

OTSEGO HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETIC HANDBOOK

A MANUAL FOR ATHLETES AND PARENTS

2018-2019



CONTENTS PAGE

To the Parent / Chain of Command	PAGE 3
To the Athlete	PAGE 4
The Athletic Philosophy and Objective (M.H.S.A.A.)	PAGE 5
Michigan High School Athletic Association Rules	PAGE 6, 7
OHS Academic Requirements	PAGE 7
Athletic Department Policies	PAGE 8-10
Training rules for the OHS Athlete	PAGE 10, 11
Penalties for Violations	PAGE 11, 12
OHS Athletic Awards	PAGE 13
Miscellaneous	PAGE 13, 14
Bulldog Respect Code	PAGE 14
A parent's guide to concussion in sports	PAGE 14-16

To the Parent

On behalf of the athletic staff at Otsego High School, we would like to thank you and your son or daughter for becoming a part of the athletic program. Your family's interest in this phase of our school program is gratifying. Participation in athletics provides a wealth of opportunities and experiences, which will assist students in everyday life.

We who are concerned with the educational development of boys and girls through athletics feel that a properly controlled, well organized sports program meets the student needs for self-expression, emotional maturity, sense of cooperation, mental alertness, and physical growth. It is our intent to maintain a program that is sound in purpose and will further each student's educational maturity.

A student who elects to participate in athletics is voluntarily making a choice of self-discipline and self-denial. These are the reasons we place such emphasis on good training habits. Good training habits are essential for the high school athlete in preparation for interscholastic competition. Attaining this goal would be a cooperative effort by all involved.

Chain of Command

Parents should maintain a supportive relationship between the coach and athlete. Parents are directed to follow the proper chain of command in the event of a question or disagreement with a coach's general philosophy, or other areas of concern. After the athlete has talked with their coach, and a parent needs more clarification on the coach's decision, parents are to first contact the coach, followed by the athletic director, and if needed the high school principal. The athletic director and high school principal's decision will be the final decision when dealing with all matters of the Athletic Handbook.

Pre-Season Team Meeting

Parents are strongly encouraged to attend each sports pre-season parent meeting where coaches have an opportunity to explain team rules, philosophy, as well as to answer any questions you may have.

When your son/daughter elects to go out for one of our sports programs, we feel there is a commitment to certain responsibilities and obligations. This is our opportunity to acquaint you with specific policies that are necessary for a well-organized program of athletics. Please read this information carefully with your son or daughter.

TO THE ATHLETE

Athlete Defined

Any student participating in any established school sport in any capacity (athlete, student-manager, statisticians, etc.) will be considered an Otsego HS athlete for the remainder of his/her enrollment in OHS and will be expected to comply with the rules and regulations stated in this athletic handbook. Otsego Athletic Handbook Rules are applied in season and out of season throughout the calendar year, including times when school is not in session.

Being a member of an Otsego athletic team is the fulfillment of an early ambition for many students. Over the years our squads have achieved a good share of conference and tournament championships. Many individuals have set records and have won State and Conference honors.

It will not be easy to become a dedicated athlete. To compete as an athlete for your school is a privilege and not a right. That may mean that you will have to say no to temptations an athlete cannot afford. It will be necessary that you not only understand the traditions of your school, but also that you be willing to assume the responsibilities that go with them.

You will inherit a leadership role when you join an athletic squad. The student body and citizens of the community will know you, and you are on stage with the spotlight on you. The student body, the community, and other communities judge our school by your conduct and attitude both on and off the field/court.

The younger students in the Otsego Schools are watching you, and they will copy you in many ways. As a result of this leadership role, you can do a great deal to promote school spirit and community pride.

As a squad member, you assume a serious responsibility to your home, school and community. When you know that you have lived up to all of the training rules; that you have practiced to the best of your ability every day, and that you have played the game "All Out"; you can keep your self-respect, and your family, school, and community can be justly proud of you.

Don't do anything to let yourself or your family down. Make your school proud of you and your community proud of your school, by setting a good example and contributing your best to the success of athletics at Otsego High School.

