



***W*HITE *O*AK *H*IGH *S*CHOOL**  
***ATHLETIC POLICY MANUAL***

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## INTRODUCTION

White Oak High School is a member in good standing with the North Carolina High School Athletic Association (NCHSAA) and the Coastal 3A Conference. As such, we agree to abide by all rules set forth by both organizations. Often times, questions concerning eligibility and other important and relevant topics surface. We have adopted a set of policies, which each member of our athletic teams, as well as coaches, are expected to follow. The following information should help everyone understand the rules each member school and individual student-athlete must abide by in order to participate in interscholastic athletics. To access the NCHSAA Handbook of policies governing interscholastic athletics, log on to [www.nchsaa.org](http://www.nchsaa.org) for exact rules and interpretations. Our school rules for student-athletes also are listed below. However, the following information is not meant simply as a list of rules, but is offered as a guide for successful participation in athletics at White Oak HS.

## Interscholastic Athletics Overview and Goals

The White Oak High School Athletic program is designed to allow those students who are achieving prescribed academic success and who possess the motor skills/athletic talent necessary, to develop those skills and talents to the fullest. We seek to provide the highest quality athletic program staffed with the most competent personnel available. Furthermore, the athletic program strives to provide our student-athletes with an enjoyable and challenging athletic environment which emphasizes the attainment of both physical skills and strong character development. The program aims to develop in students, excellent sportsmanship, a strong work ethic, a spirit of cooperation, leadership skills, and such personal character traits as integrity, loyalty, self-sacrifice, humility, healthy lifestyles, and maturity. White Oak High School strives to offer a varied program that is flexible enough to meet the needs of the novice athlete, yet strong enough to prepare the skilled athlete for higher levels of competition. To that end, we offer two different levels of interscholastic athletic competition; jayvee and varsity.

The emphasis of our programs at the jayvee level are the development and improvement of individual motor skills, effective team play and the appropriate attitudes of good sportsmanship and fair play. These jayvee programs are developmental and are conducted under less intense competitive situations. The varsity level programs usually consist of members who are most talented in the development of sport specific motor skills and have the ability to interact on a team basis. These programs tend to compete at a more intense level and have the opportunity to advance to post-season conference tournaments, as well as state playoffs.

## Athletic Programs and Teams Offered

### A. FALL SPORTS

1. Cheerleading (Girls)- JV & Var
2. Cross Country (Girls & Boys)
3. Football (Boys)- JV & Var
4. Golf (Girls)
5. Soccer (Boys)- JV & Var
6. Tennis (Girls)
7. Volleyball (Girls)- JV & Var

### B. WINTER SPORTS

1. Basketball (Girls & Boys)- JV & Var
2. Indoor Track (Girls & Boys)
3. Swimming (Girls & Boys)
4. Wrestling (Boys)- JV & Var
5. Cheerleading (Girls)- JV & Var

### C. SPRING SPORTS

1. Baseball (Boys)- JV & Var
2. Golf (Boys)
3. Soccer (Girls)- JV & Var
4. Softball (Girls)- JV & Var
5. Tennis (Boys)
6. Track (Girls & Boys)

## **Expectations of Athletes and Parents**

Participation in athletics at White Oak High School is completely voluntary. The school provides coaching, transportation, facilities and equipment to all of our athletic teams. The school reserves the right to revoke or restrict the privilege of participation if a student fails to live up to expectations and/or violates state or school rules as outlined below.

### **A. MEDICAL and INSURANCE WAIVERS**

All student-athletes **MUST** pass a physical examination within one year of each day of athletic participation. A sports physical terminates 365 days subsequent to administering and must be renewed immediately (should an athlete be "in-season") to maintain eligibility. Physical examinations must be performed by a duly registered Physician, or Physicians' Assistant.

All student-athletes **MUST** be covered under health insurance or purchase school insurance before being allowed to tryout, practice, scrimmage or participate. A copy of the OCS Athletic Participation Form, which contains both the medical and insurance forms, can be obtained through the school office.

