

# **Hamilton Community Schools**



**Student-Athlete  
&  
Parent  
Handbook**

**#EachWillThrive**

Hamilton Community Schools athletes and their parents/guardians are urged to read this handbook. If you have any questions, please contact the Athletic Department.

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Check the Hamilton Community Schools athletics website for current athletic schedules.

<https://hamiltonathletics.bigteams.com/>

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# I. MISSION STATEMENT AND PHILOSOPHY

## A. Mission Statement

1. The role of athletics in the Hamilton Community Schools is to provide an educational experience in the framework of competitive athletics. By focusing on educational outcomes and student learning, athletics provides for physical, emotional, social and intellectual growth.

## B. Educational Outcomes of Participation in Athletics

### 1. Physical Growth

- a) Achieving personal fitness
- b) Learning to deal with stress
- c) Learning fundamental skills of the sport
- d) Learning good health habits

### 2. Emotional Growth

- a) Gaining self-confidence, self-worth, and self-discipline
- b) Learning to accept criticism and accept responsibility for your actions
- c) Learning to accept success and failure
- d) Learning leadership qualities
- e) Developing a strong work ethic and mental toughness

### 3. Social Growth

- a) Developing interpersonal relationship skills
- b) Developing loyalty to a group
- c) Learning to win/lose graciously
- d) Learning to work in a group -teamwork
- e) Learning sportsmanship -fair play
- f) Learning respect for teammates, opponents, coaches, and officials
- g) Representing yourself, your team, and your school in a positive manner

### 4. Intellectual Growth

- a) Learning a sense of pride in achievement
- b) Learning commitment to a goal
- c) Learning time management skills
- d) Hamilton Community Schools Athletic Philosophy

## C. Hamilton Community Schools Athletics Philosophy

1. Athletics are a part of the educational process of Hamilton Community Schools and an extension of the classroom, serving as an arena for learning. We strive to have each student-athlete enjoy a positive experience and learn the many life lessons that participation in athletics teaches, while developing competitive teams. Within this framework, the participation of all student-athletes is encouraged, without compromising that competitive nature.

## D. Middle School Philosophy

1. The purpose of middle school athletic programs is to provide opportunities and encourage students to participate in a variety of activities and prepare individuals for the high school level. Skill development, teamwork and love for sports are the fundamental objectives. At the middle school level, we believe that participation in an athletic event is more important than the outcome of the

contest; therefore, every effort will be made to play all eligible athletes in every event as long as the athlete has earned the right to participate in contests. Playing time will not be equal and will be left to the discretion of the coach.

#### **E. Freshman Philosophy**

1. Freshman athletic programs strive to provide a positive learning experience for all players while building a successful team concept and fundamental skills. Athletes at this level will learn in both practice and in games the value of hard work, improved skill development, sacrifice and teamwork as they prepare for the challenges at the JV and varsity levels. While winning is always a goal, improvement is the focus at the freshman level. Playing time will not be equal and while it is our desire that every athlete participate in a contest, there may be some circumstances where an athlete will not be in the contest.

#### **F. Junior Varsity Philosophy**

1. Junior Varsity athletic programs are structured to prepare players for future participation in varsity level sports. While continuing to build individual skills and team loyalty, players are also prepared to be competitive with opposing teams. Participation in contests is determined by the player's ability to contribute to the success of the team.

#### **G. Varsity Philosophy**

1. The educational value of interscholastic competition is measured in many ways, one of which is winning. Varsity athletic programs aim to be as competitive as possible while developing capable and mature athletes. Every player has a defined role and is a contributor to the success of the team. Participation in contests, however, is determined by the player's ability to assist the team in winning the contest.

#### **H. Core Beliefs of Hamilton Athletics**

1. Athletic participation is a privilege, not a right.
2. Participation is for those who potentially have the skills, attitudes, and willingness to work hard to improve in their respective sports. The best players, regardless of age, should play on the varsity team.
3. All middle school students should be encouraged to be a member of a team and participate in many different sports throughout the year.
4. Athletes are students first. Coaches are teachers first.
5. The coaching staff, athletes, administration, parents, and fans should always act in a manner that would enhance the positive image of the school and community. (Exhibit great sportsmanship).
6. Athletes should be encouraged to participate in more than one sport throughout the year. Specialization at the middle or high school level is not necessary or beneficial in the long run.
7. Playing time in scheduled contests has to be earned! Work ethic, ability, academic standing, and behavior are all vital factors.
8. The needs of the team must come before the needs of the individual.
9. Athletic participation is intended to benefit all athletes by teaching fundamentals, strategies, and behavior that will enable our teams and athletes to be successful.
10. High school participation is not intended to be an avenue for college scholarships or professional contracts. If those opportunities become available, the coaches and school will assist however possible.

## II. GENERAL INFORMATION

### A. Michigan High School Athletic Association (MHSAA)

1. The Athletic Department at Hamilton Community Schools will abide by all rules and regulations of the MHSAA including those dealing with eligibility, number of allowed contests, use of registered officials, etc.

