

# GREENVILLE COUNTY SCHOOLS

## STUDENT EXTRACURRICULAR CODE OF CONDUCT

- I. Expectations of Conduct for Students Who Participate in Extracurricular Activities** – Participants on a school team, club, or organization represent not only themselves and their families, but also their teammates, their coaches or sponsors, their schools, and the Greenville County School District. Additionally, extracurricular activities often draw high public interest, visibility and focus of attention in the media. The student’s behavior commands a public interest and attention that is unique in its capacity to elevate or denigrate the school district, the school, and the team or organization. Since public support is an essential ingredient of public education, the behavior of students who participate in extracurricular activities has a significant impact on the school district’s pursuit of its mission. High standards of conduct and citizenship are essential precepts of the school district’s extracurricular program. These high standards include instilling students with a positive attitude, building strong character, teaching responsibility, and demanding integrity. Participants must set a positive example and be role models for all. To maintain high standards for all extracurricular programs throughout the entire school district, a firmly and fairly enforced code of conduct is necessary. Therefore, all participants shall abide by a code of conduct specifically for extracurricular activities.
- II. The Privilege of Participation** – Participation in extracurricular activities is a privilege, not a right. School officials may deprive a student of the privilege of participation when they determine that the student’s continued participation is not consistent with the high standards of conduct expected of all participants. In particular, whenever a student violates this code of conduct, the student is subject to losing the privilege of participation in extracurricular activities.
- III. Unacceptable Conduct**
- A. The prohibition of unacceptable conduct:** Certain conduct by any participant is absolutely unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Examples of such unacceptable conduct include, but are not limited to, theft, vandalism, disrespect, hazing, harassment, violation of alcohol, tobacco and illegal substances restrictions, major infractions of *The Student Code of Conduct*, or violations of law. This unacceptable conduct rule shall be in force twelve months of the year. This means that the school district may penalize or punish a participant who engages in unacceptable conduct during the school term, over a holiday break, or while school is out of session. This also means that the school district may impose sanctions for unacceptable conduct which occurs at school, at a school sponsored event, or off school grounds. The penalty for engaging in unacceptable conduct can include revocation of the privilege of participating in extracurricular activities.
- B. Definitions of specific kinds of unacceptable conduct:**
- **Theft-** stealing or taking personal property that belongs to another person, school, team, or organization.
  - **Vandalism-** willful or malicious breaking, destruction, or defacement of public or private property.
  - **Disrespect-** actions that show or express a lack of high regard or respect for others (fellow students, opponents, teachers, coaches, administrators, parents, or adults). This includes actions that result in OSS and the use of unacceptable language (cursing).
  - **Hazing-** any action that humiliates, degrades, abuses, or endangers another person, regardless of that person’s willingness to participate. These actions may include initiation rituals into a team, club or organization.
  - **Harassment-** actions, comments, threats, verbalizations, coercion, jokes, teasing, or intimidation that is based on or takes place because of the race, color, sex, religion, or national origin of another person, who reports the actions as unwelcome.
  - **Alcohol, tobacco, and illegal substances restrictions** – Any illegal use or possession of alcohol or tobacco or use, sale, possession, or purchase of any illegal or controlled substance, including prescription drugs.

This list of examples is not intended to be exhaustive and the appropriate staff members may impose disciplinary action for conduct not specifically listed here.

**C. Punishment for Unacceptable Conduct:**

Generally, when a school official has reason to believe that a student participant has engaged in unacceptable conduct as described in this code of conduct, the responsible school official shall notify the student of the violation and provide the student with the opportunity to present his or her account and explanation. **The responsible school official will then confer with the Athletic Director or designated administrator to determine the appropriate sanction or penalty to be imposed.** The level of discipline imposed is at the school official's discretion, and sanctions may range from reprimands to suspension from a game or contests, or in the most serious incidents of misconduct, dismissal from a team or permanent denial of participating for the remainder of the student's high school career.

**Suspension** means that the student is not allowed to dress out or participate in a contest or event. It may also include suspension from practice. However, the participant may be required to continue to practice with the team or program.

