

I. Introduction

Purpose

The Horseheads Athletic Programs strive to provide an environment which allows individuals to excel as students, as athletes and as members of the community. A firm and fair policy of enforcement is necessary to uphold the regulations and standards of the Athletic Department. The community, school administrators, and coaching staff feel strongly that high standards of conduct and citizenship are essential in maintaining a sound program of athletics.

All students participating in athletic programs shall abide by a code of conduct which earns them the honor and respect participation and competition provides.

Eligibility Implementation

The Athletic Code of Conduct applies to students starting in seventh grade. The policy will remain in effect at all times, until the student/athlete graduates from Horseheads Central Schools.

When a student is suspended from an athletic competition, the student will be expected to attend practice unless the suspension encompassed the remainder of the sport's season. If the student misses practice/meetings without a valid reason, the suspension from competition will be extended for additional games/events.

Procedure

It is the responsibility of the entire community, including coaches, advisors, students, and most importantly parents, to ensure that the Code of Conduct is observed. Any violations should be reported immediately to the coaches or athletic director. Due Process will be followed in handling all confirmed report(s) of any violation to Athletic Code of Conduct. Each allegation will be investigated when factual documentation is presented to the administration which supports any violation to the code of conduct. In each confirmed case, a full investigation will be conducted and the student(s) in question will have the opportunity to present his/her position(s) on the allegation to the person conducting the investigation. Upon completion of the investigation the administration will render an appropriate decision.

II. Athletic and Extracurricular Academic Expectations

General Expectations

The primary mission of the Horseheads school district is the development of academic skills. In supporting this mission, all students are required to demonstrate acceptable levels of academic progress throughout the duration of all Extracurricular Activities in which they participate.

Extracurricular Activities Included, but not limited to:

- All Athletic Teams (Modified, JV, Varsity, and Unified)
- Marching Band
- Field Band
- Winter Guard
- Winter Percussion
- Greenroom Players
- Varsity H

For the purpose of the Academic Eligibility Expectations, an Extracurricular Activity is defined as any activity that meets 2 or more times per week during a season's length of time (Fall, Winter, Spring). All activities can be subject to the Academic Eligibility Expectations per administration.

The district desires to maximize the educational success and the character development of all students and to prepare them to become contributing, productive citizens. The Extracurricular Code of Conduct, and the Academic Eligibility Expectations, support this mission. The primary goal of this Academic Eligibility Expectations is to identify academic problems as early as possible and encourage students to take advantage of extra help opportunities.

Academic Eligibility for students participating in Extra-Curricular Activities will be reviewed periodically. Academic Eligibility should be reviewed approximately every five (5) weeks, as determined by the district. For purposes of this Academic Eligibility Expectations, a student's grade in each course shall be reviewed and monitored at the marking periods and progress report periods. A student's eligibility status only changes at the completion of the five-week reporting period unless there was a grade reporting error, or a student has shown that they have corrected their grades (Applies to Level 2 only, See Blue Sheet in "Study Hall" Section).

The Academic Eligibility Expectations is for all Middle School and High School students. Every student who participates on an athletic team or in an extracurricular activity, as defined above, is subject to the Academic Eligibility Expectations. The Academic Eligibility Expectations carry over from one activity to the next.

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Academic Requirements and Assistance

Parents, students, administrators, advisors, teachers, and coaches will be notified of a student’s ineligibility. Student’s eligibility status becomes effective on a Monday and remains in place for 5 weeks or until the next grade monitoring. A student will remain ineligible if satisfactory academic levels are not achieved at the conclusion of the five-week period. The procedure will be repeated every five weeks during the school year.

Grade requirements along with consequences are in the table below:

<u>LEVEL</u>	<u>Grade Report</u>	<u>Consequences</u>
1	1 course or more with a grade between 65 and 69	Written Warning – Step #1
2	1 course with a grade below a 65	Academic Study Hall Assigned <i>with the possibility of release</i> via “Blue Sheet” (See Study Hall).
3	2 courses with a grade below a 65	Academic Study Hall assigned with <i>no possibility of release</i> until the next academic grade monitoring period.