### B. Hamilton Athletic Programs

#### 1. Fall Sports and Teams

- a) Volleyball - varsity, junior varsity, freshman, 8th, 7th
- b) Football –varsity, junior varsity, freshman, 8th, 7th
- c) Cross Country –varsity, middle school (6th-8th)
- d) Girls Golf –varsity , junior varsity
- e) Boys Tennis –varsity, junior varsity, middle school (6th-8th)
- f) Sideline Cheer –varsity, junior varsity, middle school
- g) Boys Soccer –varsity, junior varsity, 8th, 7th
- h) Girls Swimming/Diving –varsity
- i) Equestrian – club

#### 2. Winter Sports and Teams

- a) Boys Basketball –varsity, junior varsity, freshman, 8th, 7th
- b) Girls Basketball - varsity, junior varsity, freshman, 8th, 7th
- c) Wrestling –varsity, junior varsity, middle school (6th-8th)
- d) Competitive Cheer–varsity, middle school
- e) Swimming/Diving –boys varsity, boys and girls middle school (6th-8th)

#### 3. Spring Sports and Teams

- a) Baseball –varsity, junior varsity, freshman
- b) Softball –varsity, junior varsity
- c) Boys Track & Field –varsity, middle school (6th-8th)
- d) Girls Track & Field –varsity, middle school (6th-8th)
- e) Boys Golf –varsity, junior varsity
- f) Girls Tennis –varsity, junior varsity, middle school (6th-8th)
- g) Girls Soccer –varsity, junior varsity, 8th, 7th

### C. Adding New Sports

1. Additional sports may be added to the sports offerings at Hamilton High/Middle School as the need develops. In order to have a new sport added, there must be sufficient interest from the student body, there must be coaches available, there must be the ability to build a suitable schedule, there must be finances available to fund the new program without damaging existing programs and there must be adequate facilities available.

### D. Conference Affiliation

1. Hamilton High School is a member of the Black Division of the OK Conference. There are six divisions within the OK Conference and 41 member schools. Members of the OK Black are:

- (1) The OK Black Division
- (a) Hamilton

- (b) Holland Christian
- (c) Holland
- (d) Hudsonville Unity Christian
- (e) Spring Lake
- (f) Zeeland East
- (g) Zeeland West

#### **E. Varsity State (MHSAA) Tournaments**

1. The MHSAA divides member schools into classes or divisions based on enrollment for state tournaments for varsity teams.
2. The total number of member schools divided by four determines the class. The largest 25% of schools by enrollment will be class A. The next 25% will be class B, and so on. (Hamilton is Class B)
3. Division is determined by the total number of schools participating in that sport and divided by the number of divisions of competition. (8 for football, 4 for wrestling, 4 for track, etc.) The largest schools by enrollment will be division one and on down depending upon the number of divisions for that sport.

#### **F. NCAA Clearinghouse**

1. Students who feel that they have the potential to compete at an NCAA Division I or Division II school must have both their academic and amateurism status certified by the NCAA Initial Eligibility Clearinghouse. The Clearinghouse is an organization that works with the NCAA to determine a student's eligibility for athletic participation in his or her first year of college. Students who want to participate in college sports during their first year of enrollment at a Division I or II college or university must register with the clearinghouse. Registration should take place at the beginning of the junior year. More information can be found at [www.ncaaclearinghouse.net](http://www.ncaaclearinghouse.net) or in the high school counseling office.

## **III. ELIGIBILITY**

#### **A. MHSAA Eligibility**

1. Age –High school students become ineligible if they reach their nineteenth birthday before September 1 of the current school year. (fourteen for 7th grade and fifteen for 8th grade)
2. Enrollment –Students must be enrolled in school prior to the fourth Friday after Labor Day (1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> trimester) or the fourth Friday in February (2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> trimester). A student must be enrolled in the school for which he or she competes.
3. Trimesters of enrollment –Students cannot be eligible in high school for more than 12 trimesters, and the 10th, 11th, and 12th trimesters must be consecutive.
4. Academic Record –Students must have passed at least the equivalent of 66% (4 of 6 classes) of full credit load in the previous trimester of enrollment, and must be currently passing 83% (5 of 6 classes) of full credit load in current trimester.
5. Transfer Students—A student in grades 9-12 who transfers to another high school is not eligible to participate in an interscholastic contest for a full school year unless the student qualifies for immediate eligibility under one or more of 15 published exceptions. Students and parents anticipating a change of schools should first seek advice from their high school administration.

6. **Undue Influence**—The use of undue influence by any person directly or indirectly associated with a school to secure or encourage the attendance of a student for athletic purposes, shall cause the student to become ineligible for a minimum of one school year.
7. **Limited Team Membership**—After practicing with or participating with high school teams, students cannot participate in any athletic competition not sponsored by his or her school in the same sport in the same season. Exceptions include all individual sports, which apply the rule from the point of a student's first participation in a contest or scrimmage, rather than practice. Students in individual sports may participate in a maximum of two non-school individual meets or contests during the season while not representing their school.
8. **All-Star Competition**—Students shall not compete at any time in any sport under MHSAA jurisdiction in all star contests or national championships, regardless of the method of selection. Participation in such a contest shall cause the student to become ineligible for a maximum period of one year of school enrollment.
9. **Awards and Amateurism**—Students cannot receive money or other valuable consideration for participating in MHSAA-sponsored sports or officiating in interscholastic athletic contests, except as allowed by the MHSAA Handbook. Students may accept, for participating in MHSAA-sponsored sports, a symbolic or merchandise award, which does not have a value over \$40.
10. **Physical Examination**—Students must have on file, in the school's office, a physician's statement for the current school year (on or after April 15), certifying that he/she is physically able to compete in athletic practices and contests.

