

Philosophy and Expectation of Sport for Gorham Middle and High School Athletes

The Gorham Randolph Shelburne Cooperative School District believes its student/athletes should be model sportspersons on the field of play and model school/community citizens. The district also believes the student/athlete is a special person, for the student/athlete tacitly accepts a responsibility not required of, nor asked of, other students. That special responsibility and honor is the willingness to let one's performance on and off the field of competition be judged as the standard of excellence in our towns and in our school.

School district citizens support sports activities as a means of recognizing talent, morals, ethics, and maturity. The citizens of the Gorham Randolph Shelburne Cooperative School District simply want their student/athletes to use interscholastic sports competition as a means of becoming better people by learning the equally difficult lessons of dignity in defeat and grace in victory.

The following Code of Athletics has been developed for all Student Athletes of Gorham Middle and High School. The code indicates certain criteria of behavior as well as eligibility requirements. It is expected that all athletes will abide by these standards and by additional requirements of individual coaches. In addition, it is most important to reaffirm our position that academics take top priority and athletics are an extension of the classroom experience which provide the opportunity enhance the educational process here at GMHS.

By agreeing, signing, and returning the guidelines outlined in the Philosophy and Expectations of Sport for Gorham Middle High School Athletes, it is to be understood violations of these requirements will result in penalties outlined in the codes and be administered by the Coach, Athletic Director, Administration, or Appropriate School Official (ASO).

Participation Requirements:

- A. In order to ensure all participants have an understanding of the Philosophies and Expectations in GMHS athletics, which includes players, coaches, parents and guardians, they must attend a minimum of one preseason meeting with the ASO and coaching staff prior to the first scheduled contest.
- B. In addition players, parents, and coaches must read, understand, agree to, sign and return the Philosophy and Expectations for Sport at GMHS.
- C. As required by the NHIAA and Gorham Middle High School, all participants must have a current physical examination (within one year) for the upcoming year on file with the school.
- D. Any student who has reached the age of 19 on or after September 1 may represent the school in any interscholastic athletic contest during that school year.

Academic Eligibility

- A. All student athletes must maintain passing grades in all classes. High school athletes must be enrolled in 4 classes and middle school athletes must be enrolled in 6 classes. Students' academic eligibility will be determined at the date of progress reports and / or report cards are issued.
- B. In addition to unsatisfactory academic standing, student athletes will also be responsible for maintaining proper classroom behavior, attitude and homework responsibilities. Failure to uphold the classroom expectations will result in a parent/student meeting with ASO and may result in deeming the student academically ineligible.
- C. Incompletes are not considered passing grades for purpose of eligibility

Academic Probation

- A. Student Athletes will be placed on academic probation for failing one course on the date progress reports and/or reports cards are issued. Administration will monitor students' progress enrolled in online classes to determine if adequate progress is being made for successful completion. If inadequate progress is determined for online classes, students may be placed on academic probation. Once placed on probation, the student athlete may attend practices, however, may not participate in any contests until achieving a passing grade. Weekly reports will be required by the student athlete for all subjects to assure good academic standing is maintained throughout the probationary period.
- B. Student Athletes failing more than one class will be deemed ineligible and will not participate in practices or contests until passing all classes, which time they may return to full team participation and activities.
- C. A student who has been placed on academic probation for having a failing grade in one or two classes, At the end of a marking period, will remain on academic probation for a minimum of 2 weeks and will become eligible at the end of 2 weeks if passing all current classes. If the Student Athlete is NOT passing at the end of the 2 week period, academic probation will remain until the student athlete is passing all classes.
- D. Participants placed on academic ineligibility are required to adhere to team training rules and expectations.