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Level 1:

*Level 1 is for a student receiving **one or more course grade(s) between a 65 and 69**. This is demonstrating academic problems that may put him/her in danger of being ineligible in the future. The student will be encouraged to participate in an academic program to assist him/her in becoming academically successful. This program is student driven and may include, but not be limited to:*

- Notification to the student, parent, teacher, and coach.
- Intervention by the counselor.
- Encouragement to attend academic study hall.
- Encouragement to take advantage of extra help opportunities

Level 2:

*Level 2 is for a student who is showing academic difficulties. A student receiving **1 course grade below a 65** is experiencing academic difficulty. The student must:*

- attend academic study hall to practice and participate in contests or performances.
- abide by all rules for academic study hall.
- If the student violates the rules for academic study, he/she will not be allowed to participate in sports activities and performances in any form.
- Students may be released from Academic study with a completed "Blue Sheet" that meets the requirements of the academic policy.

Level 3:

*Level 3 is for a student who is showing serious academic difficulty. A student receiving **2 or more course grades below a 65** is having serious academic difficulty. The student must:*

- attend academic study hall to practice and participate in contests or performances.
- abide by all rules for academic study hall. If the student violates the rules for academic study, he/she will not be allowed to participate in practice on that given day.
- Students may not be released from Academic study hall.

A student who enters Level 3 (below 65 in two or more courses) will be subject to the provisions of the Academic Eligibility Expectations. A student who is found to be academically ineligible and has already been in Level 3, will be declared ineligible for participation in extra-curricular activities for two weeks

- Once declared ineligible, the student will not be permitted to participate in any practices, competitions, or performances for a period of two weeks starting on the Monday following the declaration of ineligibility. Grades will be reevaluated after 2-weeks.
 - After reevaluation, if still in Level 3, the student will be removed from participation for the remainder of the season. This can be appealed to the Athletic Director by the student directly.
- Rules for academic study hall attendance will still apply.

Study Hall

- An ineligible student, a Level 2 or Level 3 student, is required to attend academic study hall to participate in practice or contests.
- Study Hall is held from 7:00 AM to 7:40 AM, Monday through Thursday on days school is in session. The site of the study hall will be detailed in the ineligibility letter prior to first day of required attendance.
- An absence on the first day of required attendance at Academic Study Hall will not be excused (see below).
- A student who attends the academic study hall and follows all rules related to attendance and behavior will be given a pass notifying the coach/advisor of permission to participate.
- If an ineligible student does not present a pass, he/she will not be permitted to attend or participate in practice/competitions.
- If a student chooses the academic study hall (No Level or Level 1), he/she has the option to attend every day. This will not impact their ability to be eligible to practice or compete.
- If a student fails to attend academic study hall on a day where there is no scheduled practice, game or competition, the student will be ineligible to participate in the next scheduled practice, game, or competition.
- If a club meets during academic study hall, a student may receive a pass from the advisor to attend the club meeting.
- Level 2 allows for students to show improvement, and with a passing grade and teacher approval, can be removed at the end of any given week. Students are given a "Blue Sheet" on Wednesday of the week. They are to have the sheet signed and turned in on Thursday of any given week. If they have improved their grades and teachers sign off, they may be removed. This is pending approval from the Study Hall facilitator and Athletic Director.
- Failure to attend study hall will result in progressive discipline. The first miss, including Day #1 which is not excused, will result in being provided an opportunity to make up the miss during the school day per the Athletic Directors arrangements. Any absence after the first miss, will result in further discipline according to the code of conduct ("General Rules of Conduct", Section III), which may include the loss of participation privilege in their current sport/activity or future sport/activity.