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**Dismissal** means that the student is no longer a part of the team or program. If dismissed, the participant's uniform and equipment will be taken up and his/her name will be removed from the team or program roster. Re-instatement into the athletic program will be considered only after one calendar year. The principal, after consultation with the District Director of Athletics, must approve any re-instatement.

Some forms of unacceptable conduct may also violate the general code of conduct applicable to all students in the school district. In those situations, the participant is subject to punishment under both the general code of conduct and this code of conduct for extracurricular activities. Under no circumstances will any student who has been suspended from school pursuant to the general code of conduct participate in extracurricular activities during the suspension period.

**Alcohol, Tobacco, and Substance Abuse:** When a coach, teacher, or principal determines that a participant has violated the alcohol, tobacco, or illegal substances restrictions, the following penalties shall apply:

**First Violation Penalty:** The participant will be suspended immediately from a minimum of 20% of the scheduled contests in the participant's sport or activity. If the sport or activity is out of season, then the penalty will be administered at the very next season in which the student is a participant. The student may also be required to submit to on-demand drug testing.

**Second Violation Penalty:** The participant will be suspended immediately for a minimum of 50% of the scheduled contests. If the sport/activity is out of season, the penalty, or remainder thereof, will be administered at the very next season in which the student participates. The student may also be required to submit to on-demand drug testing.

**Third Violation Penalty:** The participant will be dismissed from participation in extracurricular activities for the remainder of the student's high school career.

**Note:** When violation of the alcohol, tobacco, and substance abuse restrictions also results in criminal charges, subsection D (below) will also apply.

**D. Criminal infractions:** Some forms of misconduct may violate local, state, or federal criminal law. If a student participant is charged with a criminal offense other than a minor traffic violation, the student shall immediately be suspended from participation in extracurricular activities until the responsible school officials have an opportunity to review the circumstances surrounding the arrest. After reviewing the circumstances that led to the student's arrest, the school official may elect to continue the period of suspension until the criminal charges are resolved or impose disciplinary consequences, to include suspension from games or contests, based on the conduct that led to the student's arrest. Depending on the amount of time necessary for the criminal matter to be resolved and the facts of the matter, the responsible school official shall have the discretion to lift the suspension and return the student to participation on probation pending resolution of the matter.

If the participant is convicted of the offense or pleads “no contest,” the responsible school official will impose a minimum one game suspension up to a maximum dismissal of the participant from all extracurricular activities. If criminal charges are dropped or if the participant is found not guilty, he/she may return to regular participation (except to the extent that punishment under either the general or extracurricular code of conduct precludes a return to participation). It is important to note, however, that regardless of the outcome of any criminal charges, a participant will be subject to punishment under the two codes of conduct if the responsible school official determines that a student has engaged in conduct that violates either code of conduct.

- IV. Out-of-School Suspension (OSS)** – During the period that any participant is serving an out-of-school suspension, the student will not be allowed to participate in practice or games or contests. The participants may return to participation in any activity only after being readmitted to school and attending school for one day. Offenses that lead to OSS may also warrant punishment under this code of conduct for extracurricular activities.
- V. Attendance Rule** – A student shall not participate in a contest or practice on the day he/she has been absent from school without just reason. Just reason shall be anything beyond the control of the student (ex: school field trip, doctor/dental appointments, bereavement, religious holiday, etc.). However, confirmation notes will be required by the sponsor or coach of that activity.
- VI. Individual School/Teacher/Sponsor/Coach Rules** – Individual schools, teachers, coaches, or sponsors may establish additional rules and regulations for their programs with the approval of the athletic or activities director and principal. The teacher, coach, or sponsor must give all participants written copies of any additional rules and must explain the additional rules to all participants at the start of an event or season. Penalties for violations of the rules shall also be in writing.
- VII. Appeal Procedure** – A student may appeal any decision of a teacher, sponsor, or coach under this code of conduct by filing with the principal a written appeal within five days of the decision to be reviewed. The appeal must state specifically why the decision should not be implemented. The principal shall render a decision within five days. The decision of the principal is final. If the principal made the original decision to impose the disciplinary sanction, the student shall be permitted to appeal the sanction to a designated District-level administrator, whose decision will be final.