Athletic Philosophy and Objectives

Athletics is an integral part of the total educational program and contributes substantially to the learning experience of all students. Through interscholastic athletics, an opportunity is provided for students to achieve beyond the normal school and physical education curriculum. Our program is tailored to provide meaningful learning experiences that fit harmoniously into the overall educational program. We recognize that vigorous physical activity is vital to healthful living, and participation in athletics should be founded on a clean and disciplined life. We endeavor to develop a young athlete to the full extent of his/her capabilities. Each athlete is strongly encouraged to participate in as many different school-sponsored sports as possible throughout the entire school year. Success, school unity and pride are enhanced by a wide range of individual involvement in school sponsored sports.

FRESHMEN LEVEL SPORTS are to be as participatory in nature as possible. Each athlete will be given opportunities to play in games, the extent to which is based on attendance, attitude, skill level and development, as well as effort in practices. An emphasis on winning will be introduced and serve as an objective for participation.

JUNIOR VARSITY LEVEL SPORTS are designed to prepare the athlete for eventual varsity competition. Playing time is not guaranteed each athlete. Games are played to win, while involving as many athletes as possible as determined by the coaching staff.

VARSITY LEVEL SPORTS places an emphasis on winning at the Varsity level. The more skill advanced athletes will receive the majority of the playing time, with practices serving as skill development opportunities for each member of the team.

Objectives of Interscholastic Athletics

1. To provide a diversified and balanced athletic program.
2. To encourage each student to excel to the best of their ability.
3. To develop winning teams and programs, realizing losing is not a disgrace if one has done their best.
4. To learn and practice good sportsmanship at all times.
5. To develop and promote the values of physical fitness and sound physical and mental health.
6. To educate and inform the community as to the purpose and place of
7. Inter-scholastic athletics.
8. To promote fun and enjoyment for all participants.
9. To build a winning attitude while also making every effort to involve as many athletes as possible in school-sponsored interscholastic athletics.

Rev. (1992)

MHSAA (Michigan High School Athletic Association) Rules

The Otsego Public Schools are a volunteer member of the Michigan High School Athletic Association. The M.H.S.A.A. rules listed in below are only a summary of some of the regulations affecting student eligibility. Most rules are found in the M.H.S.A.A. Handbook, which can be located at the High School Athletic Office. **Review these rules and ask questions of your principal, athletic director and coaches. Your role in following the rules will assure eligibility to participate in interscholastic sports or prevent your participation as an ineligible athlete, which could result in forfeiture of contests.**

1. AGE: Students becomes ineligible if they are 19 before September 1 of the current school year.

2. PHYSICAL EXAMINATION: Each athlete must have on file, in the athletic office, a physician's statement for the current school year (after April 15th) certifying that he/she is physically able to compete in athletic practices and contests.

3. ENROLLMENT: Students must be enrolled in school prior to the fourth Friday after Labor Day (1st semester) or the fourth Friday of February (2nd semester). A student must be enrolled in the school for which he or she competes.

4. SEMESTERS OF ENROLLMENT: Students cannot be eligible in high school athletics for more than eight semesters and the seventh and eighth semesters must be consecutive. Students are allowed four first semesters and four-second semesters of competition and cannot compete if they have graduated from high school.

5. TRIMESTER RECORDS: Students must have passed at least 66% of a full credit load in the previous trimester of enrollment.

6. TRANSFER STUDENTS: A student in grades 9 through 12 who transfers to another high school is not eligible to participate in an interscholastic contest for one full semester unless the student qualifies for immediate eligibility under one or more of the thirteen published exceptions. Contact the Otsego High School Athletic Office for the published list.

7. 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 year.

8. LIMITED TEAM MEMBERSHIP: After practicing with or participating with high school teams, students cannot participate in any athletic competition sponsored by his or her school in the same sport during the same season. Exceptions include ice hockey and all individual sports may participate in a maximum of two (2) non-school individual meets or contests during the school season while not representing their school.

9. ALL-STAR COMPETITION: Students shall not compete at 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 that student to become INELIGIBLE for a maximum period of one year of school enrollment. Athletes may appear after graduation.

