



6th – 12th
Student-Athlete
Handbook
2019-2020

Natomas Unified School District Student-Athlete and Parent Handbook

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Important!

The athletic forms must be completed and submitted to the school's Athletic Director prior to the first practice. A student-athlete will not be allowed to practice until all of the forms are submitted.

Natomas Unified School District Philosophy

The Natomas Unified School District recognizes the important contribution of extracurricular programs to the overall education of a student. It is the District's goal that these programs help students to become a part of the school community and its traditions. The District believes extracurricular programs provide an environment in which students may assume positions of leadership, apply the skills necessary to work successfully as a team, and to display individual talents outside the classroom. The District believes that extracurricular programs allow students additional opportunities to transfer learning from school to other aspects of their lives.

Natomas Unified School District Athletic Code

I. ATHLETIC GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

- A. **Goal** - The student shall become an effective citizen in a democratic society.
- B. **Objectives** – To work with others in a democratic society, a person must develop self-discipline, respect for authority, and a spirit of hard work and sacrifice. A student-athlete must place the team and its objectives higher than personal desires.
 - 1. **To Be Successful** – Our society is very competitive. We do not always win, but we succeed when we continually strive to do so. You can learn to accept defeat only by striving to win with earnest dedication.
 - 2. **Sportsmanship** – A student-athlete must learn to accept both success and defeat like a true sportsman, knowing we have done our best. We must learn to treat others, as we would have others treat us. We will develop desirable social traits, including emotional control, honesty, cooperation and dependability.
 - 3. **To Improve** – Continual personal and social improvement is essential to good citizenship. As a student-athlete, you must establish a goal and constantly try to reach that goal. You should try to better yourself in the skills involved and in those characteristics set forth as being desirable.
 - 4. **Rewarding** – It is necessary for us to acknowledge all of the personal rewards we derive from athletics, and to give sufficiently of ourselves in order to preserve and improve the program.

5. **Develop Desirable Personal Health Habits** – To be an active, contributing citizen, it is important to obtain a high degree of physical fitness through exercise and good health habits and to develop a desire to maintain this level of physical fitness after formal competition has been completed.
6. **Integrity** - Supports and demonstrates district/school rules to reflect the high integrity of district, school and athletic program.

II. ATHLETIC CODE OF CONDUCT

The conduct of a student-athlete is closely observed in many areas of life. It is important that your behavior be above reproach in all of the following areas:

- A. **On the Field** – in the area of athletic competition, a student-athlete will not use profanity or illegal tactics, and will learn quickly that losing is also part of the game. A student-athlete should be gracious at all times whether in victory or defeat.
- B. **In the Classroom** – A student-athlete is expected to demonstrate success in the classroom as well as in the arena of competition. A student-athlete must develop time management skills that provide sufficient time and energy to achieve acceptable grades as well as participate in the required activities associated with the sport in which the athlete is participating. A student-athlete shall demonstrate good citizenship; give respectful attention to classroom activities, fellow students and staff. A student-athlete shall maintain a good attendance record without instances of truancy.
- C. **On Campus** – The way we act and look on campus is of great importance. Student-athletes should be leaders and exhibit traits that will inspire fellow students to follow the example of student-athletes.
- D. **As Visiting Student-Athletes** – The manner in which we conduct ourselves as well as our appearance when traveling is of great importance. Student-athletes are representing the Natomas Unified School District and their respective schools; therefore, student-athletes shall act and dress accordingly.
- E. **Participation** – Athletics is a voluntary activity. Participation is not a graduation requirement; therefore, being on an athletic team is a privilege, which must be earned. With that privilege come responsibilities to maintain the established standards of conduct of the Natomas Unified School District, both on and off the field, as defined in the Activity Code, Code of Ethics and CIF Code of Ethics.
- F. **Athletics as Part of the Educational Program** – Athletics are just one of many parts of the educational program provided to students. The reason students attend school is to learn; consequently, academics always come first. Academic

eligibility can also be lost because of poor attendance and or citizenship. Participating in athletics and being a member of a team will require an athlete to make choices that place priorities on academic success and team commitment.