**B. Hamilton Middle/High School Requirements Before Participating**

1. All students must do or complete the following requirements in order to participate in an in-season practice or contest:
2. **Athletic Physical** - All students must have completed and turned in to the Athletic Department Office a completely filled out Athletic Physical Form dated after April 15 of the year that school starts in the fall. A completely filled out form includes:
  - a) family information –student's name, address, birth date, etc.
  - b) participation consent –athlete and parent's signatures
  - c) physical card –doctor's assessment of athlete's health and appropriate signature
  - d) emergency information –contact information and treatment consent authorization
3. **Athletic permission/handbook acknowledgement/emergency information form** on file, signed by the athlete and his/her parent or guardian
4. **Payment for participation fee** (Fee may be waived for Free/Reduced Lunch recipients).
5. **Transfer Students** –All transfer students from another high school must meet with the athletic director and verify eligibility before he/she can become a member of a team.

**C. High School Academic Eligibility**

1. **Trimester Requirements** – If, at the end of a trimester, an athlete is not passing 4 classes (66%), that athlete will be ineligible for 60 school days.
2. **Weekly Trimester Grade Checks** – The grades of all athletes will be checked on Friday each week. Any student who is failing in more than one subject will be declared ineligible for participation. One failing grade is allowed only if the athlete's overall average is not lower than a D and he/she is passing 4 classes.
  - a) Grades are checked on Friday for the following week's eligibility.
  - b) Students who become academically ineligible will not be permitted to participate in contests for a period of one week.

- c) The one week will always begin on a Monday and end on Sunday.
- d) The athlete's grades will be checked again on the Friday during the one week ineligibility period. If the grades are satisfactory the student will regain their eligibility for the following week. If the athlete's grades are not satisfactory at the one-week check, they will be checked every successive week until eligibility is regained.
- e) During the time of ineligibility, the athlete must attend every practice session, attend every game, and ride to the contest on the school provided transportation.
- f) Athletes who do not abide by this policy will have their suspension lengthened by an additional week.

3. Coaches of individual programs may implement higher academic standards for their athletes with the approval of the athletic director. Additional policies will be in writing and presented at the preseason meeting.

#### **D. Middle School Academic Eligibility**

- 1. Semester Requirements - If, at the end of a semester, an athlete is not passing 4 classes (66%), that athlete will be ineligible for 60 school days.
- 2. Weekly Marking Period Grade Checks - The grades of all athletes will be checked on Friday each week. Any student who is failing in more than one subject will be declared ineligible for participation. One failing grade is allowed only if the athlete's overall average is not lower than a D and he/she is passing 4 classes.
  - a) Grades are checked on Friday for the following week's eligibility.
  - b) Students who become academically ineligible will not be permitted to participate in contests for a period of one week.
  - c) The one week will always begin on a Monday and end on Sunday.
  - d) The athlete's grades will be checked again on the Friday during the one week ineligibility period. If the grades are satisfactory the student will regain their eligibility for the following week. If the athlete's grades are not satisfactory at the one-week check, they will be checked every successive week until eligibility is regained.
  - e) During the time of ineligibility, the athlete must attend every practice session, attend every game, and ride to the contest on the school provided transportation.
  - f) Athletes who do not abide by this policy will have their suspension lengthened by an additional week.

3. Coaches of individual programs may implement higher academic standards for their athletes with the approval of the athletic director. Additional policies will be in writing and presented at the preseason meeting.

## **IV. CODE OF CONDUCT**

Representing Hamilton Community Schools in interscholastic athletic competition is regarded as a privilege and not a right granted with school membership. Students who participate in interscholastic athletics while attending Hamilton Community Schools are expected to represent the highest ideals of character by exemplifying good conduct, good sportsmanship, good citizenship, and good training, which includes abstaining from the use of tobacco, alcohol and drugs. Separate and apart from a student's performance as an athlete, the student's conduct, sportsmanship, citizenship and training reflect at all times on the student athlete, his or her team, our school, and our community. Since the conduct of athletes is closely observed in many areas of life, a very important responsibility of the student-athlete is to act in a mature, respectful, and responsible manner **AT ALL TIMES**.

