

**State College Area School District**

**Athletic Department**

# **STUDENT-ATHLETE / PARENT HANDBOOK**



**A reference for PIAA Interscholastic Sports  
Student-Athletes and Parents/Guardians**

**Produced by the State College Area School District  
Revised 8/2019**

**This is a fluid document as we evaluate and adjust to changing times and circumstances.**

## **CONTENTS**

|   |           |
|---|-----------|
| <b>Introduction</b>   | <b>3</b>  |
| <b>SCASD Philosophy of Interscholastic Athletics</b>                        | <b>3</b>  |
| <b>Instructional Focus – Professional Practices</b>                         | <b>3</b>  |
| <b>Requirements for Participation</b>                                       | <b>4</b>  |
| <b>Eligibility Requirements</b>   | <b>4</b>  |
| <b>Participation of Secondary Homeschool<br/>Students in PIAA Athletics</b> | <b>6</b>  |
| <b>Participation of Charter School Students<br/>in PIAA Athletics</b>       | <b>7</b>  |
| <b>B.D.A. Academic Strategies</b>   | <b>10</b> |
| <b>Behavior and Citizenship</b>   | <b>11</b> |
| <b>Athletic Department Procedures</b>                                       | <b>20</b> |
| <b>Coach/Athlete/Parent Relations</b>                                       | <b>26</b> |
| <b>The College Recruiting Process</b>                                       | <b>29</b> |
| <b>Parent /Spectator Code of Conduct</b>                                    | <b>30</b> |

## **MESSAGE FROM OUR ATHLETIC DIRECTORS:**

*Welcome to another exciting year of State College Athletics. We are thrilled that you have chosen to participate in athletics and are preparing for the challenges and rewards that the State High athletic experience has to offer.*

*State College Athletics provides a great learning environment for each and every student-athlete. As a member of the PIAA and Mid Penn Conference, we face and welcome great competition and high expectations of effort, achievement, and sportsmanship.*

*Athletics provides the opportunity for many positive attributes to nurture and grow within our student body and community as a whole. Participation in athletics allows us to develop: self-esteem, work ethic, teamwork, forgiveness, humility, leadership, sportsmanship, social interactions, as well as healthy lifestyle choices. Athletics provides the chance for an individual to develop physically, mentally and socially.*

*We expect to challenge and develop the student-athletes by providing great competitive opportunities in both practice and game situations, coupled with an equally challenging and rewarding academic experience. We recognize that the balance of academics and athletics provides us with an opportunity for student-athletes to learn and practice skills in problem solving, advocacy, and persistence. No greatness comes without struggle and sacrifice.*

*Success and pride will come from competing the right way. The promise that we make to you, and we ask that you make to each other, is to do these three things every day, in and out of school and competition: (1) know and do the right thing, (2) do it with relentless effort, and (3) do it with compassion and kindness towards others.*

*We wish you great experiences and rewards filled with memories and relationships that will last a lifetime. Make it a great year.*

*Mr. Chris Weakland, Athletic Director  
Mr. Loren Crispell, Assistant Athletic Director*

## **VISION STATEMENT**

*To positively impact the lives of others,  
we will develop and support an athletic program  
built on a tradition of integrity and excellence,  
while upholding high academic, social, and athletic standards.*

## **POSITIVE PERFORMANCE PATHWAY**

*Know and do the right thing  
Do it with relentless effort  
Do it with compassion and care for others*

## **INTRODUCTION**

The State College Area School District *Student-Athlete Handbook* is designed to inform student-athletes and parents of the rules, regulations and information for participation in the SCASD interscholastic athletic program. Participation in interscholastic athletics is a privilege of honor, responsibility, sacrifice, and commitment.

Participation in SCASD Athletics, as a privilege and not a right, also comes with unique opportunities as well as expectations. Those who choose to participate will be expected to follow the rules and regulations and Code of Conducts established by the SCASD and SCASD Athletic Department, along with additional rules and expectations of the coaches for their sport.

Students who participate in the SCASD interscholastic athletic program are expected to represent the State College Area School District, their team, family, and community in a positive manner. It is expected that all athletes, coaches, staff, families, and fans conduct themselves in a manner that will uphold a positive image of our program and the State College Area School District at all times.

The State College Area High School, Park Forest Middle School and Mount Nittany Middle School are members of the Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association (PIAA) and therefore are bound by the rules and regulations of that governing body. In addition, the State College Area High School interscholastic athletic teams are a member of the Mid Penn Conference and PIAA District VI.

## **SCASD PHILOSOPHY OF INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETICS**

The Board of School Directors believes that the purpose of an interscholastic athletic program is to provide learning experiences that will contribute to the personal, physical and psychological development of the individual student athlete. These learning experiences will be consistent with the educational goals of the State College Area School District as outlined in its Statement of Organizational Purpose and will complement the academic program of the District. Hence, participation in interscholastic athletics can serve an important role in meeting the needs of secondary level students within the total educational process. See Board Policy No. 123 in Appendix.

## **INSTRUCTIONAL FOCUS - PROFESSIONAL PRACTICES**

As practitioners, teachers and coaches alike we are committed to continuous improvement of SCASD Teaching Practices, Leadership Practices, and Organizational Practices because they are the preconditions for higher levels of student achievement. The SCASD "Four Pillars" are the building blocks of the district's professional practices; they frame what must be done in every "classroom", and system-wide to ensure success for all students, without exception.

### **PILLAR #1: CULTURE OF TRUST, RELATIONSHIPS, AND COLLABORATION**

Build trust and relationships with open communication that promotes effective collaboration among all partners in the teaching and learning community.

### **PILLAR #2: RESPONSIVE TEACHING AND LEARNING**

Curriculum, instruction, and learning are shaped by a growth mindset and guided by principles of differentiation.

### **PILLAR #3: HIGH EXPECTATIONS FOR ALL**

Beliefs and practices reflect universally held high standards and shared responsibility for continuous growth and improvement.

### **PILLAR #4: WELCOMING AND SAFE CLIMATE FOR LEARNING AND WORK**

Learning occurs in safe environments that support the needs of all students and adults and provide a welcoming environment where positive academic and prudent personal risk-taking are encouraged.

## **REQUIREMENTS FOR PARTICIPATION**

Consideration for participation on an athletic team requires that a student meet the following conditions:

1. satisfy all Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association (PIAA) and State College Area School District (SCASD) eligibility and academic standards
2. adhere to the codes of conduct of the SCASD, the school building you attend, the athletics department and your individual sport team
3. Submit unaltered, completed P.I.A.A. physical documents and related forms to the District's Athletic office before participation in tryouts, practices or competitions.

### **Final Cut off dates for PIAA physicals to be turned into AD**

Although the PIAA and the SCASD maintain due dates for each sport season in regards to when forms must be turned in, late additions to teams will be allowed until the end of the first week of official practices for each season and sport. Unique cases will be considered on a case by case basis. Until the physical form is approved and a Student-athlete is added to an official roster, he or she may not participate in any practice or scrimmage in any form. At this time, if an athlete has decided not to continue with the team or has not participated in that first week of practice, then all SCASD equipment must be returned to the coach asap.

## **ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS**

*Note: All required forms and notifications are expected to be submitted by the announced deadlines. Further details and updated PIAA rules and regulations referred to in this document are available online at [www.piaa.org](http://www.piaa.org).*

### **Age - (PIAA Constitution and By-Laws: Article I)**

A student-athlete may not have reached their 19th birthday by the date of June 30 that immediately precedes the beginning of the school year.

In sports where interscholastic competition is limited to grades 7 through 9, the student-athlete may not have reached their 16th birthday by the date of June 30 that immediately precedes the beginning of the school year.

In sports where interscholastic competition is limited to grades 7 and 8, the student-athlete may not have reached their 15th birthday by the date of June 30 that immediately precedes the beginning of the school year.

**Amateur Status - (PIAA Constitution and By-Laws: Article II)**

To be eligible to participate in a sport, a student must be an amateur in that sport. A student loses amateur status in a sport if the student, or the student's parent(s) or guardian(s), receives money or property for or related to the student's athletic ability, participation, performance, services, or training in a sport.