- G. **Team Membership** – Student-athletes learn many skills to play their chosen sport, but the most important skill that must be learned is teamwork. To be successful, every member of the team must work together to make the whole greater than the sum of the parts.
- H. **Prepared to Play** – Student-athletes should come to practice on time, ready to listen and ready to learn. Student-athletes should be prepared physically and mentally for the season including training in the preseason and taking care of your body and mind at all times.
- I. **Conduct During Competition** – Student-athletes shall demonstrate respect towards their teammates, coaches, opponents, fans and officials at all times. Student-athletes shall play by the rules at all times.
- J. **Sportsmanship** – Athletics means more than competition between individuals and/or teams representing different schools. It is a means of learning the lessons of life. Winning and losing are part of competition and should be done with modesty in victory and graciousness in defeat.

III. REQUIREMENTS FOR PARTICIPATION

A student-athlete is eligible to participate in a sport once the following items have been completed:

1. Student and parent complete the signature page indicating receipt of the student athletic handbook and knowledge of its contents
2. Agreement for Team Participation
3. Natomas Unified School District HS Athletic Physical Screening
4. Concussion & Head Injury Form
5. NUSD Steroid Agreement
6. SCA Information Sheet
7. Emergency Card (Transportation/Medical)

Under state law, school districts are required to ensure that all members of school athletic teams (this includes cheerleaders, mascots, bands, drill teams, etc.) have accidental injury insurance that covers medical and hospital expenses (\$1,500 minimum coverage). This insurance requirement can be met by the school district offering insurance or other health benefits that cover medical and hospital expenses. Some students may qualify to enroll in no-cost or low-cost local, state or federally sponsored health insurance programs. Information about these programs may be obtained at www.natomasunified.org.

IV. DISCIPLINE POLICY AND JUSTIFICATION FOR SUSPENSION OR REMOVAL FROM A TEAM.

A. Immediate Suspension or Removal – A student-athlete may be immediately suspended or removed from a team at any time under the following circumstances:

1. Fails to follow the direction of an athletic coach
2. Caused, attempted to cause, or threatened to cause physical injury to another person, official, coach or other school personnel.
3. Committed verbal abuse of a coach, official or other school personnel.
4. Engage in disruptive behavior in and around the athletic team during practice, school, school time, travel, competition, etc.
5. Engage in harassing other students, coaches, officials, fans or other school personnel.
6. Committing an obscene act or gesture, or engaging in habitual profanity or vulgarity.
7. Violation of the Athletic Code of Conduct.
8. Academic ineligibility.

Student-athletes will not be able to participate in practice or games while

they are suspended from a team. If a student-athlete is dismissed from a team, he/she shall not participate in another sport until the sport from which he/she was dismissed has concluded.

V. ELIGIBILITY FOR EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

An extracurricular activity is not part of the regular school curriculum, is not graded and does not offer credit. Examples of such activities shall include, but are not limited to, student government, public performances of music, dance, drama and speech events, law enforcement events and trips, spirit leaders, dances, junior/senior prom, and club activities, field trips and competition.

Student-athletes who represent the Natomas Unified School District in any sport sanctioned by the California Interscholastic Federation (CIF) or any district comprehensive school or their respective associated student body (ASB) must comply with eligibility rules of the NUSD and CIF. Students, who participate in extracurricular activities approved by the principal, which are not requirements of a course of student, must meet the same eligibility requirements as student-athletes.

A. General Eligibility

1. A student, whose 19th birthday is attained prior to June 15, shall not participate or practice on any team in the following school year. A student, whose 19th birthday is on or before June 14 is ineligible. (CIF 203)
2. Upon entering the ninth (9th) grade, a student has (not to exceed) eight consecutive semesters of athletic eligibility to compete in high school athletics in the state of California. Enrollment and/or attendance for fifteen (15) days or more shall count as one of the eight (8) consecutive semesters.

