PENALTY CODE

I. The Board of Directors has the power to penalize or fine the school, or penalize officials, the coach and the individual players if good sportsmanship is not observed. The Board also may penalize a school for unsportsmanlike conduct on the part of its spectators. Some specific penalties will be found below; however, the Board may take any action it deems justified as it relates to the infraction involved. Fines may be reduced for self-reporting, on a case-by-case basis.

A. Schools — A school found guilty of infractions inconsistent with a wholesome athletic program may be (1) reprimanded, (2) placed on probation for a period not to exceed one year, with or without playoff privileges, (3) fined, (4) have its home games taken away for a period of time not to exceed one year, or (5) suspended from participation in a sport or sports for a period of one year.

If any school should fail to comply with the rulings of the Board of Directors of the NCHSAA, the games played or scheduled by that school in that particular sport shall be canceled for that season and shall be eliminated in determining the winner of that district affected. Furthermore, that school so affected will not be allowed to take part in the contests sponsored by the Association for a period of one year and shall be readmitted only by three-fourths vote at the annual meeting. The membership, in readmitting the school, shall require a payment of $1000 for a Class 4A school, $800 for a Class 3A school, $600 for a Class 2A school and $400 for a Class 1A school. All such payments belong to the NCHSAA.

B. Coaches — A coach found guilty of conduct inconsistent with a wholesome athletic program may be (1) reprimanded, (2) placed on probation for a period not to exceed one year, with or without play-off privileges for the team, (3) fined, and/or (4) suspended from directing a team for a period of time not to exceed one year. (NOTE: see SPORTSMANSHIP/EJECTION POLICY).

C. Students — A student found guilty of misconduct may be (1) reprimanded, (2) placed on probation for a period not to exceed one year, or (3) suspended from participation in a sport or sports for a period up to one year. (NOTE: see SPORTSMANSHIP/EJECTION POLICY).

D. Spectators — A spectator guilty of misconduct may (1) be placed on spectator probation, (2) be banned from attending school contests for a period of time not to exceed one calendar year from the date of the offense, or (3) cause the school to be penalized and/or fined. In incidents involving criminal misconduct such as assaults, school officials in conjunction with the victims assaulted are instructed to press charges in a court of law. If charges are not filed, the school is still responsible for handling the misconduct. Spectators may not approach or contact game officials in any way to question the judgment or decision of an official. Schools are responsible and may be disciplined for the conduct of their spectators. Any assault upon, or intimidation of, a game official by a spectator is per se unsportsmanlike conduct by the school and may be dealt with as such.

PENALTIES AND FINES

UNPAID FINES: Schools that have unpaid fines to the NCHSAA are not eligible to compete in the playoffs for that sport (i.e. baseball fine would be specific to baseball playoffs) unless the fine is paid two (2) days prior to the reporting date for that sport.

Any fine not paid at the end of the fiscal year (June 30) will carry over to the following school year making all teams at said school ineligible for playoffs until the fine is paid in full.

$50.00

- late ejection form
- late endowment form
- late school information form or other required document (e.g. dual team lineup, team picture, championship information in various sports)
- school changing schedules after officiating assignment slips are sent

$100.00

- late playoff entry blanks
- late membership dues
- late catastrophic insurance premium payment
- failure to provide escort in football, basketball and soccer

$300.00

- removal of bases in baseball or softball by spectators or school personnel
- removal of nets in basketball
- damaging/overturning soccer goals and / nets
- filming or videotaping of a contest by non-participating school without approval of the competing teams

$400.00

- unsanctioned out-of-state competition (per contest)
- failure of the principal/principal's designee to observe wrestling weight certification regulations
- failure to properly enter all students on certified minimum weight form
- failure to submit weigh-in form on NWCA website
- failure to have evidence of the legal birth date of each player on file
- removing a team from the field or court prior to completion of the contest/ game unless by mutual consent of both administrators
- failure to attend mandatory meetings
- failure of the head coach to attend required rules clinics
- no uniform law enforcement officer in attendance
- coaches criticizing officials to the media
- no restraining barriers at varsity football games
- failure to comply with reporting results for football seeding process (also forfeiture of first home site in playoffs)
- illegal practice (plus a two for one penalty for each illegal practice) - a school may also be placed on probation for one year, with or without playoff privileges
- illegal scrimmage - game - or unauthorized Endowment game (in addition a school may be placed on probation for a period of one year, with or without playoff privileges)
- violation of the sports season concept (plus the school and/or coach may be placed on probation for one year, with or without playoff privileges)
- no school official representative at state football or basketball information sessions/press conference

- failure to comply with reporting qualifiers from conference for playoffs (conference will be fined)
- failure to comply with reporting advancement (member school will be fined
- exceeds season limitation of games/contests

$500.00

Use of ineligible player -- failure to comply due to the following:

- taking part in a scrimmage before taking part in 9 separate days of practice in football
- no medical examination (must be within 365 days)
- does not meet the residence requirement
- does not meet the attendance requirement
- does not meet the scholastic requirement
- participates after the eighth semester
- does not meet the age requirement (can not be 19 on or before October 16th of that school year
- excessive years of participation
- dressing for a contest constitutes participation (dressing for a contest while ineligible)
- a player(s) who violate the daily, weekly, seasonal player limits
- participates or is present at a contest after being ejected (a player or coach)
- failure to meet the mandatory weigh-in procedure
- wrestling below certified minimum weight, or violation of weight loss guidelines (non-reducible)
- violation of the pitching requirements (pitching more than 12 innings in any 3 consecutive days)
- participates after being convicted of a felony
- violation of the football conditioning policy - coaches violating this policy will be reprimanded for the first offense and placed on probation for one year (If a second offense occurs the coach will receive the same penalty plus a one year suspension)
- removal of goal posts in football (plus cost of replacement of goal posts)
- failure to submit appropriate forms for football Eight Quarter Rule
- use of non-registered or non-qualified officials - schools or booking agents

$1000.00

- failure to participate in the playoffs (or the average net income of the playoff receipts)
- failure to meet minimum seating requirements in football playoffs
- individual(s) involved in a fight before or after a contest (from the time of arrival until departure)
- individual(s) leaving the bench and coming on to the playing area during a fight (whether they participate in the fight or not)

If a student who is ineligible is permitted to participate because of court order, the sanctions in this section will apply unless that order is upheld after final judicial review.

PROCEDURE

1. Any high school which allows an ineligible student to participate by dressing for and/or participating in an athletic contest shall forfeit all contests in which the student dressed or participated. In addition, the student will be dropped from the team until his/her eligibility has been restored. The team may participate in playoffs if, despite the inclusion of the forfeited contests as a loss in its season record, it would otherwise qualify.
2. If documented proof of a student's eligibility is found to have been falsified by the student and/or his parents or legal custodian, and this could not be determined by reasonable scrutiny of the school, then the student shall be dropped from the team for the remainder of the season but the team's record and playoff privileges will not be affected. (Note: In cases of conflicting, blemished, altered or illegible records, the onus rests with school officials to determine the correct information. Documents which should be checked by school officials would include, but not be limited to, all permanent records on file in the school office such as cumulative records, transcripts, and teacher's grading records, but do not include report cards or other non-controlled records. If there are conflicts or discrepancies found, they must be examined and resolved by school officials. Negligence, or failure to make a good faith effort to determine the accuracy of a student's records on the part of school officials would require all contests in which the ineligible student participated to be forfeited.)
   The student will be ineligible for 365 days from the date of notification to the NCHSAA.
3. A school which intentionally uses an ineligible player shall drop the player from the team, forfeit all games in which he/she participated, and will be ineligible for the playoffs in that sport. The school may also be debarred from taking part in the contests of the Association for one year.
   A team which participates in the playoffs while using an ineligible player must return its awards and the revenue from said playoff games to the NCHSAA. Its finish in the playoffs shall be vacated, even if the playoffs have concluded. A team which lost to the team with an ineligible player is not advanced in the tournament after the fact.
   Once qualifiers have been determined or the seeding process is completed, and teams or individuals have been placed in the brackets, at no time will another team or individual be substituted in or added to the playoff brackets for a disqualified team or individual. If a disqualification occurs after the playoffs have concluded, that place or position remains vacant. If a team is disqualified after the first round and won the opening round game, the losing team will advance.
4. A student found to be on a free list or loan list loses his/her remaining athletic eligibility and will forfeit his individual matches. If the school is unaware of the violation, there is no penalty on the school.

OTHER PENALTIES

SPORTSMANSHIP/EJECTION POLICY — This policy applies to all persons involved in an athletic contest, including student-athletes, coaches, managers and game administrators. The following examples include behavior or conduct which will result in an ejection from a contest:

- **fighting**, which includes, but is not limited to, combative acts such as:
  - an altercation between 2 or more parties that includes swinging, hitting, punching and/or kicking
  - an attempt to strike an opponent with a fist, hands, arms, legs, feet, or equipment
  - an attempt to punch or kick an opponent, regardless of whether or not contact is made
  - an attempt to instigate a fight by committing an unsportsmanlike act toward an opponent that causes an opponent to retaliate
  - leaving the bench area to participate in a fight (contact or no contact)

- **flagrant contact**, which includes, but is not limited to, combative acts such as:
  – maliciously running over the catcher/fielder without attempt to avoid contact
  – excessive contact out-of-bounds or away from playing action than is unwarranted and extreme in nature
  – tackling/taking down a player dangerously in a malicious manner
  – illegally hitting or cross-checking an opponent in an excessive manner with the crosse in lacrosse
- **biting observed or determined by an official**
- **taunting, baiting or spitting toward an opponent or official**
- **profanity**, directed toward an official or opponent
- **obscene gestures**, including gesturing in such a manner as to intimidate or instigate
- **disrespectfully address (physically contacting an official is subject to automatic expulsion and can result in ineligibility for remainder of career) an official**