### **\*\*ATHLETES MAY NOT PRACTICE IF FORMS ARE NOT ON FILE AT SCHOOL**

Concussions are brain injuries that are caused by a bump, blow, or jolt to the head. Concussions can range from severe to mild and can change the way the brain normally works. They can occur during practices and games in any sport and do not necessarily require that the victim be knocked out. Concussions can be serious even if the victim only believes he/she has had his/her "bell rung".

Any athlete who suffers a possible concussion, or displays the symptoms of a concussion, **MUST** be immediately removed from practice and/or competition and cannot return until seen by a licensed physician. The NCHSAA *Concussion Return to Play* form **MUST** be completed and signed by a physician.

### **B. ELIGIBILITY**

1. All student-athletes **MUST** have passed a minimum load of courses the previous semester (3 of 4 on block schedule, at least 5 on traditional schedule) and have met standards for promotion.
2. All student-athletes **MUST** be a properly enrolled student at the time of participation, and must be enrolled no later than the 15<sup>th</sup> school day of the semester of competition, and be in regular attendance at that school.
3. All student-athletes **MUST** have been in attendance for at least 85% of the previous semester at an approved school, with no more than 13 absences.
4. All student-athletes **MUST** live with his/her parents or legal custodian within the school administrative unit (exceptions must be approved by Onslow County Board of Education and the NCHSAA). A student meets this residence requirement if he/she has attended the same school within that same administrative unit for the previous two (2) semesters.
5. All student-athletes **MUST** attend school for a minimum of 50% (2 class periods) of the student day on the day of an athletic contest in order to participate in that contest. Exceptions must be approved by the principal or athletic director.
6. No student may participate in athletics if he/she is 19 years old on or before October 16.
7. No student may participate in athletics if he/she has exceeded eight (8) consecutive semesters of attendance or participated in more than four seasons since first entering 9<sup>th</sup> grade.
8. No student may participate at a second school in the same sport during the same sport season, except in the event of a bona fide change of residence of the parent or legal custodian.
9. No student may participate in athletics if they have been convicted of a crime classified as a felony under North Carolina or federal law, **OR** are adjudicated delinquent for an offense that would be a felony if committed by an adult.
10. No student-athlete may participate or dress out for any practice, scrimmage or contest on a day that he/she has been in ISS or suspended out of school. When a student is assigned to ISS or OSS, that student is responsible for notifying his/her coach of the infraction and subsequent disciplinary action.

### C. TRANSPORTATION

All transportation to and from athletic contests for team members (including managers and Statisticians) is provided in Onslow County Schools owned vehicles and all team members **MUST** travel in these vehicles. Any exceptions to this policy must be approved by the head coach, principal, or athletic director and even then, a Travel Release Form must be completed and given to the head coach. Travel Release Forms are available in the school office.

### D. HAZING

Hazing is defined as deliberately subjecting another person to physical injury, mental anguish or personal embarrassment as part of an initiation or prerequisite for membership....regardless of the individual's willingness to participate. Such actions violate North Carolina Law (G.S. 14.35). Any conduct or method of initiation into any student organization or team, which willfully or recklessly endangers the physical or mental health of any student or person is **NOT ALLOWED**. White Oak High School's penalty for hazing will be immediate removal from team membership. Additionally, other criminal sanctions could follow as a result from law enforcement authorities.

### E. SPORTSMANSHIP

The NCHSAA defines sportsmanship as *the quality of responsible behavior characterized by a spirit of generosity and a genuine concern for opponents, officials and teammates.*

Students and spectators should:

- realize you represent the school as does any member of a team; therefore, you have an obligation to be a true sportsman, encouraging through your behavior the practice of good sportsmanship by others
- recognize that good sportsmanship is more important than victory by approving and applauding good team play, individual skill and outstanding examples of sportsmanship and fair play exhibited by either team
- remember that the primary purpose of interscholastic athletics is to promote the physical, mental, moral, social and emotional well-being of players through the medium of contest
- respect the judgment and integrity of game officials
- be modest in victory and gracious in defeat

