



Litchfield High School
Student-Athlete Handbook
2011-2012



Statement of Purpose

Litchfield High School believes that participation in interscholastic athletics is an extension of our educational program and a continuation of the learning process. These opportunities are intended for student-athletes to develop teamwork and sportsmanship skills, as well as self-discipline and self-respect. Our purpose is to develop a student-athlete who understands the power of working together toward a common goal, of learning a new skill, and of the intrinsic rewards resulting from growth and development. We believe these skills are needed to effectively make decisions and to complete short and long term life goals.

Participation in interscholastic athletics is a privilege, not a right. The student-athlete will accept the responsibility to self, team, and to our school. Each student-athlete is responsible for consistently fulfilling the rules and expectations within the Litchfield High School Student-Athlete Handbook, Litchfield Board of Education Policies, the Connecticut Interscholastic Athletic Conference (CIAC), and the expectations identified by the coaching staff.

Participation

Students participating in extracurricular activities and athletic programs at Litchfield High School are expected to uphold, in an exemplary manner, at all times, the Litchfield High School Student-Athlete Handbook. As such, violations of school rules and/or the law may result in sanctions, including, but not limited to, loss of position of officer or team captain, denial of a varsity letter, and suspension and/or removal from an extracurricular organization or team for part or all of the current season or for subsequent seasons. Interventions, such as student / parent conferences, alternative sanctions, and/or suspension may be implemented before a student is permanently removed from an extracurricular organization or athletic team.

Students cannot participate in practices or contests if they do not have an updated physical that has been cleared by the school nurse.

Academic Eligibility Requirements

Litchfield High School students must be passing a minimum of five (5) units of work. Grades are based on the last marking period. For a fall sport, eligibility is based on receiving credit toward graduation at the close of the preceding school year in at least five (5) units of work.

If a student is academically ineligible at the start of a season, he/she may participate in tryouts. If the student makes the team, they will not be allowed to compete until academic eligibility is reinstated. Once that occurs, it will be the school administration's decision as to when or if participation may resume.

Conduct/Violation of School Rules

Litchfield High School strives to have students learn to take responsibility for their own actions. As a result, student-athletes are expected to adhere to the rules and expectations outlined in the Student-Athlete Handbook, as well as all other standard school rules and policies. Students must realize that their behaviors affect the overall impression of their team. Negative behavior, as described in the Code of Conduct for Student-Athletes, whether during practices, athletic contests, team functions and times away from the team, may result in disciplinary consequences and interventions. Students who engage in recurring incidents of negative behavior, including violations of this policy, and the Code of Conduct, during their high school career are subject to escalating penalties and possible removal from an athletic team. In addition to facing sanctions at the team level, student-athletes who violate Board policies will also be subject to disciplinary consequences, up to and including suspension and expulsion from school, in accordance with the Board's student disciplinary policy.

Attendance: Tardiness / Absence / Suspension

All student-athletes are expected to arrive at school on time every day. Unexcused absences and tardiness will subject students to disciplinary action, including detentions and other sanctions, in accordance with the district's attendance policies. If a student-athlete has an unexcused absence from school, he/she will not be permitted to attend a practice or a game on that day.

If a student athlete has an unexcused tardy, he/she will not be permitted to attend a practice or a game on that day if the student arrives to his/her first period class later than 7:23 AM.

If a student-athlete arrives to his/her first period class after 7:23 AM, the tardy will be considered excused only if the student-athlete brings a note from a doctor explaining the medical reason for the tardy or a note from a parent explaining the family emergency that caused the student-athlete to be late to school.

In order to participate in a practice or a game, a student-athlete must be in school for a minimum of 4 hours on the day of the event. Any exceptions to this rule must be appealed to the administration prior to the end of the school day.

If a student-athlete receives a detention, he/she must serve that detention, but will be allowed to attend a practice or a game on that day after the detention has been served, unless otherwise noted in team rules.

If a student-athlete has an in-school suspension or an out-of-school suspension, he/she will not be permitted to attend practices or games during the period of suspension. Pursuant to section 10-233d, for a student suspended for the first time, the administration may shorten the length of or waive the suspension period if the student successfully completes an administration-specified program and meets any other conditions required by the administration.

Substance Use: Tobacco / Alcohol / Other drugs

All students are expected to adhere to Board policies regarding the use, possession, or distribution of tobacco, alcohol, drugs and other illegal substances. Any student-athlete or participant in extracurricular activities found on or off campus to be using or possessing tobacco, alcohol, illegal substances or steroids, or misusing prescription drugs, will be suspended from his/her team or activity for up to two weeks and will be subject to denial of a varsity letter, loss of position of officer or team captain. If the student-athlete is found to be distributing alcohol, tobacco, or illegal substances, the student will be removed from the team or organization immediately. In addition, the student may be referred for outside counseling (at family expense) and/or law enforcement authorities in accordance with Board policies.