Penalty for an ejection for the above reasons

- football – ejection from the contest, miss the next contest at that level and all contests in the interim **(miss the next two contests for fighting)**
- all other sports – ejection from the contest, miss the next two contests at that level and all contests in the interim **(miss the next four contests for fighting)**

Individuals: **Players receiving two ejections for unacceptable behavior as defined above will be suspended from all sports for the remainder of that sport season.** Receiving a third ejection in a school year will result in suspension from athletics for one calendar year (365 days from the date of the third ejection).

Teams: **Teams in the following situations will not be allowed to participate in the playoffs:**

- **a team whose players and coaches accumulate six or more individual ejections**
- **a team whose players and coaches accumulate three or more individual ejections for fighting** (note: if a situation occurs where three of more players on one team are ejected during one fighting incident, those three individual ejections will cause the team to lose its playoff privileges)

If a team hits either threshold (total ejections or ejections for fighting) during the playoffs, it will be disqualified from further participation in the playoffs.

Penalties are cumulative from sport to sport and from sport season to sport season, but not academic year to academic year. Ejections in the last game of the season carry over to the next sport in which the individual participates that year. Ejected players may practice during their suspensions but may not play. Ejected coaches may not be on the premises for a contest. The coach must leave the premises (press box, bleachers, adjacent field, etc.) and must not have any type of contact with the team.

If no member of the school's coaching staff is present to assume the ejected coach's duties, the contest is terminated by a forfeit.

Anytime a student/coach is ejected from a game/meet, he/she does not participate/coach the remainder of that day. The student/coach is also suspended from the next two scheduled, rescheduled or contracted date at that level of competition (one in football) and all games/meets in the interim at other levels of competition.

The coach is not permitted to be at the game site during his/her suspension, but the student is allowed at the game site.

Any student athlete/coach/administrator who is ejected or disqualified from a contest is required to complete the STAR Sportsmanship Program before being eligible to return to competition.

CLARIFICATION:

FOR SOCCER ONLY:

Coaches and athletic directors will be responsible for tracking yellow cards accumulated by their players.

- five yellow cards accumulated by the same player will result in a suspension (miss next contest at that level and all contests in the interim)
- an additional five yellow cards accumulated by the same player (season total of 10) will result in an ejection. The player will be suspended from all sports for the remainder of that season on the 15th yellow card (or second ejection).
- a red card disqualification that is not an ejection is the equivalent of two yellow cards. Penalties are enforced at the conclusion of the game, and an ejection report must also be filed at the appropriate time for accumulation of yellow cards.
- Yellow cards are reset to zero once playoffs begin (all previous penalties must be served).
- With three yellow cards in playoffs, player is suspended for next game. A total of five yellow cards and any player is out for remainder of playoffs and may carry over to other sports.

FOR WRESTLING, TRACK, TENNIS, GOLF, CROSS-COUNTRY AND SWIMMING:

Any individual ejected from an individual event or individual tournament may not participate for the remainder of the event (entire day(s) of competition or tournament) from which he or she was ejected. Additionally, the individual may not participate in the next scheduled two events or any other events, in any sport, at any level, in the interim.

Athletes are expected to sign the sportsmanship pledge, and coaches are expected to sign the code of conduct for coaches.

II. **Penalties that may be imposed by the State Department of Public Instruction:**

A. **Participation Ban**—Violations of the state regulations, negligence or poor sportsmanship may forfeit the right of the school to participate in interscholastic athletics for a given period of time to be determined by the State Superintendent of Public Instruction.

B. **Suspension of Accreditation** — If any school engages in athletic activities in violation of the rules and regulations and in such manner as to interfere with the required instructional services adopted by the State Board of Education for use in the public schools, the State Superintendent of Public Instruction shall notify such school to desist from further violation of these rules and regulations; and upon failure of such school to desist therefrom within such time as the State Superintendent may require, he may suspend the accreditation of said school until such time as the same may have been corrected.

III. **Statute of Limitations**: September 1 of the following year is the deadline for all incidents, violations, etc., to be reported to the NCHSAA.

OFFICIATING REGULATIONS

Officiating Fees

1. Officials are to be paid on local fiscal policy as soon as possible.
2. Game fees will be paid as approved by the NCHSAA.
3. Postponed Games-
    1. For games postponed after officials leave home, including contacting of officials via mobile phone while en route to school and officials do not travel all the way to the school or after officials arrive at game site: One-half game fee for the game is to be paid to each official.
    2. Postponed game once game is underway for any reason: Officials shall be paid the full game fee.
    3. Postponed game and neither booking agent or officials are notified: Full game fee will be paid to each official.