B. Academic Eligibility Standards:

1. A minimum of a “C” average (2.0 GPA). Specifically designated honor-level courses offer one additional grade point for a grade of A, B or C, but no additional point is given for a D or F grade.
2. Passing a minimum of four (4) classes at both IHS & NHS. Failing no more than one class at LGA due to block schedule.
3. Incomplete grade (I) count as “F” for eligibility *purposes* until a letter grade is assigned. When the letter grade is determined, the student’s grade point average is recalculated. Students have fifteen (15) school days from the day grades were due to complete the work necessary to change an incomplete to a letter grade. For eligibility purposes, and without mutual agreement between teachers and students, the grade is computed as an “F” after fifteen school days even if the incomplete is later changed to a letter grade.
4. Students will meet the eligibility criteria if they have no more than one F and a 2.0 GPA for the combined total of their second semester and summer school coursework. A student may use “like for like” classes during summer school to replace up to 2 F’s earned during the fourth quarter. In this case, the calculation would not include the replaced F’s from the like for like classes.

NOTE: Eligibility will be determined on the second Monday after the close of the grading period. Specific dates are reflected in the school’s calendar.

The Natomas Unified School District Governing Board also requires students in athletics or activities be satisfactorily progressing toward the District’s graduation requirements in order to participate. Satisfactory progress is hereby defined as the ability to graduate with one’s class within conventional timelines, i.e. eight consecutive semesters from freshman entrance, including summer sessions.

C. Eligibility Waiver

1. The Superintendent may grant an ineligible student a probationary period for not more than one eligibility period. (BP 6145).
2. Students granted an eligibility waiver must meet the required eligibility standards by the end of the next eligibility period.
3. The Superintendent may revoke a student’s eligibility waiver for extracurricular and co-curricular activities when the student’s poor citizenship is serious enough to warrant loss of this privilege.

D. Probationary Period

Board Policies 6145(b) and 6145.2(b) provide for a probationary period not to exceed one semester to allow student athletes who are academically ineligible to participate in athletics for the remainder of the probationary period. The probationary period will terminate at the end of the grading period following the date the student is placed on probation. A probation request must be submitted to the school's Athletic Director to be approved by the District Athletic Committee. Students granted probationary eligibility must meet the required academic standards by the end of the probationary period in order to remain eligible for participation. The Natomas Unified School District probation standards and protocols are as follows:

1. A student can be given only one probationary period per school year
2. A student can be given only two probationary periods per four years of eligibility
3. A student must earn a minimum of a 1.5 GPA for the grading period in which probation is being requested
4. A student must be enrolled in at least 20 units to participate in sports and to qualify for probation
5. Students, including modified day students, must pass four classes to qualify for probation
6. Students must be on track to graduate and must have earned at least:
 - a. 45 credits at the beginning of their sophomore year
 - b. 100 credits at the beginning of their junior year
 - c. 155 credits at the beginning of their senior year

E. Attendance Eligibility

1. School Attendance

Coaches recognize the importance of school attendance and expect student-athletes to establish good attendance patterns:

- a. Students must attend at a minimum of three (3) class periods at LGA and four (4) class periods at IHS & NHS in order to participate in either practice or competition on that day or the day prior to a non-school day.
- b. Excused and approved absences per district attendance guidelines may count as periods of attendance for purposes of this requirement. A doctor's note or Principal's approval may be required.
- c. Students suspended from school are not allowed to attend practice or to participate in athletic/cheerleading activities for the duration of their suspension.

2. Practice Attendance

Students who participate in athletics and cheerleading make a commitment to a team and are expected to maintain good practice attendance.

- a. Students are expected to attend all practices and contests unless they are absent from school due to illness or the coach excuses them. Students are expected to communicate directly with the coach when they cannot attend a practice.
- b. Unexcused absences from practice, or failure to maintain good attendance, may be cause for removal from a team.
- c. Coaches may adopt individual rules for practice and contest attendance.

VI. CONFLICTS IN EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

An individual student who attempts to participate in more than one activity simultaneously will undoubtedly, be in a position of conflict of obligations. The athletic department recognizes that each student should have the opportunity for a broad range of experiences in the area of extracurricular activities; and to this end, will attempt to schedule events in a manner so as to minimize conflicts.