A student may accept awards from the student's school or the student's school-affiliated booster club, the sponsor of an athletic event, a non-profit service organization approved by the student's school Principal, or the news media. Permissible awards are items of apparel, a blanket, watch, ring, scroll, carry-on or warm-up bag, photograph, medal, plaque, or similar award, with appropriate institutional insignia or comparable identification. The fair market value of items provided to any such student may not exceed \$200.

**Attendance - (PIAA Constitution and By-Laws: Article III)**

A pupil must be regularly enrolled in a secondary school in full-time attendance. A student is eligible only at the school at which the student is enrolled. Exceptions exist for home-schooled students and students enrolled in Charter or Cyber Schools. A pupil who has been absent from school for a total of twenty or more days in a semester shall not be eligible to participate in any athletic contest until he/she has attended school for a total of forty-five (45) school days following the twentieth day of absence. A PIAA district committee may consider an exception when there is an extended absence because of approved reasons.

Middle school student-athletes must be in attendance for at least the *four (4) class periods* of the school day immediately prior to dismissal time in order to participate in an interscholastic practice or competition on that day.

High school student-athletes must comply with the **9:25 a.m. sign-in/Attendance time** in order to participate in interscholastic practice or competition on that day. If there is a delayed start to the day, student-athletes are expected to be on-time. (SCASD)

An attendance irregularity during the last day of classes of the school week will make a student ineligible for activities during the weekend. Exceptions for absences for educational, religious and medical reasons will be made when prior approval from the student's assigned secondary school office has been granted. (SCASD)

**Consent of Parent/Guardian - (PIAA Constitution and By-Laws Article IV)**

A student shall be eligible for participation in each sport only when there is on file with the principal a certificate of consent signed by a parent or guardian consenting to that student-athletes participation in practices, inter-school practices, scrimmages, and/or contests in the particular sport involved.

**Health - (PIAA Constitution and By-Laws: Article V)**

Any student wishing to participate in practices, inter-school practices, scrimmages and contests for a PIAA-affiliated sports teams for the first time during the school year must meet the following requirement(s):

1. Complete the electronic PIAA physical application (CIPPE) found on the Student or Parent Portal on/after June 1.

2. Print the completed forms and return them in person or by US Mail after signed by the physician to the SCASD Athletics Office has completed Section 6.
3. All forms must be completed and hand-delivered or mailed to the High School Athletics Office at 653 Westerly Parkway, State College, PA 16801. No Faxes will be accepted (must be original document).
4. PIAA Comprehensive Initial Pre-Participation Physical Evaluation (CIPPE) E-Application; Instructions can be found on the SCASD Athletics Site: <http://www.scasd.org/Page/3842>

Any student who fulfills the requirements to participate in a PIAA interscholastic sport during a school year and seeks to participate in subsequent sport(s) in the same school year, must complete and submit to the SCASD Athletic Office his/her *PIAA Recertification by Parent/Guardian* form (CIPPE, Section 5) according to the schedules posed by the PIAA and SCASD Department of Athletics.

Finally, if the student-athlete is participating in wrestling, he/she must have established a minimum wrestling weight class utilizing the *National Wrestling Coaches' Association (NWCA) Optimal Performance Calculator* as the mechanism to calculate the minimum wrestling weight. (The SCASD certified assessor will perform all required testing.)

#### **Period of Participation - (PIAA Constitution and By-Laws: Article VIII)**

A student-athlete is eligible for practice or participation in interscholastic athletics upon entry into seventh grade. A student-athlete loses eligibility when the student-athlete has reached the end of the student's fourth consecutive year beyond the eighth grade. If the student repeats a grade after eighth, the student will be ineligible as a senior. Played six seasons beyond the sixth grade or four seasons beyond the eighth grade in any sport. Completed the work of grades 9-12, inclusive.

#### **PARTICIPATION OF SECONDARY HOMESCHOOLED STUDENTS IN PIAA ATHLETICS**

Homeschooled secondary students residing within the State College Area School District shall be eligible to participate in interscholastic athletics at the age-group school within their regular attendance area. Each student shall be required to follow the rules of the team and school, the policies of the State College Area School District and the rules and regulations of the P.I.A.A.

Transportation to and from scheduled practices and events is the responsibility of the parents of the home-schooled students except where late bus transportation and team transportation are provided by the District.

#### **Procedures:**

Parents of homeschooled students who wish to have their children participate in interscholastic athletics within the school district have the following responsibilities:

1. Register their children with the superintendent's office by March 15 of the school year previous to the one during which they wish to participate.
2. Submit unaltered, completed P.I.A.A. physical documents and related forms to the District's Athletic office before participation in tryouts, practices or competitions.
3. Prior to participation, verify with the Superintendent's office the following conditions:

- a. That their child was enrolled in and passed a minimum of four (4) full-year subjects during the last school year. This is the equivalent to four (4) credits.
  - b. That their child was not absent from instruction more than twenty (20) days during the previous semester unless eligible for exemption as stated in Article III, Section 2 of the P.I.A.A. By-laws.
  - c. That their child is enrolled in four (4) full-year, four (4) credit equivalent courses during the current school year.
4. After participation has begun, notify weekly or daily as directed the District's Athletic Director if the student does not meet SCASD and P.I.A.A. eligibility requirements for academic or attendance reasons.
  5. It is an expectation of homeschooled families to be active participants in communication with coaches and district athletic department staff.
  6. The State College Area School District will perform the following responsibilities:
    - a. Announce and supervise the registration process.
    - b. Announce physical exam information through social media and website
    - c. Include the names and information of any home schooled students on the appropriate official roster.
    - d. Inform registered parent(s) / student(s) about orientation meetings, schedules, tryouts, practices, etc. for the upcoming season via coach communication.

### **PARTICIPATION OF CHARTER SCHOOL STUDENTS IN PIAA ATHLETICS**

Secondary students attending a charter school of the State College Area School District shall be eligible to participate in interscholastic athletics. Each student shall be required to follow the rules of the team, the policies of the State College Area School District and the rules and regulations of the Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association (PIAA) in relation to their participation. The charter school will be assessed a fee for each of its students electing to participate in a State College Area School District sponsored interscholastic sport.

#### **Procedures and Responsibilities:**

Directors / Parents of Charter School students who wish to have their children participate in interscholastic athletics within the school district have the following responsibilities:

1. Submit unaltered, completed P.I.A.A. physical documents and related forms to the District's Athletic office before participation in tryouts, practices or competitions.
2. Prior to participation, verify with the Superintendent's office the following conditions:
  - a. That their child was enrolled in and passed a minimum of four (4) full-year subjects during the last school year. This is the equivalent to four (4) credits.
  - b. That their child was not absent from instruction more than twenty (20) days during the previous semester unless eligible for exemption as stated in Article III, Section 2 of the P.I.A.A. By-laws.
  - c. That their child is enrolled in four (4) full-year, four (4) credit equivalent courses during the current school year.
3. After participation has begun, notify weekly or daily as directed the District's Athletic Director if the student does not meet SCASD and P.I.A.A. eligibility requirements for academic or attendance reasons.



4. It is an expectation of charter schooled families to be active participants in communication with coaches and district athletic department staff.
5. The State College Area School District will perform the following responsibilities:
  - a. Announce and supervise the registration process.
  - b. Announce physical exam information through social media and website
  - c. Include the names and information of any home schooled students on the appropriate official roster.
  - d. Inform registered parent(s) / student(s) about orientation meetings, schedules, tryouts, practices, etc. for the upcoming season via coach communication.

The Athletic Office will inform the Learning Enrichment and Student Services Office of the names of any charter school students who have submitted a completed physical exam packet and the participation fee to be billed to the charter school.

The LE/SS Office will notify the charter school of the participation fee for their students and the procedure for prorated billing (Includes coaches' salaries, equipment, supplies, transportation, reconditioning, dues & fees, rental, official's compensation, meals & lodging).

#### **All-Star Contests (PIAA Constitution and By-Laws: Article IX)**

A student will lose his/her PIAA eligibility in a sport for one year if he/she participates in an all-star contest in that sport (prior to their senior year/season).

#### **Curriculum (PIAA Constitution and By-Laws: Article X)**

A student must pursue a curriculum defined and approved by the Principal as a full-time curriculum. This curriculum must be approved by and conform to the regulations of the State Board of Education, the Pennsylvania School Code, and any policies established by the local school board.