**\*\*All athletes and parents MUST sign a sportsmanship pledge, found in the Onslow County Schools Athletic Participation Form, agreeing to support these values.**

All White Oak High School students, coaches, parents and supporters are expected to exemplify and follow these guidelines. When any student, coach, parent or spectator has exhibited behavior that is detrimental to these concepts of positive sportsmanship and, in the judgment of the Coach, Game Officials, Principal or Athletic Director, has or will discredit the school, the contest, the program, and/or him/herself; the offender will be removed from the contest and/or the venue of that contest. Extreme violations can result in an athlete's permanent removal from a team and a spectator's permanent ban from attending athletic events at White Oak High School.

### F. TAUNTING

Taunting includes any actions or comments by coaches, players, or spectators which are intended to bait, anger, embarrass, ridicule, or demean others, whether or not the actions are vulgar or racist. Included is conduct that berates, needles, intimidates or threatens based on race, gender, ethnic origin or background, as well as conduct that attacks religious beliefs, size, economic status, speech, family, special needs or personal matters. Any form of taunting is not in keeping with conduct or behaviors that promote sportsmanship. In all sports, taunting is considered a flagrant unsportsmanlike foul that disqualifies the offending contestant from that contest/day or competition. In addition, the offender shall be subject to existing NCHSAA ejection rules.

## **G. SUBSTANCE ABUSE POLICY / SCHOOL RULES**

Student-athletes are expected to adhere to high standards—physically and socially. White Oak High School strongly discourages the use of legal drugs, inhalants or medications contrary to the manner in which they were prescribed, as well as any use of illegal substances, alcohol or tobacco products by our students. By discouraging the use of these substances, the school emphasizes a concern for the health of students participating in interscholastic athletics and a concern over the long-term physical and emotional effects of chemical use on students' health and well-being. White Oak HS reaffirms and supports existing state laws which restrict the use of illegal substances and establishes standards of conduct for student athletes who are typically leaders and role models for their peers and youth. **White Oak High School does not support or condone the use of any performance enhancing drugs.** The use of performance enhancing drugs among all athletes at all levels has greatly increased in the past several years. The use of creatine and androstenedione has seen the greatest recent growth in usage. Both drugs claim to increase lean body tissue (muscle) and enhance recovery from exercise. There are a variety of companies producing these products in over-the-counter form. Studies on the potential long-term problems and health risks following use of these performance enhancers are very limited.

The school hopes to assist students who desire to resist peer pressure which directs them toward the use of illegal substances and support students who should be referred for assistance or evaluation regarding their use of illegal substances.

The opportunity to participate in the athletic programs at White Oak High School is a privilege. It is not a right. Athletes are held to very high academic standards and behavioral expectations while on this campus as well as when off this campus. In order to represent White Oak High School appropriately, the athletic department will present guidelines for success that must be reviewed and accepted by both the athlete and the parent(s) at the beginning of each athletic season. Consequences for athletes that have made inappropriate choices and/or unlawful choices are outlined below:

### **Campus Consequences:**

**ISS** - An athlete serving in the ISS program will not participate in any school athletic practice or contest during their stay in the program. Students are responsible for informing their respective coach when assigned to ISS. Failure on the part of the student to notify the coach, will be considered a violation of the Athletic Discipline Policy.

**OSS** - An athlete serving OSS will not practice nor participate in contests during the length of the suspension.

### ***Students charged with crimes on or off campus:***

**Felonies** - Students with pending felony charges will not participate in any athletic contests. Students found guilty of a felony charge are not eligible to participate in any athletic program at White Oak High School as governed by expectations set forth by the NC High School Athletic Association.

**Misdemeanors** - Students with pending misdemeanor charges will not participate in any athletic contests. Students found guilty of misdemeanor charges will not participate in any athletic contest and will be dismissed from the team. A plea of No Contest will have the same results as being found guilty. Petty misdemeanor offenses as defined by the law (such as traffic citations) DO NOT APPLY.

**Deferred Prosecution** - A student who has applied and been accepted in the deferred prosecution program will not participate in any athletic contests until the process has been completed.