## **A. Behavior Expectations**

1. On the field of competition, the athlete's behavior must always be beyond reproach, always showing respect for the opponent, the officials and their teammates.
2. In the classroom, the good athlete is also a good student. Student-athletes at Hamilton are expected to put forth their best effort in the classroom as well as on the practice field. Classroom behavior and performance are important responsibilities for all students, including athletes.
3. The way athletes look and act at school and in the community is of great importance. Athletes should be leaders and fellow students must be able to respect and follow them.
4. The use of vulgar or profane language is unacceptable anywhere and at any time.
5. The student-athlete must demonstrate respect and take pride in the equipment and facilities by helping to properly maintain and care for school property.
6. The student-athlete is also expected to abide by all the rules and regulations set forth in the Middle/High School Student Handbooks and by the Michigan High School Athletic Association.
7. Finally, the athlete is expected to put forth physically and intellectually his/her best effort to win. In this endeavor to win however, the athlete must realize that it is honorable to lose and must learn from and accept defeat. The athlete must always adhere to the rules of the game; fair play should always supersede his/her desire to win. The student-athlete must realize that he/she represents not only him/herself but also the coaches, teachers, parents, community, and the school.

## **B. Application of the Athletic Code**

When a student voluntarily participates in interscholastic athletics, he/she agrees to abide by the Hamilton Community Schools Athletic Code throughout his/her athletic career beginning in middle school and going through high school. A student may neither attend tryouts nor practice with a team until he/she has submitted a signed acknowledgment form agreeing to abide by the Athletic Code. This Athletic Code applies to members of any athletic team, team managers, and student athletic trainers.

1. **Calendar Application of the Athletic Code**
  - a) Students shall be regarded to be under the rules of the Athletic Code beginning with their first day of participation in interscholastic athletics (whether middle school or high school) and continuing through to their date of graduation or the last date of participation, whichever is later.
2. **Time/Place Application of the Athletic Code**
  - a) All provisions of the Athletic Code are in effect 24 hours per day, seven days per week and 52 weeks per year. This includes vacations, breaks, summer recess, and off-season times. The participant is always under the Athletic Code from the beginning to the end of their athletic career. This means from middle school through high school.

## **C. Standards of Conduct**

The following behaviors constitute a violation of the Hamilton Community Schools Athletic Code and subject the athlete to discipline as outlined in the "Penalties" section of the Athletic Code.

1. **Group I Violations:** Conduct unbecoming an athlete (minor infraction)
  - a) Excessive classroom misconduct
  - b) Disrespect for authority
  - c) Petty theft
  - d) Fighting
  - e) Excessive profanity
  - f) Inappropriate gestures

- g) Academic fraud (cheating)
- h) Misuse of school equipment/facilities
- i) This is not an all inclusive list and the administration has the discretion to decide whether alleged infractions fall into this category. It is also understood that steps may be skipped for multiple infractions of the same kind or multiple infractions of different kinds at the same time. Example: Stealing for a second time could progress to the penalty as a third offense for not having learned the lesson of theft the first time.

2. **Group II Violations:** Conduct unbefitting an athlete (major infraction)

- a) Any activity that is unlawful including felony or misdemeanor acts other than minor traffic offenses. Conviction of said act is not necessary to establish a violation of the athletic code. The district's investigation and determination of violations of the athletic code are independent of any legal proceedings involving the athlete. Examples would be:
  - (1) Theft
  - (2) Malicious destruction of property
  - (3) Assault (fighting causing injury to others)
  - (4) Vandalism
- b) Hazing: Hazing is defined as any activity that recklessly or intentionally endangers the mental health, physical health or safety of a student for the purpose of initiation or membership in or affiliation with any athletic team. Any hazing activity, whether by an individual or a group, shall be presumed to be a forced activity, even if a student willingly participates.
- c) Harassment: Harassment in any form will not be tolerated. The term harassment includes but is not limited to slurs, jokes, or other verbal, graphic or physical conduct relating to an individual's race, religion, ancestry, sex, national origin, age or handicap/disability.
- d) This is not an all inclusive list and the administration has the discretion to decide whether alleged infractions fall into this category.

3. **Group III Violations:** Tobacco, alcohol, vaping and drug use/possession

- a) Use or possession of tobacco or tobacco products
- b) Use or possession of alcohol or alcoholic products
- c) Use or possession of illegal drugs or look-a-like substances
- d) Use or possession of any prohibited substances or paraphernalia
- e) Use of any drug, steroid, medication or food supplement solely for performance enhancing purposes
- f) Use of any drug, medication or food supplement in a way not prescribed by the manufacturer or a physician.
- g) Use, possession or sale of drug paraphernalia
- h) Inappropriate posting of images: Images found on internet web sites of student-athletes behaving inappropriately will be considered a violation of the athletic code. Such behaviors may include pictures of students holding alcoholic containers, tobacco products, illegal drugs or drug paraphernalia, or doing or simulating other inappropriate acts. Arguments such as "the container was empty", etc. will not be a case of defense.
- i) This is not an all inclusive list and the administration has the discretion to decide whether alleged infractions fall into this category.