10. 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 participation in MHSAA sponsored sports, a symbolic or merchandise award, which does not have a value over \$25. Banquets, luncheons, dinners, trips and admissions to camps are permitted if accepted "in kind." Awards in the form of cash, merchandise certificates, or any other negotiable document are never allowed.

OHS Academic Requirements

To be eligible for interscholastic athletics, a high school student must:

CURRENT ACADEMIC CREDIT RECORD

A student athlete must carry at minimum, 66% of full credit load for a full time student. **A student athlete may not fail more than one class to be eligible.**

WEEKLY ELIGIBILITY

A report of cumulative grades will be compiled on Wednesday of each week and submitted to coaches on Thursday of each week. The report will reflect student's receiving an accumulative grade of "D" or below. If an athlete is failing more than one class, that athlete will then be ineligible for competition from Monday through Sunday of the next week.

In addition, all athletes receiving a "D" or less on the eligibility report will attend a mandatory study table for 80 minutes. Failure to complete the Study Table requirements will result in the athlete being ineligible for the next scheduled contest.

The Athletic Department will submit a list of athletes, required to attend Study Table to the coaches by Wednesday of each week.

COLLEGE ELIGIBILITY

1. If you wish to participate in NCAA Division I or II athletics, you need to be certified by the NCAA Eligibility Center. You need to qualify academically and you will also need to be cleared as an amateur student-athlete. You are responsible for achieving and protecting your eligibility

status.

2. To register for the Eligibility Center contact your Athletic Director or Guidance Counselor.

Athletic Department Policies:

Violation of Athletic Department Policies will not be tolerated and will result in appropriate discipline as determined by the Athletic Director, or coach specifically authorized for that purpose.

ATTENDANCE

In order for an athlete to participate in practice or competition, he or she must be in attendance ALL DAY on the day of any activity (practice/competition). No exceptions will be granted without just reason and prior approval of the Athletic Director. When the activity in question occurs on a non-scheduled school day, attendance is required the last school day before the event.

MISSING PRACTICE

An athlete should always consult his/her coach before missing practice or games. Missing practice or a game will result in an adjustment in playing time, depending on the circumstances. Excused absences are handled differently than unexcused absences.

EQUIPMENT

Each athlete is individually and financially responsible for all equipment issued to him/her. An athlete may not go out for another sport or receive an award if he/she has not returned all equipment or paid for same.

BEHAVIOR

Each athlete should conduct him/herself in such a manner that he/she will create a positive reflection him/herself, his/her teammates, school, student body and the Otsego community at all times throughout the calendar year, including times when school is not in session.

INTERNET WEB COMMUNICATION

Athletes who engage in internet communication or social networking activity which incriminate them, will be held accountable under the policies of the Otsego Board of Education and/or under the student and athletic handbook policies. Rules and policies governing student activity, as well as local and state laws, will be enforced.

HAZING

Hazing shall be defined for purposes of this policy as performing any act or coercing another, including the victim, to perform any act of initiation into any class, group, or organization, or which causes or creates a risk of causing mental, emotional, or physical harm. Permission, consent, or assumption of risk by an individual subjected to hazing shall not lessen the prohibitions contained in this policy. Students who fail to abide by this policy may be subject to disciplinary action and may be held personally liable for civil and criminal penalties in accordance with law.

LOCKER AND LOCK

Each athlete is required to have a lock in order to be issued an athletic locker to be sure valuables are locked at all times. A keyed /combination lock may be purchased at the athletic office for \$5.00.

DROPPING /BEING REMOVED FROM 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, he/she should notify the coach and return all equipment. If an athlete does quit or is removed from a sport, he/she will not be permitted to try out for another sport until the conclusion of that sport season.

TRAVEL

All athletes must travel to and from away games with the team. Any exceptions must be approved by the coach prior to travel date and a Parent Transportation Consent form must be signed by parent/guardian and on file in the athletic office.