#### **Eligibility is determined both weekly and by marking period:**

**Weekly:** A student must maintain a passing average in at least four, full-credit subjects or the equivalent. Eligibility shall be cumulative from the beginning of a grading period, and is reported by the teaching staff on a weekly basis. In the event a student-athlete does not meet this standard on the last school day of the week, he/she shall be ineligible for athletic competition from the Sunday immediately following the report of failure through the next Saturday.

**Marking Period:** A student-athlete must have passed at least four, full-credit subjects, or the equivalent during the previous grading period in order to be eligible for athletic competition.

A student declared ineligible due to failing grades in a preceding grading period shall be ineligible to participate for the first 15 school days of the next grading period. The first measurement for all previously eligible students will occur 15 school days into the new marking period. Eligibility for the first grading period is based on your final grades for the preceding school year.

Home-schooled, secondary students residing within the District shall be eligible to participate in interscholastic athletics at the age-group school within their regular attendance area. Parents must register their children with the District prior to participating in any athletics. Charter school students attending SCASD schools are also eligible to participate in interscholastic athletics at the age-group school within their regular attendance area. (SCASD)

### **Academic Support Expectations and Opportunities:**

The SCASD is committed to supporting our student-athletes both on and off of the field and in and out of the classroom.

It is understood that much of our athletic schedules are predetermined by league and conference schedulers / scheduling processes. There is often very few options for movement or changes to these schedules. We make every effort to avoid multiple away games/events in a given week, but it is also an understanding that this is not always possible.

As student athletes, it is imperative and expected that you communicate with your teachers clearly and in advance of any foreseeable absences from class. When possible, it is prudent to meet with your teachers prior to the absence to preview missed material, attend a different class period of the same content, and submit material ahead of time or electronically when appropriate.

To assist our students and student-athletes with the balance of athletics and academics, the SCAHS has several academic support opportunities available to them:

1. the high school Tutoring Center (ACE)
2. the high school Writing Lab
3. after school Academic Support

Note: the high school library and ACE will be open prior to the start of school for student use

See “B-D-A SUPPORT STRATEGIES for PLANNED ABSENCES” document below for best practice expectations for athletes.

# STUDENT-ATHLETES

## B-D-A SUPPORT STRATEGIES for PLANNED ABSENCES

Please refer to the tips below as a regular best practice when missing instruction.

| Student Strategy / Communication Guide   |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| Before   | During  | After   |
| <p><b>Before my absence I...</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Bookmark each of my teacher's online resources for quick reference</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Inform my teacher via email or in person, in advance, regarding my absence</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>**Ask my teacher if I could sit in during another block to compensate for the one I will be missing **</b></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Make a "to-do" list of work that will be missed during absence from teacher's online resource or from direct communication</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> If I am to miss a quiz, test, lab, or presentation...<br/><br/>e-mail and/or meet with my teacher to offer several times (before/after school, study hall, or over lunch, etc.) to make up the assignment in person</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> If I see I will not be able to make a future due date, <b>ask for an extension in advance</b> rather than waiting until it is due or past due</li> </ul> | <p><b>While I am absent I...</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Use the district wifi (when available) while I am away</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Be in touch with a reliable classmate while I am away</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Take and use reading or other materials with me on the bus/van that I will need to study or prepare for class</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Touch base with students/teammates who share similar classes and/or teachers to clarify work and discuss questions</li> </ul> | <p><b>When I return back to school I...</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Hand in work that was due while I was out</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Check HAC for any missing work or indicators that I missed something</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Check in with a reliable peer and the teacher regarding my missed work</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Review notes or other class materials that may help me understand missed instruction</li> </ul> |

## **BEHAVIOR AND CITIZENSHIP**

The State College Area School District believes that good conduct is closely related to a positive environment for learning and an effective athletic program. As athletics is an extension of the classroom, it is expected that student-athletes follow the rules and regulations governing student conduct in school, during the time spent in travel to and from school, and while participating in school sponsored events.

Such rules shall require that students:

- conform to standards of socially acceptable behavior
- respect the rights, person, beliefs, and property of others
- preserve the degree of order necessary to the program in which they are engaged
- respond positively, appropriately, and promptly to those adults charged with the responsibility of monitoring students.

Student-athletes are expected to adhere to SCASD behavioral and attendance policies. A team coach may establish and publish, with the approval and consent of the Principal and/or Athletic Director, rules that complement those rules/policies that have been instituted by the District, individual schools, and the athletic department.

**Student participation in athletics, extra-curricular activities, and co-curricular activities is a privilege. The student's participation in these activities and the reputation of the school are dependent, in part, on the student's conduct as an individual.**

### **Code of Conduct**

Student-athletes are expected to conform to the code of behavior for the building they attend. Violations of that code which result in a suspension (in-school or out-of-school), will affect a student-athlete's participation. When a student has been suspended out-of-school, the student may not visit any district campus for the duration of the suspension, nor may the student participate in any school sponsored or extracurricular activities, including athletic practices or competitions. Students may be eligible to resume participation on the day that they resume regular school attendance.

When a student is assigned after-school detention or is suspended in-school, participation in extracurricular activities is also restricted. The student may not participate in any extracurricular activities, including athletic practices or competitions. Students may be eligible to resume participation on the day following the completion of the after school detention or in-school suspension. It is the responsibility of the student-athlete to communicate with the head coach of any such detentions or suspensions.

**Attendance at Interscholastic Practices and Competitions**

Students who wish to participate in an after-school event must be in attendance at school by **9:25 a.m.** in order to be eligible to participate in an interscholastic practice or competition that day. If there is a delayed start to the day, the student is expected to be at school on-time. Friday attendance will affect eligibility for weekend activities.

Exceptions for absence may be made when prior approval has been granted. Examples of excused and unexcused absences may include, but are not limited to:

| <b><u>EXCUSED ABSENCES</u></b>   | <b><u>UNEXCUSED ABSENCES</u></b>   |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Religious observance or instruction</li><li>● Illness of the student</li><li>● Medical or dental appointment</li><li>● Death in the family</li><li>● Quarantine</li><li>● Special academic pursuit / testing (ie: college orientations, SAT, ACT, AP testing)</li><li>● Educational trip, co-curricular field trip</li><li>● Trips approved in advance</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Babysitting</li><li>● Hair appointment</li><li>● Shopping</li><li>● Gainful employment</li><li>● Fishing or Hunting</li><li>● Missing the school bus</li><li>● Absences for personal reasons</li><li>● Community service</li><li>● Senior picture appointments</li><li>● Trips not approved in advance</li></ul> |

**Please make every effort to communicate early with your coaches on any anticipated Excused or Unexcused Absences.**

**Conduct Suspensions by School Administration:**

- When applicable, athletic suspension will match the OSS duration determined by school administration.
- When a student-athlete is suspended by school administration:
  - No participation in practices or games may occur during suspension.
  - Practices may resume after suspension and the athlete must practice the number of days suspended prior to being eligible for participation in games/events.
  - A game/event date counts as a practice date for return to play purposes

## Categories of Conduct Violations

*Note: Administrative / Head Coach discretion may be used depending upon the severity of the incident and/or the student-athlete's disciplinary record.*

### LEVEL 1:

| Offense | Prescribed Course of Action  |
|---------|--|
| 1st     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Coach discusses behavior with the student-athlete and document notes.</li> <li>Coach discusses and finds a solution strategy &amp; issues a verbal warning</li> </ul>   |
| 2nd     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Coach revisit previous discussion with the student-athlete, document notes &amp; the solution strategy</li> <li>Coach issues and assigns consequence: <u>eligible to practice, ineligible for participation for first ½ of next game/event (or comparable consequence for sports with no halves)</u></li> <li>Coach notifies the parent / guardian and Athletic Director</li> </ul> |
| 3rd     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Coach revisits previous discussion with the student-athlete document notes, &amp; the solution strategy</li> <li>Coach issues and assigns consequence: <u>eligible to practice, ineligible for participation for next (1) game/event</u></li> <li>Coach notifies the parent / guardian and Athletic Director</li> </ul>   |