Attendance Policies

A. Practice attendance:

1. Students Athletes must be in school the day of a game OR practice no later than 8:00 am. Unexcused tardiness and failure to arrive at required time will deem student athlete ineligible for that day.
2. Students Athletes arriving prior to 8:00, however, later than the beginning of the school day will miss the next scheduled contest once they have accumulated 3 days unexcused tardiness notices.
3. Participants missing practices and games to attend family vacations, school trips, college visits, family outings and personal trips may impact game time participation. The level of impact will be determined by each coach's expectations.
4. Student athletes must also understand the importance of attending classes on a timely manner. Students arriving after the start of class will be considered tardy and will be subject to the same consequences as arriving late to school. Showing up with an excused explanation is required.

It is understandable situations may occur which may result in parental input or notification. When writing excuse notes for student athletes, please use integrity. It is important we are mindful of the message we are all sending and information shared is accurate.

Student Athlete Personal Conduct

- A. Student Athletes representing Gorham Middle High School are expected to display respectful attitudes and behaviors toward teachers, staff, administration, peers, coaches, officials, fans, opposition, and fellow team mates at all times. **This includes social media and the responsibility that comes with using this medium as a means to communicate.** Student Athletes who act in a disrespectful manner or in such way which embarrasses themselves, their team, their school or community will be subjected to discipline by the ASO, which may lead to suspension from future contests.
- B. **Cyber Image Policy (NHIAA LOA):** Any identifiable image, photo, or video which implicates a student athlete to be in the presence of or procession of drugs, alcohol or portrays actual use, or out of character behavior or crime, shall be confirmation of a violation of the Code. Absent the ability to establish a time or place the image was taken, it shall be the responsibility that the Student Athlete must assume. It must also be noted that there may be a person who would attempt to implicate a student athlete by taking images to place them in situations where they might be in violation of the code standards. This is the rationale for demanding our student athletes not place themselves in such environments.

Drugs/Alcohol/Tobacco Policy for Student Athletes

**** (RSA 179:10 and RSA 179:10-a) Underage alcohol use and or procession
(RSA 126-K:6) Underage tobacco use, including artificial tobacco and Vaping/Juuling products
(RSA 318-B:2) Underage use of controlled drugs
Acknowledges the legal standard for sport and athlete specific codes of conduct upheld by the United States Supreme Court****

It has been proven that alcohol, tobacco, non physician prescribed narcotics, and other drugs are addicting and dangerous. In addition, the use of such products have a direct effect on skill development, fitness level, and overall athletic performance. Therefore, student athletes will not be in the presence of, have possession of, use, abuse, or sell alcoholic beverages, tobacco products, or other illegal drugs.

Application of Policy for those In The Presence of

The following is from the NHIAA Life of an Athlete Program Standards:

If a student athlete attends a party/gathering where alcohol or drugs are being illegally dispensed, the student athlete must leave the party/gathering **IMMEDIATELY**. Expected behavior if student athletes are involved in this situation:

- A. Report attendance to a coach or administrator before the end of the next school day.
B. Take as many other student athletes with him or her as possible

If we allow student athletes to be present in this illegal environment, we promote and allow the possibility for them to be involved in illegal activities and can assume some will partake in these substances.

ID the Source

Student Athletes Who Host the Most Initiative (NHIAA LOA):

There shall be greater consequences **for any Student Athlete who organizes, facilitates, promotes, or host any gathering or social event where alcohol or drugs were available or use has occurred.** The penalty will be at a minimum of double the first violation.

Team Leaders/Captains

Student Athletes representing their team as Team Captains or in leadership roles will be held to a higher standard. They have been chosen by their team to represent the team on and off the field and to be a role model, and example of the finest GMHS Student Athletes. Student Athletes in a leadership role, found in violation of the Code, will face greater consequences (Tier II or Tier III) for first violation. Captains and team leaders must understand the great responsibility which comes with the position and fill the role to the highest standards.

Application of Gorham Middle/High School Philosophy and Expectations of Sport for Student Athletes

- A. Scope of Code. The GMHS Philosophy and Expectation Code will apply to all students participating in school sponsored athletics. The Code will apply for one calendar year and become effective from the date of the most recent signature. The code will be in effect at all times (including summer), and locations. as well. Violation of the Code will result in penalties outlined in the GMHS Philosophy and Expectations and as determined by the Coach, Athletic Director, and Administration.
- B. Penalties: Student Athletes penalized for violations of the Code will be suspended for a percentage of the season, using a tiered system. The percentage is used as opposed to a number of set games, due to the fact some seasons having varying lengths. Penalties will also carry over to the post season or following season.