**Underage Drinking** - Students with pending underage drinking charges will not participate

in any athletic contest. Students found guilty of underage drinking will be dismissed from the team.

**Note:** A plea of No Contest will have the same results as being found guilty.

Students suspended from school for being under the influence of or having possession of illegal drugs, drug paraphernalia, alcohol, or any other mood altering substances will not participate in any athletic contest, will be dismissed from the team, and will not be permitted to be on any team for the remainder of the school year.

When a student has any pending criminal charges, probation, or deferred prosecution, that student is responsible for notifying his/her coach of the infraction and subsequent disciplinary action. **Failure on the part of the student to notify the coach, will be considered a violation of the Athletic Discipline Policy.**

Student-athletes serve as role model on the White Oak High School campus and in the community. Athletes must understand the spirit of fair play while playing hard. Athletes will refrain from engaging in all types of disrespectful behavior, including inappropriate language, taunting, trash talking, and unnecessary physical contact. Athletes know the behavioral expectations of White Oak High School and accept the responsibility and privilege of representing White Oak High School and this community as a student-athlete.

#### **H. TEAM SELECTIONS, PRACTICES, and RULES**

Students should understand that participation in athletics is a privilege. When a student reports for tryouts for a team, he/she does so with a full understanding of the individual commitment and sacrifice required for participation in that sport. By trying out for a team they are expressing their interest to represent White Oak High School and must live up to the guidelines previously listed, as well as the rules of that specific team. Weekend practices vary by sport but should be expected. Students try out voluntarily and for some of our sports teams, risk being cut in order for us to maintain a high level of safety, coaching, playing time and cost effectiveness. While selection of a team is a difficult process for all parties involved, (student-athlete, parent and coach) some things to remember are listed below.

- Try-outs are open to all students that meet all the prescribed rules governing eligibility, including completion of valid physical exam, insurance verification and parental waiver forms.
- The tryout period for each team should be of sufficient duration to allow the coach to make a reasonable assessment of each candidate's ability and potential (minimum 3 days)
- Junior and Senior (3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> year in high school) students are not allowed to try-out for JV teams.
- Athletic coaches should have rules governing the conduct and appearance of players and the requirements of training and practice. These rules, which are not to be in conflict with any regulations of the school or NCHSAA must be shared with players before they are in effect. Any violations of the team or school rules may result in temporary or permanent suspension from the team. The length of the suspension is subject to the time which the coach deems fit and is approved by the athletic director and principal (in matters extending beyond athletics). Attendance is required at **ALL practice/games scheduled** including during vacations or on holidays, unless the athlete has prior approval from his coach. Approval is based in individual circumstances, as well as the team's situation and total requests, and must be granted in advance. Only the coach can excuse an athlete from practices or contests. Any athlete that misses 3 consecutive team assemblies (practices, contests, meetings) without making contact with the coach will be considered to have quit the team. It is at the coach's discretion to reinstate a student to the team and that player's position on the team may have changed significantly.
- SUNDAY Practices and/or required team gatherings **ARE ABSOLUTELY PROHIBITED** Onslow County School Board policy prohibits athletic practices or competition on any day that school is cancelled or dismissed early due to inclement weather conditions.