### LEVEL 2:

| Offense | Prescribed Course of Action  |
|---------|--|
| 1st     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meeting with the student-athlete to discuss behavior, document notes and solution strategy.</li> <li>Coach/AD issues and assigns consequence: <u>ineligible for practice/events during school issued suspension; practices may resume after suspension; ineligible for participation in next one (1) games/events after serving school suspension.</u></li> <li>Notify parents/guardians and coach; may include school principal</li> <li><i>Note: Any subsequent offense of any level, combined with a Level 2 offense, may result in a Level 2, 2nd offense consequence.</i></li> </ul>   |
| 2nd     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meeting with the student-athlete to discuss behavior, document notes and solution strategy.</li> <li>Coach/AD issues and assigns consequence: <u>ineligible for practice/events during school issued suspension; practices may resume after suspension; ineligible for participation in next two (2) games/events after serving school suspension.</u></li> <li>Notify parents/guardians and coach; may include school principal</li> <li><i>Note: Any subsequent offense of any level, combined with a Level 2 offense, may result in a Level 2, 3rd offense consequence.</i></li> </ul>   |
| 3rd     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meeting with the student-athlete to discuss behavior, document notes and solution strategy.</li> <li>Coach/AD issues and assigns consequence: <u>ineligible for practice/events during school issued suspension; practices may resume after suspension; ineligible for participation in next three (3) games/events after serving school suspension.</u></li> <li>Notify parents/guardians and coach; may include school principal</li> <li><i>Note: Any subsequent offense of any level, combined with a Level 2 offense, may result in a Level 3, 1st offense consequence.</i></li> </ul> |

**LEVEL 3:**

| Offense | Prescribed Course of Action   |
|---------|---|
| 1st     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meeting with the student-athlete to discuss behavior, document notes and solution strategy.</li> <li>Coach/AD issues and assigns consequence: <u>ineligible for practice/events during school issued suspension; practices may resume after suspension; ineligible for participation in next two (2) games/events after serving school suspension.</u></li> <li>Notify parents/guardians and coach; may include school principal</li> <li><i>Note: Any subsequent offense of any level, combined with a Level 3 offense, may result in a Level 3, 2nd offense consequence.</i></li> </ul>        |
| 2nd     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meeting with the student-athlete to discuss behavior, document notes and solution strategy.</li> <li>Coach/AD issues and assigns consequence: <u>ineligible for practice/events during school issued suspension; practices may resume after suspension; ineligible for participation in next three (3) games/events after serving school suspension.</u></li> <li>Notify parents/guardians and coach; may include school principal</li> <li><i>Note: Any subsequent offense of any level, combined with a Level 3, 2nd offense, may result in a Level 3, 3rd offense consequence.</i></li> </ul> |
| 3rd     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meeting with the student-athlete, parents/guardians, coach, athletic director, and principal to discuss behavior, and document notes</li> <li><u>Carry out team dismissal procedures</u></li> </ul>  |

**LEVEL 4:**

| Offense | Prescribed Course of Action   |
|---------|---|
| 1st     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meeting with the student-athlete to discuss behavior, document notes and solution strategy.</li> <li>Coach/AD issues and assigns consequence: <u>ineligible for practice/events during school issued suspension; practices may resume after suspension; ineligible for participation in next four (4) games/events after serving school suspension.</u></li> <li>Notify parents/guardians and coach; may include school principal</li> <li><i>Note: Any subsequent offense of any level, combined with a Level 4 offense, may result in a Level 4, 2nd offense consequence.</i></li> </ul> |
| 2nd     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meeting with the student-athlete, parents/guardians, coach, athletic director, and principal to discuss behavior, document notes</li> <li><u>Carry out team dismissal procedures</u></li> </ul>  |

**Team Dismissal Procedures:**

1. Letter detailing dismissal will be sent to parents/guardians as well as district administration
2. Collection of uniforms and district property (non-compliance may result in collection through the SCASD Business Office and local magisterial procedure)
3. Refer to "Dismissal from a Team" section below for more details

**Conduct Descriptions:**

**Attendance:**

| LEVEL | Behavior   | May Look Like / Sound Like  |
|-------|--|---|
| I     | Late to practice<br><br>Unexcused Absence from a Practice <u>with</u> prior communication to coach   | ❖ Arriving after the start of practice without a valid excuse or communicating ahead of time with the coaching staff<br>❖ Unexcused absence for the entire or majority of a practice <u>with</u> prior notification to coach  |
| II    | Unexcused Absence from a Practice and/or Game <u>with</u> or <u>without</u> prior communication to coach<br><br>Late to the bus for an away departure<br><br>Not serving a school discipline | ❖ Unexcused absence for the entire or majority of a practice <u>without</u> prior notification to coach<br>❖ Unexcused absence for the entire or majority of a game/event <u>with</u> prior notification to coach<br>❖ Leaving a practice, game/event without the coach's permission<br>❖ Arriving after the identified arrival time for a bus departure, including cross-town shuttles<br>❖ Not attending or failing to inform the head coach of an In-School Suspension or After School Detention |
| III   | Unexcused Absence from a Game/Event <u>without</u> prior communication to coach<br><br>Failing to arrive at the bus for an away departure  | ❖ Unexcused absence for the entire or majority of a game/event <u>without</u> prior notification to coach<br>❖ Arriving after the bus departure for an away game/event, including cross-town shuttles<br>❖ Failing to inform the head coach of an Out-of-School suspension  |
| IV    | N/A  |   |

**Program / Team Rules:**

| LEVEL | Behavior   | May Look Like / Sound Like   |
|-------|--|--|
| I     | Inappropriate behavior that is disruptive or hinders your or other's ability to learn or perform<br><br>Dress / Uniform violations | ❖ Being inattentive, disruptive, or distracting to self or others<br>❖ Non-adherence to team rules or norms<br>❖ Inappropriate dress / not adhering to the prescribed dress code or uniform for travel or events |
| II    | Elevated Level I offense<br><br>Actions that may be damaging or disruptive to the team image, culture and/or chemistry             | ❖ Elevated actions from the list above<br>❖ Open defiance of school or team rules<br>❖ Actions unbecoming of a SCASD athlete that may take place on or off school property or in or outside of the school day    |
| III   | Elevated Level II offense<br>Accessing areas that are off-limits   | ❖ Accessing equipment rooms, training rooms, offices, or locker rooms without permission<br>❖ Entering a restricted area   |
| IV    | Participating in or initiating a severe disturbance or prank   | ❖ Malevolent school disturbance<br>❖ Any act placing others in unwanted fear or disorder<br>❖ Creating a disturbance that severely interrupts a practice or game/event   |



**Disorderly / Disrespectful / Insubordinate Language or Conduct:**

| LEVEL | Behavior   | May Look Like / Sound Like   |
|-------|--|--|
| I     | Negative attitudes or actions  | ❖ Ignoring, arguing, failing to follow directions  |
| II    | Negative attitudes or actions intended to defy a request by an adult or undermine the authority of a coach or an adult   | ❖ Refusing to follow directions<br>❖ Talking back, disrespectful language or actions<br>❖ Use of profane/vulgar language   |
| III   | Elevated Level II offense<br><br>Recurring offensives after repeated unsuccessful interventions<br><br>Forgery, Counterfeiting, or Lying<br><br>Verbal assault of a student or staff member<br><br>Unacceptable language, gestures, or actions | ❖ Repeated backtalk, or refusal to comply with reasonable requests<br>❖ Open defiance of school or team rules<br>❖ Providing false information, documentation, or forgery (lying, forged notes)<br>❖ Words meant to demean or hurt another, including the misuse of social media<br>❖ Abusive language; verbal or written<br>❖ Using or demonstrating vulgar, perverse, and/or offensive language or gestures directed at others (including: opponents, teammates, fans, coaches, officials, or staff members) |
| IV    | Elevated Level III offense   | ❖ Elevated actions from the list above   |

