing time. It shall be the coach's prerogative to decide when a player is in condition to resume play.

H. Bus Behavior

1. Student/athletes must travel to and from contests on the team bus, accompanied by the coach and will abide by all bus rules and laws.
2. Athletes will be expected to conduct themselves appropriately at all times while riding to and from athletic contest.
3. Any damage to buses, caused by athletes, will be paid for by the athlete(s) involved. Said athlete(s), by this behavior, will be subject to dismissal from the squad and school discipline.

- I. Hazing** – Hazing is **prohibited** at all times. Hazing activities of any type are inconsistent with the educational goals of the school system. “Hazing” means committing an act against a student, or coercing a student into committing an act, that creates a risk of physical or emotional harm to a person, in order for the student to be initiated into or affiliated with a student organization or any other purpose.

The term hazing includes, but is not limited to:

1. Any type of physical brutality such as whipping, beating, striking, branding, electronic shocking, or placing a harmful substance on the body.
2. Any type of physical activity that subjects the student to a risk of harm or that adversely affects the mental or physical health or safety of the student.
3. Any activity that intimidates or threatens the student with ostracism, that subjects a student to stress, embarrassment, shame or humiliation that adversely affects the mental health or dignity of the student or discourages the student from remaining in school.
4. Any activity that causes or requires the student to perform a task that involves violation of state or federal law or of school district policies or regulations.

Note: The school district will act to investigate all complaints of hazing and will discipline up to and including expulsion.

- J. Captain's Practice** – The term “Captain's Practice” usually means the team's captain organizing and conducting practice sessions for the sport without adult supervision. The CIAC and NCCC do not in any way sanction, encourage or condone “Captain's Practice” in any sport. “Captain's Practice,” depending on the member school's involvement, may be a clear violation of the season limitations eligibility rule or certainly a violation of the spirit of the rule.

K. Changing Sports

1. Prior to the opening of each season, athletes will be allowed to transfer from one sport to another only on mutual agreement of the two coaches involved.
2. An athlete who drops from the squad after the first contest is not permitted to join another squad during that season.

L. Gymnasium Procedures

1. No one is allowed in the gym unless it is his or her designated practice period.
2. At no time is it permissible for individuals or groups to work out in the gymnasium, unless under direct supervision of a coach.
3. Athletes practicing in the gymnasium for one sport will refrain from using equipment not specifically designated for their sport.
4. Teams “in season” will have priority on gymnasium use.

M. Dress Code

1. The Athletic Department expects all student-athletes will maintain a clean, neat and modest appearance. Appropriate shirts, tops, and shoes must be worn at all times. Undergarments will not be worn as the only layer or as the outside layer.

2. Student-athletes will refrain from wearing tee shirts with inappropriate logos including and/or endorsing profanity, alcohol consumption and tobacco or drug use. Bare midriffs are prohibited as well as going shirtless.
3. All student athletes will dress properly at all home and away games. The dress code will be established by the coach for each respective sport. Team members not in compliance with the team dress code are subject to discipline. Dress code is to follow the Stafford High School Code of Conduct.

- M. Performance Enhancing Drugs Policy** – A student-athlete who has been determined to have used, in or out-of-season, androgenic/anabolic steroids or other performance enhancing substances shall be declared **ineligible** for all CIAC-controlled activities for **one hundred eighty (180) school days** on each occurrence.
- N. School Suspensions** – Students may not participate in any game, contest, practice or school activity while under suspension, nor may a student appear on school grounds or at a school activity on any school day while suspended from school. This includes contests at away sites. The suspension is in effect until the student is readmitted to classes by an administrator.

STAFFORD SCHOOL DISTRICT TRANSPORTATION FEE LETTER

Dear Student Athletes and Parents / Guardians,

The Board of Education is very supportive of athletics programs in our schools. However, as you well know, we are in a period of difficult financial times. In order to maintain our present athletic programs, it was necessary to institute a transportation fee of \$50 per student athlete, per sport, for Stafford High School athletics and a fee of \$40 per student athlete, per sport, for Stafford Middle School athletics.

This fee must be paid by each student athlete prior to the first scheduled game or match of the season for each sport in which the student athlete participates, regardless of the level of athletics the student athlete plays (e.g. freshman, junior varsity, or varsity). The fee will be collected by the Director of Athletics and Recreation or team coach after the team has been selected by the coaching staff.

As in previous years, decisions of whether a student athlete makes a team and how much playing time he or she receives will be made by the coaching staff and are not related to the payment of the transportation fee. It should also be noted that the transportation fee is not refundable after the season has begun. In addition, as per school rules, all student athletes must utilize school transportation to and from all games/meets.

If you are eligible for the free or reduced priced school meals program, you can receive a waiver for the Transportation Fee. Please direct requests for financial assistance to Mr. Damian Frassinelli, Director of Athletics and Recreation, at 684-4233, ext. 61013. All requests will be kept confidential.

Please provide the appropriate payment for the transportation fee to the Director of Athletics and Recreation or coach for your student athlete's sports team following his/her selection for the team. Make checks payable to the Stafford Athletic Department, and please write "Athletic Team Transportation Fee" and the sport on the memo line.

Thank you for your understanding and cooperation.

EXPECTATIONS OF PARENTS

1. Be positive with your athlete; let him/her know that he/she is accomplishing something simply by being part of the team.
2. Don't offer excuses to your athlete if he/she is not playing. There is usually a reason for it. Encourage your athlete to work hard and do his/her best.
3. Don't put down the coaches or other athletes. If you are constantly berating your athlete's coach you are not setting a good example for positive results for the season. Be supportive in a positive way.
4. Insist on good grades. Check the number of hours your athlete spends on homework.
5. Don't try to live your life vicariously through your athlete. High School athletics is for high school students only.
6. Being a fan (supporter!!) does not entitle you to be belligerent or abusive toward players, coaches or officials. Coaches work with athletes and know their talents. Respect that! Those who have actually played, officiated or coached ordinarily understand the nature of sport, and they are less likely to be a poor fan. **Also, consider that sons and daughters are often embarrassed by parents who can be heard from the stands.**
7. Insist that your athlete respect and follow team rules, school rules, game officials and sportsmanship. Don't let him/her embarrass his/her family, school and team by a rude gesture or incident. Self-respect begins with self-control.
8. Encourage your athlete to maintain a positive self-image by believing in himself or herself. Don't compare and contrast athletes with family members who have previously played. Don't put added pressure on your athlete to be much better than his/her siblings.
9. Encourage your athlete to play for the love of the game – not scholarship or college admission. This alleviates a lot of pressure for a youngster.
10. Remember that the coach is involved as a coach because he/she is sincerely fond of children and is an experienced professional. Coaches have different ways of dealing with people and situations. Athletes' lives are enriched by interactions with different types of leaders.
11. Remember, at a competition, you, the parent, represent the school and your son/daughter and you should be a positive role model. Therefore, do not shout advice from the stands. A steady stream of technique suggestions has no value to the athlete. Shout words of encouragement.
12. Be involved with your son's or daughter's team in a positive way. Cheer for all kids on the team. Help with booster clubs. There are hundreds of ways to be involved with the team and be a good parent at the same time.