OPEN GYMS

Open gyms, when supervised and available are provided to give opportunity for participation and skill development to all out of season athletes. Athletes involved in an in-season sport must receive confirmation from his/her coach to participate in an open gym.

CONFLICTS IN EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Students should be cautious about belonging to too many extracurricular activities where conflicts are bound to happen. Student-athletes are to advise the faculty sponsors involved before a conflict arises. All school departments will attempt to schedule events in a manner to minimize conflicts.

Conflict resolution guidelines for students in more than one activity

Keys to the Process

- Sustain programs and work together for success in all programs.
- Flexibility from staff, students and parents.
- Consistency of philosophy – Same guidelines school-wide.
- Cooperation and communication over fear and confusion.

The Process

1. Staff members seek to determine potential conflicts before a season begins.
2. Staff members and students confer to resolve conflicts; parents either at conference or notified afterwards.
3. If the staff members cannot resolve conflicts between themselves and students, the matter will come to the school administration.
4. No retributions towards students, but coaches and teachers reserve the right to promote/start individuals committed 100% to one program.
5. There may be times when doing two or more activities leads to a multitude and/or magnitude of conflicts that will require the student to make a choice.

Guidelines

Contests/performances have the priority over practices.

Conference tournaments and/or state qualifying performances have priority over regular contests/performances.

The Bottom Line

What's best for the kids is to have all parties cooperate and communicate honestly to prevent conflicts.

Training rules for the Otsego High School athlete

TRAINING RULES

- The following training rules will be in effect throughout the calendar year on or off school property. They apply from the time a student participates in their first athletic program and remain in effect until the student is no longer enrolled in Otsego High School.

Except for prescription drugs used by the person for whom it were prescribed in the manner intended by the prescribing medical doctor, the possession, use, distribution, purchase or sale of any alcoholic beverage, drug, drug paraphernalia, controlled substance, look-alike, tobacco or tobacco product (including e-cigarettes, vaporizers, electronic inhaler devices, etc.) over the counter supplements that are intended to enhance performance, and any banned drug on the National Collegiate Athletic Association banned drug list (ncaa.org). [Web Link for banned substances: http://www.ncaa.org/2018-19-ncaa-banned-drugs-list](http://www.ncaa.org/2018-19-ncaa-banned-drugs-list) or any other substance which, when taken into the human body is intended to alter mood or mental state, including any item or substance which is represented by a student to be any of the foregoing, regardless of the true nature or appearance of the substance, is prohibited in school buildings, on school buses and on all other school property or school related events at any time. This prohibition shall include all school sponsored or school-related activities, whether held before or after school, evenings, or weekends and shall additionally include a prohibition of use by a student athlete in any instance where the school can demonstrate a reasonable connection to the school program or school athletic program. For purposes of this procedure, students who are the influence of prohibited substances shall be treated in the same manner as though they had prohibited substance in their possession.

PENALTIES FOR TRAINING RULES VIOLATIONS

FIRST VIOLATION

Penalty – After confirmation of the first violation, the student will be suspended immediately for 25% of the scheduled contests in the sport in which the student is a participant. If the penalty is not fully administered during that sport season, the remainder of the penalty will be applied to the next interscholastic sport season in which the athlete participates and completes.

- The suspension for the 1st violation may be reduced to 10% if the student-athlete chooses to complete a substance abuse/drug screening.
- The screening needs prior-approval from the Athletic Director and the student-athlete needs to provide documentation of completion.

SECOND VIOLATION

Penalty – After confirmation of the second violation, the student will be suspended immediately for 75% of the scheduled contests in the sport in which the student is a participant. If the penalty is not fully administered during that sport season the remainder of the penalty will be applied to the next interscholastic sport season in which the athlete participates and completes.

Within 5 school days of confirmation of a violation the student must meet with parents, Athletic Director and a school counselor for the purpose of: (1) determining and discussing the severity of the problem, (2) counseling the student and parents on alternatives for the prevention of the behavior(s) related to said violation.

The penalty period will begin from the date of confirmation provided the student/athlete fulfills the counseling requirement within the five-school-day period.