**Defacing School Property / Vandalism / Theft:**

| LEVEL | Behavior   | May Look Like / Sound Like  |
|-------|--|---|
| III   | Theft, attempt of theft, or receiving stolen property or selling or buying stolen property (\$150 & below)<br><br>Damaging, vandalizing, altering and/or taking of any school, team, or individual property that can be replaced or repaired at minimal cost (\$150 & below)   | ❖ Theft of any property, uniforms, or school equipment<br>❖ Theft of property lost or mislaid<br>❖ Writing on walls, desks, floors or property<br>❖ Altering of property<br>❖ Negligent damage to property or devices<br>❖ Malevolent destroying or defacing of property<br>❖ Reckless disregard for property, uniforms or school equipment                         |
| IV    | 2nd "Defacing School Property / Vandalism / Theft" violation<br><br>Theft, attempt of theft, or receiving stolen property or selling or buying stolen property (\$151 & above)<br><br>Damaging, vandalizing, altering and/or taking of any school, team, or individual property that can be replaced or repaired at cost (\$151 & above) | ❖ Repeated violation<br>❖ Theft of any property, uniforms, or school equipment<br>❖ Theft of property lost or mislaid<br>❖ Writing on walls, desks, floors or property<br>❖ Altering of property<br>❖ Negligent damage to property or devices<br>❖ Malevolent destroying or defacing of property<br>❖ Reckless disregard for property, uniforms or school equipment |

➤ ***Police notification may be possible depending on the severity of the infraction.***

**Student Fighting / Safety / Assault:**

| LEVEL | Behavior   | May Look Like / Sound Like   |
|-------|--|--|
| I     | Horseplay or throwing of objects                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Throwing dangerous objects</li> <li>❖ Reckless play that can lead to injury</li> <li>❖ Unwanted play or behavior</li> </ul>   |
| II    | Player fighting (inside or outside of competition) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Fighting or physical retaliation</li> <li>❖ Player ejection from a game/event (PIAA rule)</li> </ul>  |
| III   | Attempting to harm another                         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Malicious attack on another person with the intent to harm</li> <li>❖ Engaging in any physical behavior that has the potential to harm another</li> </ul>                         |
| IV    | Physical assault<br>Reckless endangerment          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ An unlawful attack by one person on another</li> <li>❖ Intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly causing bodily injury</li> <li>❖ Deliberately disregarding safety rules</li> </ul> |

➤ *Police notification may be possible depending on the severity of the infraction.*

**Harassment / Bullying / Sportsmanship:**

| LEVEL | Behavior  | May Look Like / Sound Like   |
|-------|---|--|
| I     | N/A   |  |
| II    | Alarming or annoying unwanted behavior that shows no purpose  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Engaging in conduct that knowingly annoys another</li> <li>❖ Unwanted contact, texting or messaging others</li> </ul>   |
| III   | Unwanted electronic, verbal, written, or physical action or series of actions directed at a student(s) that is severe, persistent or pervasive<br><br>Harassment; sexual, racial, ethnic, and/or gender | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Slurs or insensitive remarks</li> <li>❖ Threats or bullying, including cyber-bullying</li> <li>❖ Pushing, shoving or physical aggression</li> <li>❖ Unwarranted physical contact</li> </ul>   |
| IV    | Severe harassment / bullying or sexual, racial, ethnic, and/or gender intimidation<br><br>Hazing activities- any activity that recklessly or intentionally endangers others                             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Severe or repeated Level III infraction</li> <li>❖ A threatening strike, kick or physical contact</li> <li>❖ Creating a threatening environment</li> <li>❖ Team initiation activities</li> <li>❖ Endangering the mental health, physical health or safety of a student with malicious intent</li> </ul> |

➤ *Police notification may be possible depending on the severity of the infraction.*

**Other Infractions:**

| LEVEL     | Behavior                                | May Look Like / Sound Like  |
|-----------|---|---|
| II        | Tobacco / e-cigarettes / look-alikes    | ❖ Possession, use, sale, or distribution of tobacco, tobacco products, or paraphernalia or look-alikes (including e-cigarettes, vaporizers)   |
| IV        | Alcohol                                 | ❖ Possession, use, sale, or distribution of alcohol   |
| IV        | Drugs, Possession of Steroids (non-use) | ❖ Possession, use, sale, or distribution of drugs or paraphernalia and look-alikes<br>❖ Possession of Steroids or paraphernalia   |
| IV        | Extortion / Severe Threats              | ❖ Obtaining something through force or threats<br>❖ Threatening someone through violence, property damage, or harm to reputation<br>❖ Declaration of intent to commit a crime of violence against another with the intent of threatening a person, building, facility, or public or private habitat<br>❖ Place any person or public in fear of imminent serious bodily injury<br>❖ Threats to commit any offense involving violence |
| PA Act 93 | Use of Steroids                         | ❖ Use of Steroids:<br>❖ <u>First Offense</u> – Suspension from school athletics for the remainder of the current season.<br>❖ <u>Second Offense</u> – Suspension from school athletics for the remainder of the current season and the following season.<br>❖ <u>Third Offense</u> – Permanent suspension from school athletics.  |

➤ *Police notification may be made for these infractions with potentially legal consequences.*

**Further Descriptions of Expectations:**

**Sportsmanship**

As a PIAA-member school, we are committed to the goal that sportsmanship be recognized as an important part of interscholastic athletics. Sportsmanship is generally defined as the overt display of respect for the rules of the sport, as well as for all players, coaches, officials and spectators at any event.

SCASD student-athletes, when part of any team activity, are expected to behave in a way which demonstrates fair play, ethical behavior, and integrity. Any actions or comments which are intended to taunt, bait, anger, embarrass, ridicule or demean others in the athletic arena will not be tolerated.

**Hazing (SCASD Board Policy No. 247)**

Hazing is defined as any activity that recklessly or intentionally endangers the mental health, physical health or safety of a student for the intention of team initiation or membership; for our purposes, this refers to any sports team recognized by the Board of School Directors. Any hazing activity, whether by an individual or a group, shall be presumed to be a forced activity, even if a student participates willingly.

The SCASD does not condone any form of initiation (*i.e., hazing*) as part of any school-sponsored interscholastic sports-team activity. The District has adopted a policy prohibiting the involvement of students, volunteers and employees in any hazing activity; no student-athlete, coach, volunteer or District employee shall plan, encourage, assist or engage in any hazing activity.

### **Training Rules**

Student-athletes perform best when they follow intelligent training rules. These rules include prohibitions in the use of drugs, alcohol and tobacco. The SCASD has board-approved policies regarding the use of these substances by all students on SCASD property and at SCASD-sponsored activities at all sites with the objective of providing drug, alcohol and tobacco free environments.

Furthermore, the athletic department prohibits the use of these substances by any student-athlete for the length of his/her team's sport season at any time, either on or off a school campus. Violations by district student-athletes of these policies or rules will be addressed according to district policies and athletic department procedures.

### **Drugs and Alcohol (SCASD Board Policy No. 227)**

The objective of the school district's drug and alcohol policy is to eliminate the improper use of drugs, behavior-altering substances and performance-enhancing substances in our schools, on school property, on school conveyances and at school-sponsored events. In keeping with the district objective, the athletic department believes interscholastic athletics can play a vital role in promoting and maintaining a drug-free environment. Student-athletes violating the policy will first be dealt with according to the general policy. All drug, alcohol and steroid violations are Level IV, Code of Conduct violations.

In addition to the athletic policy, when violations occur within the school purview, the school student discipline will occur concurrently. For all incidents in which the student incurs school discipline and suspension, the student-athlete is excluded from extracurricular activity by the school discipline section of the policy and the following athletic procedures will be in effect:

- First Offense - Upon returning from the school suspension, the student-athlete will be subject to the consequences of a Level 4, 1st offense.
- Second Offense - The student-athlete will be subject to the consequences of a Level 4, 2nd offense; carry out team dismissal procedures.

### **Steroids (PA Act 93 of 1990)**

The use of steroids continues to be a problem that plagues athletics. Student-athletes must be made aware of the dangers of steroids and the consequences of their use. Student-athletes and their parents may obtain specific information about steroid use from any member of our Athletic Training staff.

The Pennsylvania legislature has passed legislation specifically prohibiting the use of steroids in athletics in the Commonwealth. The provisions of this Act and the consequences for violations supersede the SCASD Board of School Directors policies on the use of drugs or alcohol.

- First Offense – Suspension from school athletics for the remainder of the current season.
- Second Offense – Suspension from school athletics for the remainder of the current season and the following season.
- Third Offense – Permanent suspension from school athletics.