Tiered Penalty System:

1. **First Violation for Substance Abuse – Tier 1:** will result in suspension from athletic contest for at least **40%** of the season. The suspension may be **reduced to 20%** of the season IF THE STUDENT ATHLETE/PARENT AGREE TO THE FOLLOWING:
 - Student Athlete will be evaluated by school a approved, certified substance abuse counselor within the first two weeks of the violation.
 - Both the Student Athlete AND Parent follow the prescribed treatment/plan recommended by the counselor and prove is provided.
 - Upon discovery of a violation, the student athlete must be truthful, provide accurate information, and fully cooperate with Coaches, Athletic Director or ASO.
 - Student athletes serving suspensions will be allowed to participate in team activities. Athletes should attend practices, team functions, and games in a supportive role. Having the student athletes remained involved will hopefully provide needed support, maintain fitness levels and keep current with team strategies and tactics.

2. **Second Violation for Substance Abuse- Tier II:** The second violation may result in suspension of UP to **100%** of the season and the student athlete AND parent will participate in a school approved substance abuse program.
3. **Third Violation for Substance Abuse – Tier III:** The third violation will result in a suspension from all athletic contest for a total of **one school year (180 days for date of third offense) and will carry onto the following school year.**
4. **Rejoining the Team:**
Upon completion of the suspension and treatment program, the student athlete must display sincere and genuine remorse for their actions. They will address their team and admit to their mistakes and recommit to the team by resigning the GMHS Philosophy and Expectations in the presence of their team and coaches.

Alcohol, Tobacco, and Drug Possession on School Property:

Student Athletes must respect school property and activities. Schools and all properties associated with the school (buses, practices fields etc.) are “Drug Free Zones”. The following violation will result in a **TIER II** violation:

- A. Students Athletes who are in possession of, or use **ILLEGAL DRUGS** on school property, or in a school activity or sponsored event, including transport to and from any contest.
- B. Student Athletes who participate in a contest or practice session while under the influence of an illegal substance.
- C. Distribute, dispense or sell any such drugs to other students or student athletes.

Transportation

- A. Seating arrangements will be at the discretion of the coaches. However, any horse play or inappropriate behavior will be immediately handled by the coach and/or driver and may result in additional administrative consequences. Punishment may include being banned from further travel with the team.
- B. Athletes are expected to travel to and from athletic events with the team. In situations where a student athletes wishes to travel with parent or guardian, the coach must receive in writing, a permission slip from the student’s parent prior to the departure from the GHS parking lot. Students Athletes may be released to teammates parent(s) with prior written notification. Emails to coaches or athletic director can serve as proper notification.
- C. Stops at stores or fast-food restaurants will occur at the discretion of the coaches and bus drivers.

Parent/ Coach Communication Guide and Procedure for Conflict Resolution

Communication is an importance part of the athletic experience. It is important the Student Athlete, Coach, Administration, and Parents have to opportunity and ability to communicate effectively throughout the season. The following is a guide for communication which will be followed.

Areas which are not up for discussion:

1. Playing time (the Coach is the authority who determines playing time)
 - A. In an effort to appropriately recognize senior athletes, all eligible and able seniors should see playing time in their final home game.
2. Team strategies
3. Play calling/ coaching from the sidelines
4. Other team members

Communications you should expect from your child's Coach:

1. Coaching Philosophy
2. Expectations and Goals for the players, team, season
3. Location and times of games and practices
4. Team requirements and equipment needs
5. Procedure for medical issues or injuries
6. Team rules, guidelines, and consequences for violations

Communications the Coach should expect from Parents:

1. Concerns with medical issues
2. Notifications of prolonged absences from team
3. Appropriate concerns such as the coach's interaction with your child, and ways your child can improve.