**D. Penalties for Athletic Code Violations**

1. **Group I Penalties**

- a) First offense: 5% of regular season contest dates suspension

- b) Second offense: 10% of regular season contest dates suspension
  - c) Third offense: 25% of regular season contest dates suspension
- 2. **Group II Penalties**
  - a) First offense: 25% of regular season contest dates suspension
  - b) Second offense: 50% of regular season contest dates suspension
  - c) Third offense: Suspension from all athletics for the remainder of the student's high school career
- 3. **Group III Penalties**
  - a) First offense: 1/3 of regular season contest dates suspension
  - b) Second offense: 2/3 of regular season contest dates suspension
  - c) Third offense: Suspension from all athletics for the remainder of the student's high school career.
- 4. **NOTE:** Any combination of 3 offenses from group II and III will result in suspension from all athletics for the remainder of the student's high school career. Let it also be known that depending on the severity or reoccurrence of each type of infraction, penalties are subject to the discretion of the athletic director and high school principal. Repeat offenses of the same nature may be treated differently than violations for different types of infractions.
- 5. **General Provisions**
  - a) In the event that the Athletic Code or other school policies or procedures do not cover situations that arise, the administration reserves the right to establish such rules, conditions, and penalties to respond effectively to unanticipated or unique circumstances.
  - b) The above are minimum standards set for all sports, but a coach for any given sport may adopt more stringent regulations, (this would be in writing and given out at the preseason meeting). This code also shall not restrict the authority of a coach to set guidelines or take disciplinary action for conduct other than that mentioned above.
  - c) No penalties shall run concurrently. Example: if an athlete has gotten a second group II violation before serving his/her first violation, the suspension would be for 75% of the season. (25% for the first violation plus 50% for the second violation)
  - d) Athletic Code violations will accumulate throughout the athlete's career and will carry over from middle school to high school.
  - e) Athletes who incur the first or second violation will not be allowed to participate in contests. The athlete must attend every practice session, attend every game (not in uniform), and ride to the contests on the school provided transportation. Any athlete who does not abide by this policy will have his/her suspension lengthened proportionally to the abuse of the policy.
  - f) The athlete must finish the season in good standing in order to have fulfilled their disciplinary obligation
  - g) If a penalty is not completed during a given sports season, the remaining percent not served, will be carried over to the next sport in which the athlete participates.
  - h) Fractional suspensions of less than one-half (.5) game will be dropped and fractional suspensions of one half (.5) or more game will be rounded off to one additional game of suspension. Exception: A group I first offense in football will be a 1/2 game suspension
  - i) Athletes who seek help regarding chemical dependency problems shall not be subject to disciplinary action provided that there exists no violation at the time the student seeks help and, in the opinion of the athletic director or principal, the spirit of the policy has not been violated. This self-disclosure exemption is available to an athlete only once during his/her athletic career.

## **E. Reporting Violations**

The administration will investigate on the basis of rumor or physical evidence that a violation has occurred when it involves school property or school functions. However, the administration will investigate alleged violations of the athletic code that do not involve school property or a school function only if a witness or law enforcement official will testify or provable evidence is presented.

1. Written or verbal report to the athletic director or a principal by a non-student adult.
2. The athletic director and/or principal shall notify the athlete of the reported violation and penalty within five school days after the violation report.
3. The athletic director and/or principal will notify parents by phone and/or in writing of the reported charge of the athlete's violation and subsequent penalty within five school days after the violation report.
4. Coaches of the athlete involved shall be notified by the athletic director and/or principal.

## **F. Board of Athletic Review**

The Board of Athletic Review shall be composed of the following five members: the athletic director, an administrator other than the athletic director, faculty representative of the athletic council, two coaches selected by the athletic director. The functions of the Board is to review athletic policies and make recommendations to the athletic council and hear appeals at level 1.

## **G. Student Appeals Procedure**

1. If the athlete desires to appeal the charge, he/she must follow the following steps in the order given.
2. Level 1 – The athlete shall inform the athletic director of his/her desire to appeal the charge within five school days after notification of the charge.
  - a) The athletic director will then arrange a hearing for the athlete before the Board of Athletic Review, at which time the athlete will state his/her case.
  - b) The athlete may have such persons in attendance as he/she deems necessary.
  - c) The person reporting the violation must attend the meeting if requested.
  - d) The athletic director will inform the athlete of the disposition of his/her appeal.
  - e) The athletic director will inform the parents or guardians of the disposition of the case by telephone, if possible, and by letter or email.
3. Level 2 - If the athlete desires to appeal the decision of the Board of Athletic Review in Level 1, he/she shall inform the athletic director within two school days. The building principal will hear the appeal and that principal will make a decision and make the necessary notifications as outlined in level 1.
4. Level 3 –If the athlete desires to appeal the decision of the building principal in Level 2, he/she shall inform the building principal within two school days. The appeal will be heard by the superintendent of schools and the superintendent will make a decision and make the necessary notifications as outlined in Level 1.
5. Level 4 – If the athlete desires to appeal the decision of the school superintendent in Level 3, he/she shall inform the school superintendent within two school days. The Hamilton School Board will hear the appeal and the Board will make a decision and make the necessary notifications as outlined in Level 1.