Students have a responsibility to do everything they can to avoid continuous conflicts. This would include being careful not to belong to too many activities in which conflicts are bound to occur. The student also has the responsibility to notify faculty advisors/coaches involved immediately when a conflict occurs.

When conflicts do arise, the staff sponsors will meet to work out a solution so that a student is not in a “no-win” situation. If a solution can not be reached then the principal will have to make the decision based on the following:

- A. The relative importance of each event.
- B. The importance of each event to the student.
- C. The relative contribution the student can make to or gain from the experience.
- D. How long each event has been scheduled.
- E. Input from the parents.

Once the decision has been made and the student has followed the decision, they will not be penalized in any way by the staff sponsor. If it becomes obvious that a student cannot fulfill the prearranged obligation of a school activity, they shall withdraw from the activity.

VII. NON-USE OF ALCOHOL, TOBACCO OR CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES (Including the Use of Steroids)

In order for a student-athlete to achieve both team and personal goals, and to be a positive role model, possessing or using alcohol, unauthorized controlled drugs or other substances, or tobacco products is unacceptable, not just during the season of sport, but both in and out of school during the entire school year. If a student-athlete uses, possesses or found to be under the influence of any of the aforementioned substances, the student will be assigned disciplinary consequences consistent with the California Education Code and Natomas Unified School District policy/procedures. In addition, the student athlete may be removed from a team on which he/she is participating and

will forfeit the award of a letter. If a student-athlete becomes ineligible under this section, he/she may not try out for the next sport if the tryout period occurs during the term of the suspension.

These athletic code requirements are minimums. Each coach reserves the right to make more strict standards if he/she chooses to do so.

VIII. MISCELLANEOUS ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT POLICIES

A. Dropping or Transferring Sports – On occasion, a student-athlete may find it necessary to drop or quit a sport. If this does occur, the student-athlete is required to adhere to the following procedures:

1. Talk with the coach of the team and then the varsity head coach.
2. Report the situation to the Athletic Director.
3. Check in all equipment.

If a student-athlete wishes to change or quit a sport during the season, he/she must receive approval from both coaches concerned and the Athletic Director. Failure to follow these procedures in dropping, quitting or changing sports can result in the loss of all athletic privileges. No student-athlete who has dropped a sport may practice or compete in another sport until all events in the dropped sport, including playoffs, have been completed (Unless released by the coach of the team the athlete dropped).

B. Equipment – School equipment checked out to the student-athlete is his/her responsibility. He/she is expected to keep it clean and in good condition. Loss or loss of use, of any equipment is the athlete's financial obligation. A student-athlete must turn in all uniforms and equipment for one sport before being issued a uniform or equipment for the next sport.

C. Missing Practice – A student-athlete should always consult his/her coach before missing practice or leaving campus. Missing practice or a game without a valid reason will be dealt with at the discretion of the coach. Sudden illness or a family emergency would be examples of a valid reason for missing practice or a game. It is the student-athlete's responsibility to inform the coach prior to the event the student-athlete will miss.

D. Travel – All student-athletes must travel to athletic contests with the team on NUSD-provided transportation. Student-athletes will remain with their team and under the supervision of the coach while attending away contests. Student-athletes must return from contests on NUSD-provided transportation unless riding home with the student's own parent or guardian. All district transportation rules will be followed.

E. Minimum Attendance – While students are expected to attend all classes each school day, a student must attend a minimum of four classes to be eligible to

participate on the day of a contest. Students at block schedule schools must attend a minimum of three classes to be eligible to participate on the day of a contest.

