

# **New Lebanon/Berlin Athletic Code of Conduct**

## **I. ORGANIZATIONAL CHART**

New Lebanon and Berlin Central Schools athletics is governed by the WASAREN League, Section 2 and the New York State Public High School Athletic Association (NYSPHSAA) constitutions.

## **II. PURPOSE OF INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETICS**

**Among its goals, the purpose of interscholastic athletics is to provide students with the opportunity to:**

- a. Develop organizational skills to balance athletics and academics.
- b. Learn new skills and improve existing ones.
- c. Experience commitment and dedication to school, sport, team & coach.
- d. Develop physical vigor and desirable habits in health and safety.
- e. Learn what it takes to be a good teammate.
- f. Develop new friendships.
- g. Observe and exemplify good sportsmanship.
- h. Realize that athletic competition carries with it certain responsibilities.
- i. Learn that a violation of this Code has a consequence.

## **III. CODE OF CONDUCT FOR INTERSCHOLASTIC SPORTS**

Interscholastic sports are considered an integral part of the total educational process. To maintain this connection, our athletic program is based on sound educational principles. New Lebanon and Berlin Central School Districts are committed to individual growth for each student athlete by facilitating excellence in citizenship, academics, sportsmanship and athletic skills. Participating in athletics is a privilege, not a right. It is the obligation of the administration and the coaching staff to enforce this policy.

### **A) Team Standards**

In addition to the schools' codes of conduct that are in effect at all times, athletes must:

- a. Attend all practices and contests unless excused by the coach.
- b. Demonstrate respect for fellow teammates.
- c. Abstain from harassment and intimidation of teammates.
- d. Demonstrate respect for game officials, opponents and spectators.
- e. Demonstrate respect, loyalty, commitment and dedication to team and coaches.
- f. Demonstrate control over emotions and speech.
- g. Demonstrate constant effort to improve.

**Violation of team standards:** The coach will review his/her specific expectations and consequences at the beginning of each season. Violation of team standards will result in disciplinary action by the coach. This may include suspension, ranging from one game to all games remaining on the schedule. The coach may refer repetitive minor infractions and will report all severe infractions to the

Athletic Director. Coaches, athletic directors and building principals may impose athletic consequences at their discretion.

## **B) Sportsmanship Policy**

1. New Lebanon and Berlin student athletes must learn and understand the rules of the sport that they elect to participate in. It is expected that athletes play hard, play to win and play fairly. Student athletes should respect their opponents and never taunt. Opponents are to be congratulated at game's end. Good citizenship and appropriate behavior are expected of all student athletes, as they are representatives of New Lebanon and Berlin Central School Districts, and should conduct themselves in a manner that will not discredit their team, coach, school, family or community. Athletes should work to set a positive example for the school, teammates and opponents.
2. A player who is disqualified by an official from a contest for unsportsmanlike behavior is prohibited from playing in the next scheduled athletic contest. If a second ejection occurs, the player is prohibited from play in the next two contests. These players will practice and will sit on the team bench in plain clothes while serving out game suspensions. A third ejection will result in expulsion from the team for the remainder of that sport's season.
3. Players must respect the integrity and judgment of officials. A player who verbally and/or physically assaults an official will be subject to an extended suspension from athletic competition. A physical confrontation with an official is an incident in which a player either strikes, bumps, or otherwise physically intimidates an official prior to, during, or after a contest.

## **C) Academic Standards**

1. Athletics, generally speaking, have a positive effect on the athlete's academic performance in the classroom and attitude toward school.
2. In order for a student to be eligible to participate in a sport, he or she shall have an overall average of 65 and no more than one failing grade in any subject. Such eligibility will be reviewed when progress reports or report cards are issued. The athletic director or principal will review the eligibility notices and inform students of their eligibility status. The athletic director or principal will have the authority to make exceptions when circumstances warrant.
3. If a student becomes ineligible, in the first week they may practice but may not play in games. If a student becomes ineligible for a second week in a five week period, they will not be able to practice or play until they have met all eligibility requirements. To meet eligibility requirements, they must get all signatures on the eligibility form weekly to be considered for a return to the team for the following week. This eligibility process continues until the next progress report/report card.

## **D) Team Bus**

**Students are expected to:**

1. Observe all school rules when riding to interscholastic contests. Student athletes are expected to respect the bus driver and pick up after themselves.
2. Be courteous, neat and clean in public venues such as restaurants, bathroom stops and parking lots.

3. Respect other motorists during travel.
4. Ride the team bus to and from all away athletic contests. Athletes may receive permission from their coach to return home with **THEIR PARENTS**, or another member of their immediate family. The athlete **must** provide the coach with a note from his or her parent if he or she desires to ride home with another family member or with another athlete and his or her parents.
5. Be dropped off at Berlin HS and New Lebanon HS *only*.