A student found to have engaged in a second offense on or off campus during the school year involving tobacco, alcohol, drugs and other illegal substances within the student's high school career will be suspended from the team and/or club for the remainder of the season or year, will lose his/her position as team captain or club officer, and will be denied a varsity letter. In addition, the student may be referred for outside counseling (at family expense) and/or law enforcement authorities, in accordance with Board policies.

A student found to have engaged in a third offense on or off campus during the school year within a student's high school career will be prohibited from participating any further in interscholastic athletics and/or other extracurricular activities for the remainder of the student's high school career. In addition, the student may be referred to outside counseling (at family expense) and/or law enforcement authorities, in accordance with Board policies.

In addition to the above sanctions, any student who violates school rules or Board policy regarding tobacco, alcohol, drugs and other illegal substances, will also be subject to further discipline, up to and including suspension and/or expulsion from school, in accordance with Board policy.

Procedure for Communicating Concerns

While we expect all of our programs to run smoothly, we understand there are times student-athletes and parents may have concerns. Therefore, we have set up a communication procedure to address any issues that may arise.

If a student-athlete or parent has an athletic concern, he/she should proceed as follows:

Step 1. Athlete meets with the coach to discuss and resolve the issue.

Step 2. Parent (and athlete) makes an appointment to meet with the coach to discuss and resolve the issue.

Step 3. Athlete meets with the Athletic Coordinator (and coach) to discuss and resolve the issue.

Step 4. Parent (and athlete) makes an appointment to meet with the Athletic Coordinator to discuss and resolve the issue.

If the previous four steps do not result in resolution, then the parent and athlete should make an appointment with administration to resolve the issue.

LITCHFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS' ATHLETIC CODE OF CONDUCT

As a student-athlete, I understand that I personally contribute to the overall success of the team and my school. As such, I will abide by the following terms:

Sportsmanship

All student-athletes will:

Practice good sportsmanship at all times.

Demonstrate self-respect, and respect for coaches, team, and the Litchfield Public Schools.

Use appropriate language and gestures at all times.

Demonstrate respect for opponents, fans, and the game officials.

Abide by the rules of the game.

Win and lose graciously.

Uphold a safe school climate by not fighting with, harassing, intimidating, or ridiculing other student-athletes, coaches, volunteers, spectators, or staff.

Training and Competition

All student-athletes will:

Train regularly and practice good health habits.

Learn and follow the rules of the sport.

Adhere to coaches' expectations and ask questions for clarification.

Adhere to the decisions of officials.

Commit to training, practicing, and competing to the best of one's abilities.

Not take any performance-enhancing substances, including steroids, for the purpose of improving performance or physique.

Informational Websites

Litchfield Board of Education Policies: <http://www.litchfieldschools.org/boe/policies/index.html>

CAS-CIAC Website: www.casciac.org

CIAC Handbook: www.casciac.org/pdfs/ciachandbook_1112.pdf

******After reading the Student-Athlete Handbook, please print, fill out, and sign the following 4 pages which include the Consent, Emergency, and Concussion Forms******

**LITCHFIELD HIGH SCHOOL
STUDENT-ATHLETE CONSENT FORM
(This Form must be submitted to the coach prior to the start of the season)**

I hereby acknowledge that I give my consent for my child to participate in the Litchfield Schools' interscholastic athletic program.

In the event of a medical emergency, all coaches have been instructed to consult with the athletic trainer (when available) and/or contact emergency personnel when they feel an injury or illness warrants immediate attention.

All athletes must communicate any distress to the coach immediately. If the coach does not see the athlete or cannot stop the contest immediately, the athlete must sit down and signal the official to stop the game.

I/We understand that athletic activity involves the potential for injury which is inherent in all sports. Even with the best coaching, use of the most protective equipment and strict observance of rules, injuries are still a possibility.

I give my permission to the appropriate certified school staff or medical personnel to render emergency treatment, if required, in connection with athletic injury or illness.

_____ has my permission to participate in _____
Student-Athlete's Name Sport

_____ Date _____
Signature of Parent/Guardian

_____ Date _____
Printed Name of Parent/Guardian

To the Student-Athlete:

I have read, understand, and will abide by all rules and expectations as defined in the Student-Athlete Handbook.

I understand that if I violate the rules and expectations as defined in the Student-Athlete Handbook as well as, the rules and expectations defined by my coach(es), I will be subject to a range of consequences that may include suspension and/or removal from the team, denial of a varsity letter, loss of position as team captain and/or other disciplinary consequences in accordance with Board policy.

Signature of Student-Athlete: _____ Date _____

To the Parent/Guardian of the Student-Athlete:

I/We have read and understand the rules and expectations as defined in the Student-Athlete Handbook. I/We recognize our responsibility in ensuring that our son/daughter abides by the provisions of this agreement.