### **Tobacco (SCASD Board Policy No. 222)**

The objective of this policy is to provide a tobacco-free environment. The policy bans the use of all forms of tobacco products on school property or at school activities. In keeping with this policy the athletic department prohibits the use of tobacco products by Coaches, student-athletes and support personnel while taking part in a school-sponsored activity, whether or not on school district property. Violations of this policy will be dealt with in accordance with the athletic department procedures detailed in the Code of Conduct chart above.

### **Uniform and Equipment**

The district provides all uniform and equipment necessities except shoes to student-athletes. All items remain the property of SCASD. Student-athletes are held accountable for the uniform and equipment issued to them, and is responsible for using them in compliance with instructions as provided by the coaches and athletic training staff.

Items are to be returned directly to the coach or equipment manager in a timely manner at the end of the season. No student-athlete is permitted to tryout or participate in another sport until all uniform and equipment obligations have been fulfilled from any previous season(s).

Unreturned items are subject to collection through the SCASD Business Office and local magisterial procedure.

## **ATHLETICS DEPARTMENT PROCEDURES**

### **Squad Limits and Squad Selections**

Many sports teams have no squad limits; therefore, all students who meet eligibility requirements and participate in try-out activities/practices become part of the team. However, the nature of certain sports limits the number of team members who can be effectively managed by the coaching staff and/or facilities. Coaches, as the designated professionals in charge of these sports, will make student-athletes aware of the criteria for selection prior to the evaluation process. The coaches will maintain records of try-out evaluations and will provide sufficient opportunity to fairly evaluate and rank student-athletes.

Students not selected for a squad may be permitted to try-out for another sport during the same season, provided the selection process for that team has not been completed. The student-athlete must contact and obtain approval from the coach no later than two days after receiving notification that he/she was not selected for the first sport he/she attempted to join.

### **Team Travel**

It is expected that all student-athletes will use the transportation provided by the school district to travel TO and FROM athletic contests. There are several reasons for this procedure but foremost are safety, security, and legal liability. The school district realizes that there are exceptions or extenuating circumstances that may be approved by the Head Coaches and/or Athletic Director(s). For those circumstances, the following procedures must be followed:

- All students wishing to ride home from an event with their family, may do so, but ONLY with their parent or legal guardian

- Parents / guardians must sign the provided roster indicating their intent to take their child home from an event
- Students who require ANOTHER family to transport them from an event, must submit completed and signed "[Transportation Release Form](#)" no later than 3 PM the day prior to the competition - both families must complete and sign the form
- Forms are available online on the athletic website or in the athletic office

Student-athletes who miss the bus and arrive at a contest are not permitted to participate unless the coach gave prior approval to the student-athlete's parent or legal guardian.

Circumstances during post-season competition may warrant overnight travel to sporting events. In that case, all school district/athletics department/team policies, procedures, rules and regulations are in effect. Violations of these standards will result in disciplinary action according to the appropriate Student Handbook and School District Code of Conduct as well as Student-Athlete / Parent Handbook.

### **Practice and Competition Attendance Requirements**

A student-athlete should regard his/her attendance at all SCASD practices and competitions as a very high priority. Practice, just like a game, is a team event that has meaning and value to all members of the team. This expectation is based upon:

- Given that the competition is extremely high among SCASD students to be selected for a position on a team's roster or to achieve a starting role on a SCASD team, it is expected that students who are successful in gaining these opportunities utilize their participation to its fullest capacity.
- Missing practice or competition may hinder a student-athlete's individual skill, attitude and knowledge development; weaken his/her role on the team; and affect the team's performance, chemistry, and chances for success.
- PIAA Bylaws base a student-athlete's postseason eligibility upon attendance at his/her school's practices and competitions: Article IX, Section 5 states, "A student who participates as an individual or as a member of a team in a sport in an athletic program other than that of the student's school, who is enrolled at a school having a team in that sport, shall be ineligible to participate in the District or Inter-District Championship Contests in that sport unless the student has been in uniform and available to participate as a member of the student's school team in that sport for at least 75% of the regular season contests... and if a student's practice in an athletic program other than that of the student's school does not meet the practice requirements of the student's school as determined by the Principal, the student shall be ineligible to participate in the District or Inter-District Championship Contests in that sport."

### **Excused Absences**

A student-athlete's absence from a SCASD practice or competition will be excused for the following three reasons:

1. Missing any beginning-of-the-season tryout or practice sessions because of family vacation only when the student-athlete provides written notice of his/her plans to the head coach at least one week prior to the first day of official practice/try-out. In addition, the student-athlete must be in attendance for his/her try-out session(s) for teams that make cuts before the final squad selection has been made.
2. Circumstances generally approved by the SCASD for absence from school (illness/injury, religious observance, educational trip, co-curricular field trip, special

academic pursuit, state or nationally controlled academic testing, family commitment, or doctor's appointment).

*Considerations:*

- a. Student-athletes should always communicate an upcoming absence as far in advance as possible to the head coach.
- b. Because of the broad scope of district activities, conflicts may occur between an athletic event and another SCASD-sponsored activity. When a conflict occurs, the student-athlete and coach should work out a reasonable solution that will be in the best interest of the student-athlete utilizing these criteria:
  - i. The relative importance of each event
  - ii. The importance of each event to the student
  - iii. The contribution the student can make to each activity
  - iv. When the events were scheduled

Once the decision has been made, the student-athlete will not be penalized by the coach or sponsor of the event not chosen.

3. Participation in the practice, inter-school practice, scrimmage or competition of another program in the same sport during the same season when these requirements have been met:
  - a. The Principal, with the agreement of the Head Coach, waives the requirement of Article IX, Section 5 because of the student's failure to meet the 75% requirement results from illness, injury or the student's failure to meet another PIAA eligibility rule.
  - b. The Principal, with agreement of the Head Coach, determines that practice in the athletic program other than that of the student's school meets the practice requirement of the school.

### **Playing Time**

The interscholastic athletics philosophy of the SCASD identifies the standards for participation and playing time at each level of sport activity. (SCASD Board Policy No. 123) It is the charge of each sports team's coaches solely to make determinations regarding playing time based upon their observation and evaluation of athletes during tryouts, practices, and competitions in accord with the principles of the SCASD's philosophy of interscholastic athletics.

*Middle School / Junior High:* At the Middle school / Junior High level, student-athlete participation and development of skills in a sport are valued above the winning of contests. It is an expectation that at a middle school competition, all student-athletes will participate (presuming health, conduct, and academic eligibility). Playing time may not be equitable, but coaches are encouraged to pursue equity when possible. Coaches are also encouraged to award playing time for measures such as effort, good citizenship, good sportsmanship, as well as demonstrated game play.

*9th Grade / Freshman:* At the 9th Grade / Freshman level, student-athlete participation and development of skills in a sport are valued above the winning of contests. It is an expectation that at a 9th grade / Freshman competition, all student-athletes will participate (presuming health, conduct, and academic eligibility). Playing time may not be equitable, but coaches are also encouraged to be mindful of playing time equity, while pursuing a healthy competitive environment.

Junior Varsity: At the junior varsity level, participation, instruction and the development of individual skills for all student-athletes continues to be emphasized. It is an expectation that at a JV competition, all student-athletes will participate (presuming health, conduct, and academic eligibility). However, team success in interscholastic competition is also valued and emphasized.

Varsity: At the varsity level, coaches have the dual responsibility of fostering individual skill development and achieving team success. To achieve this end, the most effective student-athletes, regardless of grade level, will be given the opportunity to further develop their athletic abilities and to work together to develop a strong desire to attain the highest possible levels of team success.

### **Multiple Sport Participation**

Students are encouraged to participate on as many different sports teams as possible during their school careers. However, for a student to participate on more than one team per season can be extraordinarily difficult, and may not in the best interest of the student or the teams. Athletes wishing to pursue multiple sport participation within the same season require the approval from the head coaches and Athletic Director.

### **Open Gym**

“Open Gym” participation is forbidden during the sports season. No Varsity or Junior Varsity athlete who is on an in-season roster for a PIAA team will be permitted to participate in “open gym” activities until the PIAA season and postseason is complete. Middle School and 9th grade athletes (non Varsity / JV) will be permitted to participate in “open gym” activities when both PIAA coaches, AD, and family agree. Top priority will be placed on the in-season PIAA sports team.