## **V. STUDENT- ATHLETE RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **A. School Attendance**

1. An athlete must be in attendance at school all day in order to participate in that day's practice or contest. All day means the athlete must attend all of their scheduled classes. Exceptions granted by the principal, athletic director or designee.
2. The athletic office must have prior notice in order for the athlete to be excused from the all day attendance requirement for practice and competition. Athletes are requested to bring a doctor's note back to school with them if they have scheduled doctor's appointments. The athletic director will make the decision for absences due to "unexpected situations" out of the athlete's control.
3. An athlete who is on suspension from regular school attendance (ISS or OSS) all day or for any part of the day may NOT practice or take part in interscholastic competition on the day(s) in which he/she is suspended.

### **B. Game/Practice Attendance**

1. In-season attendance is mandatory! If an athlete is going to be absent, he/she must talk with the coach directly. Coaches decide if absences are excused or unexcused and consequences for missed practices (coaches policies will be given out at preseason meetings).
2. Snow day practices/contest: No athletic practices will be allowed before 12:00 PM. The building principal will make a decision as to whether weather conditions would allow practices or contests to take place later in the day. If a student and/or parent consider the weather or driving conditions to be unsafe, no consequences will be incurred for missing a practice. Coaches are responsible for contacting their athletes to inform them of the cancellation and for providing information about rescheduled events.
3. Holiday practices during the season are mandatory unless there are family commitments or extenuating circumstances. If you are unable to attend practice, contact your coach. All pre-arranged absences need coach approval in advance.
4. Out-of-season activities (when school is in session): Scheduled activities by coaches are optional but athletes are encouraged to attend, when able, to assist in their individual development. In-season athletes must receive permission from parents and in-season coaches to participate in out-of-season activities in another sport.
5. Summer Activities for all sports are optional. Athletes are encouraged to attend to assist in their individual development. Coaches will meet to try to coordinate activities to assist multi-sport athletes.

### **C. Training and Conditioning**

It is the athlete's responsibility to be in the best physical and mental condition when participating as a member of an athletic team. While a team member, the athlete will:

1. Get a reasonable amount of rest
2. Exhibit healthful and nutritional eating habits
3. Refrain from the use of all forms of tobacco and alcohol or controlled substances that would be harmful to his/her physical and/or intellectual performance

**D. Personal Appearance**

Exemplary personal appearance is considered important and is to be encouraged. Individual coaches may establish a consistent or uniform dress policy for game days.

**E. Travel**

Team members and coaches must travel to away contests on authorized school approved transportation if transportation is provided. See the transportation policy for additional details.

**F. Sportsmanship**

The athlete must exhibit good sportsmanship both on and off the field. He/she is to show respect for all other people he/she may come in contact with including teammates, coaches, teachers, officials, opponents, fans, etc.

**G. Equipment**

It is the athlete's responsibility to properly maintain, clean and secure all equipment issued to him/her and return all issued equipment at the conclusion of the season. Athletes will pay the replacement cost for equipment that is not returned or carelessly damaged. All uniforms and equipment must be returned or reimbursement made before an athlete may begin participation in another sport.

**H. Limited Team Membership**

MHSAA Policy (Regulation I, Section 12) prohibits in-season athletes from participating in any other athletic competition outside of school in the same sport during the same season, (failure to comply will result in loss of eligibility). Participation in any other athletic activity during the season needs the permission of your coach.

**I. Team Membership**

The administration and coaches want to provide as many students as possible the opportunity to participate on a team. However, limiting team sizes is necessary at times and cuts will have to be made. Each head coach will explain to the athletes the criteria for gaining membership to the team before practice begins and give them ample time to display their talents. The coach will individually notify students if they are not selected. Those students not making the team may request a personal interview with the coach and/or the athletic director. Once teams have been chosen or begun practice, transfer students or late additions may be approved to join the team at the discretion of the coach(es) of that program and the athletic director.

**J. Coaching Regulations**

Individual coaches may institute other regulations for their particular sport that are not contained herein. Additional policies will be in writing and presented at the preseason meeting.

## **VI. MISCELLANEOUS RULES**

**A. Dual Sport Policy**

High School athletes may participate in 2 sports during the same season provided the dual sport policy provided below is followed:

1. Both sport coaches, the student-athlete, the athletic director and the parent(s)/legal guardian of the student –athlete must be fully supportive of the request. Before being allowed to participate in the two sports all of the above must meet and sign the dual sport agreement.
2. The athlete will declare a primary sport and a secondary sport.

3. The athlete may NEVER miss the primary sport. This means for practices and contests. \*In the event that it would be possible for an athlete to participate in both sports on the same day, the athlete must obtain approval from both coaches.
4. On days that an athlete is not in competition, he/she should make an effort to practice both sports. If only one sport can be practiced, it should be the primary sport.
5. All eligibility rules, plus rules specific to both sport teams, are to be followed.

**B. Dropping a Sport**

Dropping out of a sport without a valid reason is always considered a serious matter. If an athlete wants to quit any sport in season, he/she should notify the athletic director and coach and return all equipment.

**C. Sport Loyalty**

1. If a high school athlete has been a member of a team for two or more games, he/she cannot switch to a different sport during that season. If prior to the second game an athlete desires to change sports, he/she must receive written permission from the coach of the team he/she is leaving.
2. A middle school athlete may change sports if permission is received from both of the coaches involved.