### **E) Attendance/School Discipline Policy**

1. In order to participate in any contest or practice, the athlete must be in attendance on that day for at least 4 class periods, unless excused in advance for a valid reason by the athletic director or an administrator. (Ex: doctor, dentist, funeral, college visit, etc.) Exceptions can be given by the athletic director or by an administrator on the day in question. Athletes absent from school on the Friday preceding a weekend contest will not be eligible to participate in that contest unless approved by the athletic director or administrator in advance.
2. Students serving a penalty of out of school suspension (OSS) shall be **ineligible** to participate in the interscholastic athletic program during the period of suspension. The student may **not** practice or sit on the bench. They may not attend school events. Students serving detention may attend practices after the detention period is over.
3. Students serving a penalty of in school suspension (ISS) for all or part of the day lose the right to attend athletic practices or games during the period of suspension, unless approved by the Athletic Director or Principal.

### **F) Athletic Attendance Policy**

1. If an athlete has an unexcused absence and misses practice the day before a game, the athlete will not be eligible to participate at the next game. Amassing five or more unexcused absences from practice will result in removal from the team. Exceptions may be made by the athletic director or building principals for unique circumstances.
2. Athletes are expected to contact their coach via email, text or phone prior to missing practice to explain their reason for not attending. Absences from practice are likely to impact playing time.

### **G) After School Supervision**

Student athletes staying after school in anticipation of practice or a game will be supervised up until the late bus arrives. Each school has a dedicated after school location where athletes should report.

### **H) Physical Exam**

Every student must have a doctor's physical exam giving clearance to participate in interscholastic sports. Physicals are only valid for 1 year. Sports sign-up sheets are reviewed by the school nurse to confirm medical clearance. Any student without an up to date exam will **NOT** be allowed to participate in practice or games until re-evaluated by a physician.

### **I) Standards Related to Tobacco, Drugs and Alcohol**

#### **1. Possession or Use of Tobacco**

Possession or use of tobacco or electronic/vapor cigarette products will not be permitted. This includes smoking items and chewing tobacco, smokeless tobacco, Juuls/vapes and snuff.

Penalties:

- a. **First Offense** will result in a minimum penalty of suspension from four (4) contests (including

but not limited to meets, interscholastic scrimmages, matches and/or scheduled games). Athletes will not be allowed to practice or attend games during the suspension. Missed practices cannot exceed ten (10).

**b. Second Offense** will result in suspension from the team for the remainder of the season.

### **2. Possession and Use of Illegal Drugs (including marijuana), Anabolic Steroids, and Alcoholic Substances**

a. The use or possession of any substance prohibited by the New York State or the Federal Narcotics Law is strictly prohibited. This rule is in effect throughout the school year.

b. The use of alcohol under the age of 21 and the use of drugs are illegal. Parents should take responsibility to see that no alcohol is served at social events given or attended by their children.

c. Anabolic Steroids - The use of anabolic steroids poses serious health risks to users and is strictly prohibited. In addition, possession of even personal use steroids not validly prescribed a doctor is a federal crime.

Penalties:

**a. First Offense:** The student will be suspended from the team for the remainder of the sport season.

**b. Second Offense:** The student will be suspended from all sports for one calendar year.

**3. Sale and/or Distribution:** If a student is selling or distributing illegal drugs, the student will be barred from any participation in interscholastic athletics for one calendar year. Law enforcement officials may be involved in the investigation and legal charges may be filed.

**3. Hosting or Attending Parties Where Drugs, Alcohol, or Other Controlled Substances Are Used by Minors** Hosting or Attending a function where drugs, alcohol or other controlled substances are used by minors is not permitted.

Penalties:

a. **First Offense (in season):** The student will serve a minimum suspension of 4 contests (including but not limited to meets, interscholastic scrimmages, matches and/or scheduled games).

**b. Second Offense (in season):** the student will be suspended from the team for the remainder of the sports season and will be ineligible to participate in any interscholastic sports activity during the subsequent sports season

### **J) Hazing Policy**

”Hazing” is defined as committing an act against a student, or coercing a student into committing an act, that creates a risk of emotional, physical or psychological harm to a person, in order for the student to be initiated or affiliated with a student organization, or for any other purpose. Athletes are responsible for reporting any incident of hazing to the coach, who is required to then report that incident to school administration. An administrator will conduct a full investigation of the charges in accordance to district policy. Any student found guilty of hazing will be suspended from all sports for one calendar year. Law enforcement officials may be involved in the investigation and legal charges may be filed.