### **"Playing Up"**

There may be a circumstance in which the skill level of a student enrolled at a particular grade level of a sport and the nature of the team/sport/competition warrant the student participating on a team that is offered for students of a higher grade. (For example- a ninth grade wrestler participating at the varsity/JV level-comprised of the 10<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup>, and 12 graders-rather than at the junior high level-made up of 7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> graders.) Program coaches or student-athletes and their parents may initiate the process; however, when an initiative to do so is made, PIAA By-Laws and SCASD athletics department protocol must be followed.

Coaches, parents, the student and administrators must be in agreement that this move is in the best interest of the student and beneficial to the team; final approval rest with the athletic administration. This option is never available to students below the entry grade level at which a particular sport is offered. (For example-an eighth grader is not eligible to participate on the girls' lacrosse team since it is offered for only ninth through twelfth graders.)

### **Injury Management**

Participation in interscholastic athletics comes with inherent risks. Unfortunately, despite attention to, instruction of, and adherence to principles of safe sport play, injuries may occur. Parent and student-athletes must acknowledge this risk.

The SCASD is committed to the belief that proper care of injuries is critical to the students in the athletics program. A National Athletic Trainers Association Certified and



Pennsylvania State Level Licensed Athletic trainer is provided by the school district to furnish care and rehabilitation of athletic injuries. Additional certified Athletic trainers, Penn State University Athletic Training Students assist the head certified trainer. However, given the size of the athletics program, it may be impossible to provide coverage at every scheduled event. The athletic trainer will make every effort to see that your sport receives attention based on the available personnel. Sports judged to be high injury-risk sports will receive primary coverage. In the event a certified Athletic trainer is not present, the coach in charge of the activity will assume responsibility.

If an athlete believes they need evaluation from an athletic trainer, the athlete may communicate this to their coach who will contact the athletic trainer. The athlete may also report this to their parent who can contact the athletic trainer. The athletic trainer can see the athletes during practice and game times and also before, during or after school.

If an injury has occurred during off hours or at an away event, the athletic trainer may still be contacted and will communicate evaluation options (meeting at the school on next practice day, referring to a doctor, referring to the ER).

Parents are advised to always act on the side of caution and may seek medical advice from medical professionals at any time, especially if an injury appears emergent.

### **Insurance Options**

The State College Area School District *does not* provide free accident insurance coverage for its student-athletes. Medical expenses incurred while participating on SCASD interscholastic sports teams or in SCASD intramural activities may be covered through the following options:

- Private insurance plan
- Voluntary SCASD Student Accident Insurance Plan (exception sport – football)  
[www.scasd.org/site/Default.aspx?PageID=682](http://www.scasd.org/site/Default.aspx?PageID=682)
- Pennsylvania's Children Health Insurance Program (CHIP)
- Pennsylvania's Medical Assistance Program (MAP)

### **Return to Play Criteria**

Following a complete physical assessment, the certified athletic trainer(s) may, at his or her discretion and in accordance with approved protocols, return a student-athlete to practice or competition unless the student-athlete is under the current (proximate) care of a licensed physician. When the student-athlete is under the care of a licensed physician, the certified athletic trainer must have written or verbal documentation for consideration of return to play.

Final return to play decisions will be made in cooperation and agreement with the treating licensed physician, certified athletic trainer and in accordance with approved protocols, policies, and procedures. If a student-athlete is not being seen by a licensed physician following an injury, the certified athletic trainer will determine when the student-athlete returns to practice or competition.

### **Rules and Regulations of the Athletic Training Room**

- The Athletic Training Room is a medical facility; act appropriately.
- Use universal precautions to protect yourself and others from infectious diseases.
- Be respectful of the Athletic Trainer's time and efforts to assist you.
- Be courteous and polite to all Athletic Training staff and Athletic Training students; anything less may be grounds for removal from the facility.
- The Athletic Training Room is co-educational facility; dress accordingly.

- Only student-athletes receiving treatment or waiting to see the Athletic Trainers should be in the Athletic Training Room.

### **Quitting a Team**

If a student-athlete wishes to quit a team after the start of the season, they must meet with and inform the head coach in writing.

Understand that any athlete who quits (stops participating or discontinues membership) a team after the season starts (after the first game or match is played) is not permitted to start practicing or begin attending open gym/field sessions with another school team until the entire season is concluded for the first team.

A student-athlete who chooses to no longer participate in a sport shall not be subjected to ridicule or embarrassment.

### **Suspension from a Team**

The Coach of the sport, Athletics Director or Building Administrator, may make suspensions from a team. The coach, athletics director and/or the building principal will confer with one another before such action is taken. Causes for suspension include violations of team, athletics department, and school and district rules and/or policies. (see *Categories of Conduct Violations* chart above)

If a student-athlete is under investigation for dismissal from a team, the coach, Athletics Director, or administrator may invoke a suspension until the investigation is complete as per Due Process procedure.

A student-athlete who is suspended from a team or loses eligibility to participate in a sport shall not be subjected to ridicule or embarrassment.

### **Dismissal from a Team**

Removal of a student-athlete from a team may be made by the coach of the sport, Athletics Director, or Building Administrator for severe or repeated violations of team, department, school or district rules and/or policies. (see *Categories of Conduct Violations* chart above) The coach, Athletic Director and/or administrator will confer with each other before such action is taken.

If a student athlete is under consideration for suspension from a team, he/she has the right to due process.

Any student-athlete dismissed from a team will not be permitted to participate on another school team during that sport's season and is not permitted to start practicing or begin attending open gym/field sessions with another school team until the season is concluded for the first team. School board policy may further restrict a student's participation during that school year.

A student-athlete who is dismissed from a team or loses eligibility to participate in a sport shall not be subjected to ridicule or embarrassment.

### **Due Process**

The following procedure has been developed by the SCASD Athletics Department to provide due process in the event a student is under consideration for suspension or dismissal from a team:

- The Coach, Athletic Director or Administrator will notify the student-athlete and the student-athlete's parent/guardian of the of suspension or dismissal, its proposed date/time of effect, and the infraction that prompted the consideration of this consequence. This notification may take place in person or by a phone call.

- The student-athlete and his/her parent/guardian will then be afforded the opportunity to reply to the charge and present evidence.
- If requested, such conference will be held as soon as possible as mutually agreed upon by the school district official, the student-athlete, and his/her parent/guardian.

Nothing contained in this section denies a student or parent/guardian of his/her right to then appeal to the Building Principal, Assistant Superintendent, Superintendent, school board, or the courts or to be represented by counsel at any stage of the process.

### **Declaration of Ineligibility**

When declared ineligible for competition because of inability to meet PIAA academic or attendance standards, a student-athlete may (with the approval of the Head Coach) attend and participate in practices or team meetings and accompany the team to competitions; however, he/she may not do so in uniform.

When declared ineligible for practice, meeting or competition because of inability to meet the SCASD daily attendance requirement or conduct codes, a student-athlete may not participate in practices or team meetings, nor may he/she accompany the team to any competition (home or away events and scrimmages). See *Categories of Conduct Violations* charts above.

### **Athletic Awards**

The coaching staff of the individual sport determines the “S” award criteria. These criteria may include, but are not limited to, playing time, points scored, dedication, co-operation, loyalty, leadership, a sense of fair play, and years of service. Certificates of recognition are awarded for each sport and sport level; however, only one chenille is awarded to a student-athlete at the middle school/junior high, junior varsity and varsity levels, regardless of the number of sports in which a letter is earned.

Students dismissed from the team for disciplinary reasons or who elect to leave the squad prior to the completion of the season forfeit their eligibility for awards.

### **COACH / ATHLETE / PARENT RELATIONS:**

An effective working relationship among the Coach, Student-Athlete and Parent benefits the quality of each person's experience and contributes significantly to the success of the entire team. Establishing this relationship requires that each of the three individuals understands his/her role in the process and communicates openly and honestly with the other persons.