**D. School Equipment and Uniforms**

No athlete shall wear or use any school-owned equipment or uniform except in games and practices without proper authorization from the coach.

## **VII. ATHLETIC AWARDS**

**A. Middle School Awards**

1. All middle school students who successfully complete their season will receive a participation certificate.
2. Middle School 4-Sport Award
  - a) All middle school students who successfully complete 4 sports seasons in a single academic year will receive the 4-Sport Award.

**B. Freshman Awards**

1. Students who successfully complete a freshman sport will receive:
2. Freshman participation Certificate for each sport of participation
3. Numerals (one time only) – Awarded for first year participation in a sport

**C. Junior Varsity Awards**

1. Students who successfully complete a Junior Varsity sport will receive:
2. JV participation Certificate for each sport of participation
3. Hawkeye emblem (one time only) – Awarded for the second year of participation in the same sport

**D. Varsity Awards**

1. Students who successfully complete a Varsity sport will receive:
2. Varsity Letter (one time only) – Requirements are established by each individual coach
3. Varsity Letter Certificate for each sport
4. Sport related metal insert for each season of successful participation
5. Captain Award (star) for each time that an individual was selected as a captain of his or her team

**E. Outstanding Senior Male and Female Athlete Award**

1. These awards are given annually at the Senior Awards Night to one senior female and one senior male who are chosen by the coaching staff for their contributions to the entire athletic program. Recipients will receive a plaque.

**F. OK Conference Scholar Athlete Award**

1. Any senior athlete who successfully completes 4 athletic seasons during high school (must earn a varsity letter in senior year) and has a cumulative GPA of 3.5 or higher will receive a certificate at the Senior Awards Night.

**G. Athletic Commitment Award**

1. Any senior who participates in 3 sports for each of their 4 years of high school will receive a plaque in recognition of this achievement.

## **VIII. PARENT/COACH COMMUNICATION**

Research indicates that students involved in co-curricular activities have a greater chance for success during adulthood. We believe Hamilton High School's Athletic program helps develop the character traits that promote a successful life after high school. Both parenting and coaching are extremely challenging vocations. By establishing an understanding of each position, we are better able to accept the actions of each other, providing greater benefit to children. As parents, when your children become involved in our program, you have a right to understand what expectations are placed on your child. This begins with clear communication from the coach of your child's program. If a situation arises which requires a conference between the coach and the parent, this is encouraged. It is important that both parties involved have a clear understanding of the other's position.

**A. Communication you should expect from your athlete's coach**

1. Philosophy of the coach
2. Expectations the coach has for your child and other players on the squad
3. Locations and times of all practices and contests
4. Team requirements, i.e. fees, special equipment, off-season conditioning
5. Procedure should your child be injured during participation
6. Discipline that result in the denial of your child's participation

**B. Communication coaches should expect from parents**

As Hamilton High School athletes become involved in the athletic program; they will experience some of the most rewarding moments of their lives. It is important to understand that there may also be times when things do not go the way an athlete wishes. At these times, discussion with the coach is encouraged.

1. Concerns expressed directly to the coach
2. Notification of any schedule conflicts well in advance
3. Information regarding any medical, physical or emotional concerns.
4. Volunteering to assist at events.

**C. Appropriate concerns to discuss with coaches**

It is very difficult to accept as a parent your child's not playing as much as you may hope. Coaches are professionals. They make judgment decisions based on what they believe to be best for all students involved.

1. The treatment of your child, mentally and physically
2. Ways to help your child improve
3. Concerns about your child's behavior

**D. Concerns not appropriate to discuss with coaches**

While there are certain things, which can and should be discussed with your child's coach, there are other things, which must be left to the discretion of the coach.

1. Playing time
2. Strategy
3. Play calling
4. Other student-athletes

**E. If you have a concern to discuss with a coach**

When parent-coach conferences are necessary, the following procedure should be followed to help promote a resolution to the issue of concern.

1. Call the high school to set up an appointment with the coach.
2. The Hamilton High School telephone number is (269)-751-5185
3. If the coach cannot be reached, call the Athletic Director at (269)-751-5185. They will set up the meeting for you.
4. Please do not attempt to confront a coach before or after a contest or practice. These can be emotional times for both the parent and the coach. Meetings of this nature do not promote resolution.

**F. Unsatisfactory resolution**

What can a parent do if meeting with the coach did not provide a satisfactory resolution?

1. Call and set up an appointment with the Athletic Director at (269)-751-5185 to discuss the situation.
2. At this meeting the appropriate next step can be determined

## **IX. TO THE PARENT**

**A. Athletic Parent Golden Rules**

1. Make sure your child knows that win or lose, scared or heroic, you love them, appreciate their efforts, and are not disappointed in them. This will allow them to do their best, to avoid developing a fear of failure based on the specter of disapproval and family disappointment if they do mess up. Be the person in their life they can look to for constant positive enforcement.
2. Try your best to be completely honest about your child's athletic capability, their competitive attitude, their sportsmanship and their actual skill level. Don't compare the skill, courage or attitudes of your child with that of other members of the squad or team, or at least not within their hearing.
3. Be helpful but don't "coach" them on the way to the track, diamond, or court...on the way back...at breakfast...and so on.
4. Teach them to enjoy the thrill of competition. Encourage them to work toward improving their skills and attitude, to take the physical bumps and come back for more. Don't say, "winning doesn't count" because it does. Instead, help them develop the feel for competing, for trying hard, for having fun.
5. Try not to relive your athletic life through your child. Don't pressure them because of your pride. Find out what they are all about and don't assume that they feel the same way you did, want the same things, have the same attitudes. Sure they are an extension of you, but let them make their own voyage of discovery into the world of sports. Let them sail into it without interference.
6. Help to calm the water when things get stormy, but let them handle their own navigational problems. In the meantime, continue to think of your child as a child, not as "my son/daughter, the athlete!"