Grade Clarification

A student who believes a grade has been incorrectly reported may seek clarification from his/her teacher (s). There is no appeal from a student's request for grade clarification. A student's grade as reported on a particular date reflects all work reviewed by the student's teacher as of the date the grade is reported. Any work handed in, or reviewed by the teacher, after that date may be considered for Level 2 students only. Level 3 students will have their work reflected in the next grade reporting cycle.

Process

The Academic Eligibility Expectations were developed by the A&E (Athletic and Extracurricular) committee over the course of the 2021-2022 school year through monthly meetings. The committee is comprised of the athletic director, high school and middle school administration, extracurricular advisors, board of education members, coaches, parents, and teachers.

III. General Rules of Conduct

Horseheads Central School District Expectations and Requirements

- Attendance- Unexcused absences, as defined by the Horseheads Central School District's Code of Conduct, will result in being ineligible for practice and contests that day. A legal excuse is required to participate in practices or contests.
- Physical Education - Student athletes are expected to be prepared and participate in physical education class. Students failing to participate in physical education will be ineligible to participate in practices or contests.
- Academic Study Hall – Failure to attend academic study hall the first time will result in a loss of participation for that given day (practice or contests). Failure to attend in subsequent days may result in further loss of participation in current or future activity.
- Team/Club Specific Standards- Coaches and advisors may establish additional guidelines that govern training, practice, and competition. Student athletes will abide by specific conduct and rules established by the coach.
- Vacations- Athletes who commit to a program should assume that practices and/or contests take precedence over vacations. STAC and Section IV contests are often scheduled and are required to take place throughout school recesses. Athletes who must practices and/or contests during school recesses should expect that there may be some effect on their standing on the team, their playing time, their chances of making a team when cuts take place, and their ability to earn a letter for that sport. Athletes who finish a season while away on vacation may have consequences carry over to their next sport season.

III. Reporting Violations of Conduct

Reports of alleged violations that have been personally witnessed and/or include physical documentation of alleged violation(s), will be verified, then investigated by the athletic director.

IV. Expectations for Behavior and Citizenship

Acts of unacceptable conduct, such as, but not limited to: bullying, hazing, disrespect, immorality, insubordination, or tarnish the integrity of the athletic program will not be tolerated.

Students are expected to remove him/herself immediately from locations where violations of the athletic/extracurricular eligibility program regulations occur.

Unacceptable conduct may be addressed by the coach. Examples of possible consequences include, but are not limited to:

- Half game suspension

- A single game suspension
- A multi-game suspension

Depending on the severity of the violation, the athletic director may intervene. Examples of the possible consequences that may come from include, but are not limited to:

- A one-year suspension from participating in athletic department activities
- Permanent removal from interscholastic athletics
- Any other consequence deemed appropriate.

Please note that the above referenced consequences are advisory recommendations. The Athletic Director and Appeals Board, when necessary, have the authority to depart from these recommendations, based on the nature and/or severity of the offense.

V. Substance Use and Possession/Criminal Activity Policy

- Alcohol- The use, consumption, possession, buying, selling, giving away of any alcoholic beverages
- Tobacco- Possession and/or use of tobacco products, which includes the use of electronic cigarettes or vapor products
- Controlled/Illegal Substances- The use, consumption, possession, buying, selling, giving away any controlled or illegal substance
- Weapons- The use, distribution, possession, sale or giving away of any object that is used as a weapon to inflict bodily harm
- Theft- Stealing, committing any act of vandalism, and being charged/convicted of a misdemeanor or felony
- Arrest- The arrest and being charged with a crime

Violations of the Substance Use and Possession/Criminal Activity Policy, as outlined above will be, as a general rule, be progressive. Subsequent violations that occur during the same school year will result in increased penalties for the student. In determining the appropriate disciplinary action, the athletic director and building administrator will consider the non-exhaustive list of factors stated below.

The expectation is for the athlete to openly admit a violation of the Substance Use and Possession/Criminal Activity Policy if questioned by a school official. The following procedure will typically be used:

First Offense: Suspension from participation in 20% of the regularly scheduled contests of the team on which he/she is playing. Participation in a

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Drug and Alcohol Program may be deemed appropriate, given the nature of the misconduct. Parents/guardians will be notified of infractions resulting in the suspension of their son/daughter from competition/participation.