Signature of Parent/Guardian: _____ Date _____

**Litchfield High School
Student-Athlete Emergency Form**

(This form must be submitted to the coach prior to the start of the season)

Student Name _____

Grade _____ D.O.B. _____

Parent Name _____

Address _____

Home Phone* _____ Cell Phone* _____

Daytime Phone* _____ Alternative Phone* _____

* Please circle one number that will be called in case of emergency

Doctor _____ Phone _____

Dentist _____ Phone _____

Highly Allergic to _____

Diabetic _____ Epileptic _____ Asthma _____

Cardiac Problems _____ Contact Lenses _____ Other _____

Hospital Preference _____

Medication _____

In the event parents cannot be reached, call:

Name _____ Phone _____

Name _____ Phone _____

Insurance Company _____ Policy Number _____

Insurance Carrier _____

(Parent or Guardian)

You have my permission to take whatever action is necessary for the health and welfare of my child.

Signed _____

(Parent or Guardian)

Date _____

HEADS UP: CONCUSSION IN YOUTH SPORTS

A Fact Sheet for Parents and Athletes

(Requirement to Read and Sign by Parents and Athletes. Return This Form to Team Coach.)

WHAT IS A CONCUSSION?

A concussion is a brain injury that is caused by a bump or blow to the head. It can change the way your brain normally works. It can occur during practices or games in any sport. Even a “ding,” “getting your bell rung,” or what seems to be a mild bump or blow to the head can be serious. A concussion can happen even if you haven’t been knocked out. You can’t see a concussion. Signs and symptoms of a concussion can show up right after the injury or may not appear or be noticed until days or weeks after the injury. If your child reports any symptoms of concussion, or if you notice the symptoms yourself, seek medical attention right away.

Parents and Guardians

What are the signs and symptoms of a concussion observed by Parents/Guardians?

If your child has experienced a bump or blow to the head during a game or practice, look for any of the following signs and symptoms of a concussion:

Appears dazed or stunned

Is confused about assignment or position

Forgets an instruction

Is unsure of game, score, or opponent

Moves clumsily

Answers questions slowly

Loses consciousness (even briefly)

Shows behavior or personality changes

Can’t recall events prior to being hit or falling

Can’t recall events after being hit or falling

How can a Parent/Guardian help their child prevent a concussion?

Every sport is different, but there are steps your children can take to protect themselves from concussion.

Ensure that they follow their coach’s rules for safety and the rules of the sport.

Encourage them to practice good sportsmanship at all times.

Make sure they wear the right protective equipment for their activity (such as helmets, padding, shin guards, and eye and mouth guards). Protective equipment should fit properly, be well maintained, and be worn consistently and correctly.

Learn the signs and symptoms of a concussion.

What should a Parent/Guardian do if they think their child has a concussion?

1. Seek medical attention right away. A health care professional will be able to decide how serious the concussion is and when it is safe for your child to return to sports. Notify your child’s coach if you think your child has a concussion.
2. Keep your child out of play. Concussions take time to heal. Don’t let your child return to play until a health care professional says it’s OK. Children who return to play too soon— while the brain is still healing—risk a greater chance of having a second concussion. Second or later concussions can be very serious. They can cause permanent brain damage, affecting your child for a lifetime.
3. Tell your child’s coach about any recent concussion in ANY sport or activity. Your child’s coach may not know about a concussion your child received in another sport or activity unless you tell the coach.

Athletes

What are the symptoms of a concussion?

Headache or “pressure” in head
Nausea or vomiting
Balance problems or dizziness
Double or blurry vision
Bothered by light
Bothered by noise

Feeling sluggish, hazy, foggy, or groggy
Difficulty paying attention
Memory problems
Confusion
Does not “feel right”

What should an athlete do if they think they have a concussion?

Tell your coaches and your parents. Never ignore a bump or blow to the head even if you feel fine. Also, tell your coach if one of your teammates might have a concussion.

Get a medical checkup. A doctor or health care professional can tell you if you have a concussion and when you are OK to return to play.

Give yourself time to get better. If you have had a concussion, your brain needs time to heal. While your brain is still healing, you are much more likely to have a second concussion. Second or later concussions can cause damage to your brain. It is important to rest until you get approval from a doctor or health care professional to return to play.

It is better to miss one game than the whole season.

How can athletes prevent a concussion?

Every sport is different, but there are steps you can take to protect yourself.

Follow your coach’s rules for safety and the rules of the sport.

Practice good sportsmanship at all times.

Use the proper sports equipment, including personal protective equipment (such as helmets, padding, shin guards, and eye and mouth guards). In order for equipment to protect you, it must be:

The right equipment for the game, position, or activity. Worn correctly and fit well.

Used every time you play. Repaired and maintained.

Student Signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

For more detailed information on concussion and traumatic brain injury, visit: <http://www.cdc.gov/injury> or www.cdc.gov/ConcussionInYouthSports