To open the communication channels, the coaching staff will hold a pre-season orientation meeting at which time the following topics may be addressed:

- Introduction and related background experiences of the coaching staff
- General plans for the upcoming season
- PIAA, District, school, department and team philosophies, procedures, rules and expectations as covered in the Student-Athlete's Handbook and team handouts
- Locations and times of practices and competitions
- Helpful tips on how parents/guardians can best support their child during the season
- How best to reach the Coach (by phone or email) and a confirmation of how best to reach each parent/guardian.

Student-Athletes and their parents are responsible for asking questions to clarify their understanding of any topics discussed at the meeting or published in any other material (such as the "Student-Athlete / Parent Handbook"). Student-athletes and parents are also responsible for confirming mailing addresses, phone numbers, email addresses and must inform coaches of any anticipated conflicts in the proposed practice/competition schedule.

### **Communication**

In a time of question concerning an appropriate topic, the following procedures are to be followed in the attempt to resolve the problem:

- Avoid telephone and email discussions if possible. Speak face-to-face (at an appropriate time; see below) with the other individual(s) so that the most complete communication takes place.
- The first level of contact should always be between the student-athlete and coach, however this contact should be made at a time other than during a practice or competition. Speaking privately with the coach or in a place away from other team members is preferred.
- If the problem is not resolved at this primary-level meeting, a conference which includes the coach, student-athlete and parent/guardian may take place. However, none of these persons should be confronted immediately before or after a practice/competition to discuss the matter.
- Always call or email to set up an appointment. If the coach can not be reached in this manner, the parent/guardian should contact the athletic office in order to obtain assistance in reaching the coach.
- If a resolution still is not gained after this conference, contact the Athletic Director in for input as to how to proceed. The Athletic Director will give due process and consideration to all of the involved parties while attempting to bring the matter to a reasonable conclusion. SCASCD Policy #906 ("Public Complaints") may be initiated at this point if dissatisfaction with the Athletic Director's ruling occurs.

### **Order of Communication**

1. Player meets with position coach and/or head coach
2. Player meets with Athletic Director / Assistant Athletic Director
3. Parent/Guardian meets with position and/or head coach
4. Parent/Guardian meets with Athletic Director / Assistant Athletic Director
5. Communication with the Building Principal
6. Communication with the Assistant Superintendent
7. Communication with the Superintendent

### **Parent - Coach Meetings**

It is anticipated that communication between any of the parties can easily and respectfully be conducted throughout the season. However, the most critical time for the working relationship to be employed is when a concern or conflict arises about an expectation or comprehension of a policy/procedure. The meeting time should be scheduled ahead of time and must not interfere with game, practice, or meeting times.

Topics that are **ACCEPTABLE** as appropriate for discussion are:

1. The student-athlete's school attendance or academic performance

2. The student-athlete's behavior in school, with the team, or in the general public as it pertains to the team's reputation
3. The student-athlete's role on the team
4. The application of PIAA, District, department and team philosophies, procedures, rules and expectations for SCASD student-athletes
5. Suggestions to improve a student-athlete's skill acquisition, knowledge and attitudes relevant to the sport
6. Information about recruiting and recommendations about a student-athlete's suitability for play at collegiate levels
7. Management of injuries incurred by the student-athlete

However, there are also topics which are not appropriate for discussion. These include certain prerogatives for which the coach alone has jurisdiction with the bounds of school district philosophies, regulations and policies.

Topics that are **NOT ACCEPTABLE** as appropriate for discussion are:

1. Other player's roles on the team
2. Selection, placement and determination of playing time
3. Establishment and enforcement for all guidelines and training rules related to the activity
4. Appointment of practice times, dates and procedures
5. Preparation and execution of all travel arrangements for the team
6. Creation and implementation of competition strategies
7. Management or determination of all awards

### **Permissible Practice Visitation**

It is the understanding that athletics is an extension of the classroom. Thus, the head coach has the ultimate discretion determining whether or not parents, guardians, family, friends or other may attend or be present at practices. Player, coach and spectator safety will play an important role in the decision.

The following conditions shall be observed for all parents, guardians, family, friends or other at team practices when a coach agrees to allow practice visitation:

- During the visit, all visitors must remain in the spectator seating area if available
- If no spectator seating area is available, visitors must remain outside of the gym/room/field or within a coach designated area
- There will be no contact, either verbal or nonverbal, with any of the coaches, support staff, other personnel, and/or athletes during practice (see above communication protocol for clarification)
- There will be no coaching of athletes directly or indirectly
- There will be no photos, video or audio recording of players or practices
- Cell phones should be on silent and any necessary phone conversations would need to occur outside of the practice gym/room/field
- The coach may terminate a visit at any time if it is determined that the visit is disruptive to the coaches, support staff, other personnel, and/or athletes
- For reasons of safety and the smooth operation of the team practice, those who are within an unauthorized visiting area without permission and/or those who have been denied permission to visit a practice will be considered to be trespassing. Trespassers may be prosecuted.

NOTE: Invited guests or requests from media, visiting coaches, alumni, or other outside entities will be granted on a case by case basis by the head coach.

### **Spectator Game/Event Attendance:**

- During games/events, all spectators must remain in the spectator seating area where available
- If no spectator seating area is available, spectators must remain outside of the field of play or within a coach designated area
- For reasons of safety and the smooth operation of games/events, those who are within an unauthorized spectator area without permission will be considered to be trespassing and may be subject to removal from the game/event and possibly prosecution.

## **THE COLLEGE RECRUITING PROCESS**

The coach, school counselor and the Athletic Director should be your primary sources of information and guidance regarding the collegiate recruiting process. They are willing to communicate with parents and student-athletes about their interest in becoming a college student-athlete, collegiate eligibility standards and collegiate sport particulars.

To supplement the assistance of these professionals, the SCASD athletic department and the SCASD department of student services has cooperated to make an independent educational service available to student-athletes and their parents. This program is designed to help student-athletes and their parents make informed decisions about the college recruiting process. Videos and handbooks from Dynamite Sports, Inc. are available in both the secondary school guidance offices and the athletic office. These resources provide Division I, II and III scholarship information, as well as discussion of the “walk-on” option. Additionally, *Dynamite Sports, Inc.* provides a website and an online question and answer service which allows families to contact *Dynamite Sports* directly with questions about the NCAA or recruiting.

Please be aware that collegiate recruiting personnel frequently contact coaches and the athletic office seeking information about SCASD student-athletes. In compliance with FERPA (Federal Educational Rights and Privacy Act), directory information about a student (name, address, phone number, honors and awards) may be disclosed to college recruiters as requested. If any student-athlete or his/her parent/guardian does not wish to have this information made available to recruiters, a request to that effect should be made in writing. This request should be filed with the SCASD athletic office prior to the first official day of practice for the team.

***The SCASD administration congratulates all students who make the choice to participate in interscholastic athletics and wishes all students a great experience!***

***We hope you have an enjoyable time filled with great memories and friendships highlighted by great school spirit as we support all athletes, teams and school activities.***

## APPENDIX I:

### **Parent / Spectator Code of Conduct:**

Parents/Guardians are to be responsible for their words and actions while attending a school athletic program sporting events. The parents or legal guardians of student athletes shall be required to follow the Code of Conduct set forth as follows:

1. will demonstrate positive behavior and not engage in unsportsmanlike conduct with any coach, parent, participant, official or any other attendee
2. will be supportive of our coaches and programs and not engage in any conversation or action that is detrimental to the team culture or counterproductive to district and/or team initiatives and goals
3. will be positive with others and not encourage my child, or any other person, any behavior which would endanger the health, safety or well-being of others nor to engage in unsportsmanlike conduct with any coach, parent, player, participants, official or any other attendee
4. will use appropriate language and not engage in the use of profanity nor encourage my child, or any other person to engage in the use of profanity
5. will treat any coach, parent, player, participant, official or any other attendee with respect at all times regardless of sex, creed, color, national origin, sexual orientation or ability
6. will have positive interactions with others and not engage in verbal or physical threats or abuse aimed at any coach, parent, player, participant, official or any other attendee
7. will allow the coaches to coach and the players to play and will not shout instructions, coach or direct players on the field from the stands nor the sidelines
8. will allow the officials to officiate and not address the officials from the sidelines in any manner.

It is important to understand that any violation of this code of conduct could result in being banned from attending any SCADS Athletic Program sporting event or banned from SCASD properties.