If the student/athlete fails to meet the counseling requirement within the five-school-day period, he/she will remain suspended until a counseling session takes place. The penalty period for the violation will then begin from the date of counseling session.

No deviation will be allowed without prior approval of the Athletic Director.

- The suspension for the 2nd violation may be reduced to 50% if the student-athlete chooses to complete a substance abuse/drug program.
- The program needs prior-approval from the Athletic Director and the student-athlete needs to provide documentation of completion.

THIRD VIOLATION

Penalty – After determination of the third violation, the student will be suspended from participation in athletics for one calendar year of his/her high school career and referred to the high school counseling department.

- After serving the one year suspension, the student-athlete may apply for readmission into the athletic program. This request will be considered by a committee of the Athletic Director, Principal or Assistant Principal, and relevant coaching staff. The committee will consider the student's behavior in and out of school, the student's academic progress, and any efforts by the student in seeking appropriate help and in providing community service as part of its deliberation.

Suspensions from School

Athletes in violation of student handbook policies shall be subject to normal school discipline:

Students who are suspended **out of school** are ineligible to participate in activities until their suspension ends. The suspension begins immediately and ends when the student returns to school.

Students assigned to **In-House Suspension** may participate in activities.

OHS ATHLETIC AWARDS

Each coach will inform squad members of the requirements and standards for earning an award in the particular sport. The athletic awards are given by the Otsego High School Athletic Department in special recognition of athletic performance. To qualify for this honor, a student should meet the established qualifications of the school, must be recommended by the coach of the sport in which he/she is participating, and be approved by the Director of Athletics. The athlete must also have an excellent practice and game attendance record and must successfully complete the season.

To remain an amateur, one must not accept money, merchandise, membership privileges, services, or other valuables for having participated in any form of athletics, sports, or games. Medals, trophies or letter awards which do not exceed more than twenty five dollars (\$25.00) each may be accepted.

VARSITY – The awards for varsity competition is an 8” chenille letter “O” and a certificate signed by the coaches and the Director of Athletics. Each athlete will receive only one 8”chenille letter “O” in their athletic career, when they complete their first varsity season in good standing. In cases where a varsity award is earned in another sport, only the certificate is awarded. Other awards may be given at the discretion of the coach with approval from the Director of Athletics.

JV – The Junior Varsity (JV) award is a 6” bulldog patch and a certificate signed by the coaches and the Director of Athletics. Only one 6” chenille bulldog patch is awarded to any one athlete.

FRESHMAN – For All freshman sports 2” numerals will be awarded indicating the year of graduation and a certificate signed by the coaches and the Director of Athletics.

MISCELLANEOUS

POTENTIAL DANGERS IN ATHLETIC PARTICIPATION

Parents and student athletes should fully understand and appreciate the risk of serious personal injury associated with participation in the educational sports programs provided by the Otsego Schools. The safety and well-being of the participant shall be of prime importance to those in charge.

RULES AND REGULATIONS NOT SPECIFICALLY COVERED

The school reserves the right to set forth as part of the Athletic Code of Conduct those rules and regulations necessary and proper for carrying into execution, the athletic program of the

school, which are not specifically stated here or as the need arises. When in judgment of the administration, a student's behavior reaches such proportion or is of a nature that it tends to adversely influence others and/or interfere with the athletic philosophy, or infringes on the right of others, this behavior is grounds for suspension.

GOVERNING POLICY

Athletes and parents should be aware that the rules, policies and information contained in this handout will govern the athlete once the student has committed him/herself to any of our interscholastic programs at the high school level, freshman through senior level. Carryovers and records will be kept on file for up to four (4) years.

NON DISCRIMINATION REQUIREMENTS

All students at Otsego High School shall have an equal opportunity to participate in and benefit from all academic and extracurricular activities and services. No student, on the basis of sex, race, or nationality, will be excluded from participation in any program directed by the school unless the exclusion is lawful.