If there is a need to communicate with your child's Coach, please follow the procedures listed below.

Do not confront a Coach before or after a contest or practice. The time following a contest can be a very emotional time for players, fans and coaches. Meeting in this manner, could possibly result in a counterproductive situation. Call or email the school to schedule a meeting. Do not use the email for conflict resolution, however, as a tool to set up an appointment. If the Coach cannot be reached, contact the Athletic Director and request a meeting with the coach.

Before scheduling a meeting with your child's Coach, meet with your child and discuss the situation. Sometimes what parents perceive as a problem is not an issue with the child.

Once a concern is validated, the GMHS conflict resolution model will be followed:

- 1. Student Athlete/Coach(es)**
 - a. Coaches and administration do realize that sometimes a student-athlete may feel uncomfortable talking to his/her coach. Should this occur, we encourage the student-athlete to talk to his/her parent/guardian and have the parent make the initial contact with the coach.**
- 2. Student Athlete /Coach(es)/Parent(s)**
 - a. Please call to set up an appointment with the coach.**
 - b. If the coach cannot be reached, please call the Athletic Director. A meeting will be set up for you with the coach.**
 - c. Concerns must be in writing and submitted to the Athletic Director prior to the meeting.**
- 3. Student Athlete/Coach(es)/Parent(s) Athletic Director**
 - a. Please call to set up an appointment with the Athletic Director.**
 - b. Athlete must be present at the meeting.**
 - c. Concerns must be in writing and submitted to the Athletic Director prior to the meeting.**
- 4. Student Athlete/Coach(es)/Parent(s)/Athletic Director/[Administrator]**
 - a. Please call to set up an appointment with the Administration.**
 - b. Student athlete must be present at the meeting.**
 - c. Concerns in writing must be submitted to the Administration prior to the meeting if they are different than those in item number 3.**
- 5. Student Athlete/ Coach(es)/ Parent(s)/Athletic Director/Administrator/Superintendent**
 - a. Please call to set up an appointment with the Superintendent.**
 - b. Student athlete must be present at the meeting.**
 - c. Concerns in writing must be submitted to the Superintendent prior to the meeting if they are different than those in item number 3 or 4.**
- 6. Student Athlete/Coach(es)/Parent(s)/Athletic Director/Administrator/Superintendent/School Board**

When dealing with a coach, please be sure to contact the appropriate coach, i.e. JV or Varsity.

Conduct at Athletic Events

At Gorham High School we cultivate awareness that participation in high school athletics is part of the total educational experience. We emphasize the proper ideals of sportsmanship, ethical conduct and fair play as they relate to the lifetime impact on the participants and spectators. Further, the purpose of athletics in school programs is to develop and promote the physical, mental, moral, social and emotional well being of individual participants.

Therefore, it is important to refrain from making disparaging remarks to opponents, officials, coaches, or spectators. Every person is expected to exemplify proper self-control at all times and accept adverse decisions without public display of emotion or dissatisfaction. It is also important to greet opposing team members and officials respectfully and encourage behavior which will create positive relationships between schools.

Any individuals who display inappropriate behavior at athletic events will be asked to leave the premises immediately. At the first opportunity, the offending individual will be asked to meet with the school administration to discuss the incident in question. Attending any future athletic events will not be an option until this meeting has been held. Once this meeting has been held and behavior parameters are agreed upon and set, the individual may be able to attend future athletic events. **Repetition of these behaviors is not an option and any future negative displays will result in being banished from attending any athletic contest for one calendar year.**

Gorham Middle High School Philosophy and Expectations of Sport

Athletic Contract for 2018/2019 school year

By signing this document, I _____, Parent/Guardian, indicate that I understand and agree with these standards, as set forth in order for my son/daughter _____ to be afforded the privilege of representing Gorham Middle High School as a Student Athlete. I am also aware that any violation on the part of my child, of any of these standards, shall result in the consequences contained within this policy.

Participant's Signature

Date

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