IX. CHAIN OF COMMAND

There are times when questions or conflicts arise either between student-athletes, student-athlete and coach, and/or parent and coach. The athletic department believes that most conflicts can be resolved quickly and fairly if the appropriate parties meet to discuss the issue. When conflicts do occur, there is an appropriate chain of command to be followed:

- A. Player to Coach
- B. Player to Head Coach
- C. Parent to Coach
- D. Parent to Head Coach
- E. Player/Parent to Athletic Director
- F. Parent/Player to Principal
- G. Player/Parent to Superintendent or the Superintendent's designee.
- H. Player/Parent to NUSD Governing Board

X. PARENT CONDUCT

As role models for their student-athlete, parents have a responsibility to exhibit good sportsmanship and appropriate behavior at school events. Parents want their student-athletes to be successful on and off the field of competition. The athletic department strives to mesh the needs of the individual with the goals and objectives of the athletic department and its teams. Each student-athlete is given a fair opportunity to become a member of a team and to improve his/her individual skills. It is important that parents understand that effort does not always equate with skills. It is the coach's determination based on experience, observation at practice and the needs of the team as to who makes the team, starts, plays, and plays in which position and substitutes.

The coaches will be happy to discuss with parents (and student-athletes) things such as attitude (coach's and/or players), behavior, discipline and the student-athlete's role on the team and what a player can do to change that role. There may be a time when a parent may not be satisfied with the explanation given by the coach. If the issue in question is who make the team, starts, plays, plays in which position, substitutes, or non-agreement about the role of the student-athlete, the coach's decision is final.

Additionally, coaches are not able to discuss with any parent information or opinions about other student-athletes.

XI. TRANSFER FROM ONE SCHOOL TO ANOTHER SCHOOL

Once a student establishes residency at a school, CIF regulations must be completed BEFORE a transferring student can compete in athletics at his/her new school of attendance. All incoming transfer students MUST meet with the athletic director to complete CIF eligibility determination procedures.

XII. CIF CODE OF ETHICS

The California Interscholastic Federation Constitution and Bylaws are located at http://www.cifsjs.org/about_cif-sjs/constitutions_and_bylaws.

1. To emphasize the proper ideals of sportsmanship, ethical conduct and fair play.
2. To eliminate all possibilities which tend to destroy the best values of the game.
3. To stress the values derived from playing the game fairly.
4. To show cordial courtesy to visiting teams and officials.
5. To establish a friendly relationship between visitors and hosts.
6. To respect the integrity and judgment of sports officials.
7. To achieve a thorough understanding and acceptance of the rules of the game and the standards of eligibility.
8. To encourage leadership, use of initiative and good judgment by the players on a team.
9. To recognize that the purpose of athletics is to promote the physical, mental, moral, social and emotional well-being of individual players.

XIII. CALIFORNIA EDUCATION CODE SECTION 271 ARTICLE 10. ATHLETE'S BILL OF RIGHTS

271. The following list of rights, which are based on the relevant provisions of the federal regulations implementing Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (20 U.S.C. Sec. 1681 et seq.), may be used by the department for purposes of Section 270:
- (a) You have the right to fair and equitable treatment and you shall not be discriminated against based on your sex.
 - (b) You have the right to be provided with an equitable opportunity to participate in all academic extracurricular activities, including athletics.
 - (c) You have the right to inquire of the athletic director of your school as to the athletic opportunities offered by the school.
 - (d) You have the right to apply for athletic scholarships.

- (e) You have the right to receive equitable treatment and benefits in the provision of all of the following:
- (1) Equipment and supplies.
 - (2) Scheduling of games and practices.
 - (3) Transportation and daily allowances.
 - (4) Access to tutoring.
 - (5) Coaching.
 - (6) Locker rooms.
 - (7) Practice and competitive facilities.
 - (8) Medical and training facilities and services.
 - (9) Publicity.
- (f) You have the right to have access to a gender equity coordinator to answer questions regarding gender equity laws.
- (g) You have the right to contact the State Department of Education and the California Interscholastic Federation to access information on gender equity laws.
- (h) You have the right to file a confidential discrimination complaint with the United States Office of Civil Rights or the State Department of Education if you believe you have been discriminated against or if you believe you have received unequal treatment on the basis of your sex.
- (i) You have the right to pursue civil remedies if you have been discriminated against.
- (j) You have the right to be protected against retaliation if you file a discrimination complaint.

Sportsmanship – Citizenship – Character