Second Offense: Suspension from participation in 50% of the regularly scheduled contests of the team the student is participating in. Participation in a Drug and Alcohol Program may be deemed appropriate, given the nature of the misconduct. Parents/guardians will be notified of infractions resulting in the suspension of their son/daughter from competition/participation.

Third Offense: Dismissal from the team for a period up to one calendar year or permanent suspension from all athletic programs for the duration of the student's school career. Parents/guardians will be notified of infractions resulting in the suspension of their son/daughter from competition/participation.

*If the student denies the problem or incident but is determined by the administration to have participated in the problem or incident despite the student's denial the following procedure will be used.

First Offense The student will be suspended from the team/activity for 30 calendar days. Should the season end before the completion of the 30 day suspension, the remainder of the suspension shall begin on the date of the student(s) first contest/event in the next athletic/extracurricular season for which he/she participates. This will not affect the tryout period for the next season. After the tryout period the student is not permitted to continue to practice or attend meetings until the suspension is completed. The above mentioned suspension will also be put into place if the student refuses to participate in any suggested counseling. Parents/guardians will be notified of infractions resulting in the suspension of their son/daughter from competition/participation.

Second Offense The student will be suspended from the team/activity for 60 calendar days. Should the season end before the completion of the 60 day suspension, the remainder of the suspension shall begin on the date of the student(s) first contest/event in the next athletic season for which he/she participates. This will not affect the tryout period for the next season. After the tryout period the student is not permitted to continue to practice or attend meetings until the suspension is completed. The above mentioned suspension will also be put into place if the student refuses to participate in any suggested counseling. Parents/guardians will be notified of

infractions resulting in the suspension of their son/daughter from competition/participation.

Third Offense

The student will be suspended from participation in athletics activities for the rest of their high school career. Parents/guardians will be notified of infractions resulting in the suspension of their son/daughter from competition/participation.

Appeals

All final decisions regarding the appropriate sanction to be imposed for a violation of the rules are appealable to the Athletic Appeals Board.

Decisions regarding athletic eligibility penalties may be appealed to the athletic director. Parents must request an appeal, in writing to the appropriate athletic director. The appeal must be submitted within three school days of notification of the imposed athletic penalty. The written appeal must state the nature of the parents' concerns with the athletic penalty of their student(s) and the reason that the initial decision should be overturned.

Once a written request for an appeal is received, an athletic appeals board will be convened by the athletic director. The building principal who will be the facilitator. The voting athletic appeals board will convene within three school days of receipt of the written appeal request. This committee will consist of the student's building principal, guidance counselor, and two coaches/advisors (out of season).

First Appeal: Athletic Eligibility Review Hearing

The hearing will be conducted only with the presence of the parent/guardian requesting the appeal, as well as the student in question.

The hearing process will start with the reading of the appeal request by the facilitator. The parent and student will then be given the opportunity to summarize their appeal and state why the student should be eligible. Additionally, the parent/guardian, as well as the student, will answer any and all questions of the hearing committee to the best of their ability. Upon hearing the relative information, the hearing committee members, along with the non-voting facilitator, will convene privately and make a determination of eligibility for the student. The initial eligibility status, as determined by the athletic director, will remain in effect during the appeal process until a final decision is made via the athletic eligibility review hearing. A final decision of the athletic eligibility review hearing committee will be communicated to the parent/guardian via a letter written by the facilitator within 24 to 48 hours of the hearing.

Final appeal: Superintendent

A final appeal can be made to the superintendent by the parent and student within three (3) calendar days. The superintendent will have the final decision and authority to uphold, rescind, or

modify the penalty imposed by the athletic eligibility review board following a hearing.

Procedural Review

The athletic director and the administration will review these Athletic Eligibility Regulations and Procedures annually. Changes will be recommended and made based upon annual review.