BULLDOG RESPECT CODE

- **Treat others as we want to be treated.**
- **Be cooperative, attentive and supportive in classroom, hallways and at all school activities.**
- **Respect the worth and dignity of others.**
- **Politely consider the ideas and answers of others.**
- **Support each other in our efforts to be our best in academics, activities, and personal goals.**
- **Show respect and consideration for the property of others and the condition of the school.**

A Parent's Guide to Concussion in Sports

(National Federation of State High School Association)

What is a concussion?

- A concussion is a brain injury which results in a temporary disruption of normal brain function.
- A concussion occurs when the brain is violently rocked back and forth or twisted inside the skull as a result of a blow to the head or body.
- An athlete does not have to lose consciousness (knocked out) to suffer a concussion.

Concussion Facts

- It is estimated that over 140,000 high school athletes across the United States suffer a concussion each year. (Data from NFHS Injury Surveillance System)
- Concussions occur most frequently in football, but girl's lacrosse, girls' soccer, boy's lacrosse, wrestling and girls' basketball follow closely behind. All athletes are at risk.
- A concussion is a traumatic injury to the brain.
- Concussion symptoms may last from a few days to several months.
- Concussions can cause symptoms which interfere with school, work, and social life.
- An athlete should not return to sports while still having symptoms from a concussion as they are at risk for prolonging symptoms and further injury.
- A concussion may cause multiple symptoms. Many symptoms appear immediately after the injury, while others may develop over the next several days or weeks. The symptoms may be subtle and are often difficult to fully recognize.

What are the signs and symptoms of a concussion?

Symptoms reported by the athlete

- Headache
- Nausea
- Balance problems or dizziness
- Double or fuzzy vision
- Sensitivity to light or noise
- Feeling sluggish
- Feeling foggy or groggy
- Concentration or memory problems
- Confusion
- Can't recall events after hit

Signs observed by parents, friends, teachers or coaches

- Appears dazed or stunned
- Is confused about what to do
- Forgets plays
- Is unsure of game, score, or opponent
- Moves clumsily
- Answers Questions slowly
- Loses consciousness
- Shows behavior or personality changes
- Can't recall events prior to hit

What should I do if I think my child has had a concussion?

If an athlete is suspected of having a concussion, he or she must be immediately removed from play, be it a game or practice. Continuing to participate in physical activity after a concussion can lead to worsening concussion symptoms, increased risk for further injury. and even

death. Parents and coaches are not expected to be able to diagnose a concussion, as that is the job of a medical professional. However, you must be aware of the signs and symptoms of a concussion and if you are suspicious, then your child must stop playing.

When in doubt, sit them out!

All athletes who sustain a concussion need to be evaluated by a healthcare professional who is familiar with sports concussions. You should call your child's physician and explain what has happened and follow your physician's instructions. If your child is vomiting, has a severe headache, is having difficulty staying awake or answering simple questions he or she should be taken to the emergency department immediately.

When can an athlete return to play following a concussion?

After suffering a concussion, no athlete should return to play or practice on that same day. Previously, athletes were allowed to return to play if their symptoms resolved within 15 minutes of the injury. Studies have shown us that the young brain does not recover quickly enough for an athlete to return to activity in such a short time.

Concerns over athletes returning to play too quickly have led state lawmakers in both Oregon and Washington to pass laws stating that no player shall return to play following a concussion on that same day and the athlete must be cleared by an appropriate health-care professional before he or she are allowed to return to play in games or practices. The laws also mandate that coaches receive education on recognizing the signs and symptoms of concussion.

Once an athlete no longer has symptoms of a concussion and is cleared to return to play by health care professional knowledgeable in the care of sports concussions he or she should proceed with activity in a stepwise fashion to allow the brain to re-adjust to exertion. On average the athlete will complete a new step each day. The return to play schedule should proceed as below following medical clearance.

- Step 1. Light exercise, including walking or riding an exercise bike. No weight-lifting.
- Step 2. Running in the gym or on the field. No helmet or other equipment.
- Step 3. Non-contact training drills in full equipment. Weight-training can begin.
- Step 4. Full contact practice or training.
- Step 5. Game play.

If symptoms occur at any step, the athlete should cease activity and be re-evaluated by their health care provider.