7. Don't compete with the coach. The young athlete often comes home and chatters on about "coach says this, coach says that." This is often hard to take, especially for a father or mother who has had some sports experience.
8. If your child shows a tendency to resent the treatment they get from the coach, or the approval other team members get, be careful to talk over the facts quietly and try to provide fair and honest counsel. This is a perfect opportunity to discuss (not lecture) with your youngster the importance of learning how to handle problems, react to criticism and understand the necessity for discipline, rules, regulations, and so on. If you play the role of the overly protective parent who is blinded to the relative merits of your youngster and their actual status as an athlete and individual, you will merely perpetuate the problem. Your youngster could become a problem athlete.
9. Always remember that children tend to exaggerate when both praised and criticized. Temper your reactions to the tales of woe or heroics that they bring home. Don't cut your youngster down if you feel they are exaggerating, just look at the situation and gradually try to develop an even level. Above all, don't over-react and rush off to the coach if you feel injustice has been done. Investigate but anticipate that the problem is not as it might appear

## X. STUDENT TRANSPORTATION POLICY

- A. All Hamilton Athletes are required to ride school district provided transportation to and from away contests if transportation is provided. Any situation that might arise to deviate from this policy will require coach approval and written permission from a parent or guardian. The athlete may only ride home with his/her parent or guardian or someone else designated by his/her parent or guardian.
- B. Athletes wishing to ride home from an athletic contest with another student's parents must have their parent call the athletic office and request a transportation waiver form. The athletic secretary will fill out the form and give it to the coach so that the coach is aware of the arrangement.
- C. Due to lack of bus drivers, school provided transportation may be sparse. Please contact the Athletic Director, (269)-751-5185, if you would like to be trained to drive school buses.

## XI. ATHLETIC INJURY PROCEDURE

- A. By its nature, participation in interscholastic athletics includes risk of injury, which may range in severity from minor scrapes and bruises to death. Although serious injuries are not common in supervised school athletic programs, it is impossible to eliminate the risk.
- B. Participants have the responsibility to help reduce the chance of injury. Players must obey all rules, report all physical problems to their coaches, follow a proper conditioning program, and inspect their own equipment daily.
- C. When an athlete is injured, our staff will assess the injury and take the proper steps of necessary first aid. All injuries should be reported to the coach, who will then refer to the athletic trainer. In case of severe injury, 911 will be called.
- D. If an athlete discovers an injury while away from school every effort must be made to contact our athletic trainer prior to seeking treatment.
- E. If an athlete needs to be taken to a hospital, the following steps will be taken:
  1. If the parents are present, they will make the necessary decisions as to what hospital, ambulance or no ambulance, and accompanying the athlete.
  2. If the parents are absent, the coach will call the parents or emergency contact. If the parents are unavailable, a school representative will accompany the athlete to the hospital.

F. If an athlete has seen a doctor, and a return to play date has been determined, a doctor's clearance is required to resume participation prior to that date.

## **XII. ATHLETIC INSURANCE**

A. The school has insurance to cover injuries that occur during practice or any scheduled event that is not covered by the participant's family insurance policy. Athletes who feel they have a claim should contact the athletic office. At no time should the school be billed for your claim. The school does not assume liability for injuries received in athletics, nor is it legally responsible. Any form of outpatient therapy (physical therapy, chiropractic) and or office visit connected therewith, including x-rays and diagnostic charges shall be limited to a maximum of \$300 per claim.

## **XIII. ADMISSION**

**A. Regular Season Ticket Prices**

1. All HS Events
  - a) Adults \$5.00
  - b) Students (K-12) \$5.00
2. MS Events
  - a) Adults \$3.00
  - b) Students \$2.00
3. All Events
  - a) Preschool Free
  - b) Senior Citizens (+ 60 with Golden Age Card) Free
4. Subject to change depending upon OK conference policy

**B. Season Passes**

1. Good for all home regular season games – not accepted for tournaments
2. Adult \$75.00
3. Student \$25.00
4. Family Plan – Family Plan for a family with three or more children - \$200.00

## **XIV. DOWNLOADING SCHEDULES**

- A. With constantly changing schedules due to weather and other factors, the schedules on the web are the most accurate and up-to-date. As soon as we are notified of a schedule change, we will update those changes for all to view.
- B. To access the schedule, go to <https://hamiltonathletics.bigtteams.com/> and find the sport you are looking for under its respective season.