### **K) Harassment Policy**

Harassment can be verbal/sounds (e.g. comments, spreading rumors, accusations, jokes or whistling), physical (e.g. touching, flashing or mooning), visual (showing pictures or making obscene gestures), electronic (e.g. e-mail, texting, social networking), or in writing. Harassment can happen to girls and boys and can include, but is not limited to sexual, racial, ethnic or religious discrimination. Athletes are responsible for reporting an incident of harassment to the coach, who is required to then report that incident to school administration. An administrator will conduct a full investigation of the charges in accordance to district policy. Any student found guilty of harassment will receive a consequence depending on the severity of the incident. The penalty could range from a game suspension to an expulsion from all sports for one calendar year. Law enforcement officials may be involved in the investigation and legal charges may be filed.

### **L) Leaving a Team**

#### 1. Quitting A Team:

Any athlete who quits a team after the first contest will not be permitted to join another team during that sport's season. Any athlete that quits a team prior to the first contest may join another team with the permission of the athletic director after consultation with the coaches involved. Half of the practices attended in previous sports count towards eligibility of the new sport.

#### 2. Dismissal from the Team:

Any athlete who is dismissed from a team for violating Codes of Conduct will not be permitted to join another team during that sport's season. Additional suspensions for future seasons may also be considered.

### **M) Eligibility Standards**

1. AGE – A student shall be eligible for interschool competition until his/her 19<sup>th</sup> birthday. If the age of 19 is reached on or after July 1<sup>st</sup>, the student may continue to participate during that school year in all sports.

2. GRADE – A student is eligible for interschool competition for only 4 years once in high school. Two more years are allotted for students who meet the APP process and play JV/Varsity in 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> grade.

3. PARTICIPATION - A student may not participate in more than one sport during a given season.

4. ADVANCED PLAY – athletes may not play/practice with or against college level teams (during college visits). Students who participate in advanced play may lose their eligibility for the remainder of their their high school careers.

### **N) Athletic Placement Process (APP) Testing Procedures**

In order for 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders to be eligible to participate on a junior varsity or varsity team, they must pass the APP test.

PROCEDURE: A coach recommends to the athletic director a junior high student for participation on a junior varsity or varsity team. The parents are informed of the coach's request. If the parents wish for their child to play up, they complete and return the proper permission and health forms for testing. The test is scheduled by the athletic director to assess the student's physical ability to participate at a higher level, after clearance from the school physician. The physical ability piece of the APP process must be completed by a PE teacher.

### **O) Uniforms**

An athlete shall care for his/her uniform and all equipment issued by the school. It is suggested by the manufacturer that for increased longevity, all sport uniforms should be washed in cold water and hung to dry. Dryers may shorten the life of the uniform. If some problem develops (i.e., stain, torn uniform, etc.) athletes should notify the coach as soon as possible. In the event that items are lost or stolen, athletes are required to pay a replacement cost. No player will be issued a uniform for another sport until all uniforms and equipment have been turned in or paid for from the previous sport. Students should always turn uniforms in to a school official to be checked in. The main office accepts uniforms.

### **P) Risk of Injury**

Participation in sports involves a certain degree of risk for injury. Such physical activity can occur in any type of sports activity and may vary in nature. Before going out for the team, athletes should be aware of the risk so they will be better able to reduce their chances for injury. Pre-season conditioning, learning the skills and techniques of the sport, and knowledge of rules and any safety factors will help athletes have a healthy season. It is the responsibility of the athlete and/or parent to report all injuries immediately to the coach.

### **Q) Jewelry Clause**

No jewelry may be worn in any sport. Religious and medical medals must be taped to the body and under the uniform. Soft, pliable barrettes are permissible.

### **R) Team Sign Up and Selection**

Sign ups for sport teams will be posted in advance of the season. When signing up, student athletes are asked to please write neatly so that coaches can read the given information accurately. Sign up is by team. Team levels (modified, junior varsity & varsity) are chosen by the coaches only.

### **S) Playing Time**

New Lebanon and Berlin's modified programs are designed to safely accommodate as many students in grades 7-9 as are interested in participating in a given sport. Every effort is made by the coaches to allow each athlete to receive playing time. At the junior varsity and varsity level, student athletes seek to achieve mastery skill in a given sport and focus on overall team success. Coaches field the best possible squad for the purposes of interscholastic competition. At the JV and varsity levels, there is no expectancy of equal or guaranteed playing time.

### **T) Awards and Recognition**

A sports awards ceremony will be held at the end of each sports season to honor the student athletes. A student must be listed on the team's final roster to be eligible for any athletic awards.

## **IV. ADMINISTRATION OF THE CODE OF CONDUCT**

Serious violations of the athletic code of conduct should be communicated to the following people:  
Building administrator and the coaches directly impacted by the violation.