- Students involved in several activities should know their schedules so conflicts can be resolved early. This might include music, community service, drama, college entrance exams and visits etc. Student-athletes have a responsibility to their school team and to that team's coach. Any member of a White Oak High School team is precluded from missing a high school practice or competition in order to participate or compete with a non-school team. Any student who violates this rule is subject to disciplinary action by the coach, including dismissal from the school team.
- Once an athlete has been selected for a team, he/she may not quit or leave that team to join another White Oak team. No athlete may voluntarily leave one sport and tryout for another after the season has begun without consent of the Athletic Director and both coaches involved.
- After the first contest in a sport (scrimmage or regular contest), if an athlete quits or leaves a team, he/she cannot try-out for a team in the next sports season until the other athletes on that team would be able to try-out. (ie, Volleyball player quits the volleyball team, she could not try out for basketball or swimming until the volleyball team's season was completed)
- A 24 hour "cooling off" period applies to any athlete who quits or is dismissed by a coach from a team. The day following an athlete quitting a team or a coach informing an athlete they are off the team, the player and coach should meet and discuss the situation to insure that a rash or imprudent decision was not made in the heat of the moment. Athletes must realize that depending on the circumstances, disciplinary action may be warranted as part of his/her continued team membership. Any student-athlete or coach that is ejected or disqualified for unsportsmanlike behavior from any athletic contest while representing White Oak High School will be subject to the NCHSAA suspension policies regarding future contests, and **MUST** meet with the Principal and Athletic Director before being allowed to resume practice or competition. *The NCHSAA ejection policy can be found on the back page of the Onslow County Schools Athletic Participation Form.*
- The student-athlete is responsible for the proper upkeep of all uniforms and equipment which is assigned to him/her. If items are lost or abused, the student will be required to pay for a replacement. All uniforms and equipment must be returned to the coach at the end of the season .

## **I. PARENT/COACH RELATIONSHIPS**

At White Oak High School we understand that both parenting and coaching are extremely challenging vocations. Through early communication and by establishing an understanding of each position, both parties are better able to accept the actions of each other, providing greater benefit to our students. A clear line of communication is crucial in helping parents and coaches to cooperatively serve the best interests of our students. As parents, when your children become involved in our athletic programs, you have the right to understand what expectations are placed on your child. This begins with clear communication from the coach of your child's program regarding his/her goals, expectations, team rules and schedules. If a situation arises which requires a conference between the coach and the parent, this is encouraged. However, it is important that an appropriate time and setting be established and that both parties involved have a clear understanding of the other's position.

The following guidelines should be considered:

### **Appropriate Communication Parents Should Expect From Coaches**

1. Expectations the coach has for your child and other players on the team
2. Locations and times of all practices and contests
3. Team requirements, i.e. fees, special equipment, off-season conditioning, overnight trips
4. Procedure for dealing with injuries should they occur during participation
5. Team rules including discipline that results in the denial of your child's participation

### **Appropriate Communication Coaches Should Expect From Parents**

1. Notification of any schedule conflicts well in advance
2. Notification of any specific medical abnormalities or medication needs of your child
3. Notification of any transportation plans, with appropriate form that deviates from stated school policy

4. Specific concerns regarding a coach's philosophy and/or expectations

#### **Appropriate Concerns Parents Should Discuss With Coaches**

1. The treatment of your child mentally, emotionally and physically
2. Ways to help your child improve and mature
3. Realistic evaluation of your child's opportunity to play collegiately or the process of college recruitment
4. Concerns about your child's behavior, grades, or disciplinary actions towards him/her

#### **Issues NOT Appropriate for Parents to Discuss With Coaches**

Coaches are professionals. They make judgment decisions based on what they believe to be best for their athletic team and all students involved. As a parent it is very difficult to accept your child's not receiving the playing time, position or role on the team that he/she, as well as you, hoped that they would. While there are certain things that can and should be discussed with your child's coach, there are other things, which must be left to the discretion of the coach. These include, but are not limited to:

1. Playing time or positioning of team personnel
2. Game strategy
3. Play calling
4. Any other students

#### **To Discuss an Appropriate Issue With Your Child's Coach**

1. Call the school to schedule a meeting with the coach.
2. If you cannot reach the coach, contact the Athletic Director and he will schedule the meeting with the coach.

*NOTE: Under no circumstances should a parent/coach meeting occur immediately prior to or following a practice or contest as these tend to be emotional times and not conducive to resolution.*

#### **If Meeting With Coach Did Not Produce Satisfactory Resolution**

1. Call the school to schedule appointment with the Athletic Director to discuss the situation
2. Utilize this meeting to determine an appropriate next step
3. If no satisfactory resolution has been reached, parent should schedule appointment with the Principal or his designee
4. If meeting with Principal does not produce satisfactory resolution, contact the Superintendent of his designee