FORT KNOX MIDDLE HIGH SCHOOL

ATHLETIC STUDENT-PARENT HANDBOOK

FORT KNOX STUDENT/PARENT ATHLETIC HANDBOOK

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***A COPY OF THIS MUST BE SIGNED BY BOTH THE PARENT AND STUDENT ATHLETE AND RETURNED TO THE ATHLETIC DIRECTOR PRIOR TO THE FIRST OFFICIAL CONTEST. IF A STUDENT ATHLETE DOES NOT HAVE THIS ON FILE, HE/SHE IS SUSPENDED EFFECTIVE THE FIRST CONTEST FROM ALL PARTIPATION UNTIL SIGNED CONTRACT IS SUBMITTED. THIS INCLUDES PRACTICES AS WELL AS COMPETITIONS.**

Athletic Philosophy

The Fort Knox Community School System believes that participation in sports provides a wealth of opportunity and experience that assists students in personal growth, self- expression, mental alertness, and physical growth. The Fort Knox Athletic Department strives to provide a positive environment dedicated to achieving excellence in athletic and academic performance and inspiring personal development which prepares student-athletes to benefit society in a lasting and meaningful way.

Athletics play an important part in the life of Fort Knox Schools. Young people learn a great deal from their participation in interscholastic athletics. Lessons in sportsmanship, teamwork, competition and how to win and lose gracefully are an integral part of each team in our athletic program. Athletics also play an important part in helping the individual student develop a healthy self-concept as well as a healthy body. Athletic competition adds to our school spirit and helps all students-spectators as well as participants-develop pride in our school.

Information in this handbook is designed as a set of guidelines, rules and responsibilities for Fort Knox Students in grades 7-12. Values such as good sportsmanship, integrity, character education, a winning attitude and the complete development of the individual in team and individual settings shall be promoted. We believe athletics truly are a major part of well-rounded educational experience. We are intentionally making efforts to foster a family atmosphere in our athletic programs. By "family" we mean student athletes, parents, coaches and school administration and staff working together to develop responsibility and accountability. Let us work together to make athletics at Fort Knox a meaningful educational experience.

KHSAA Member School

Fort Knox adheres to and abides by the rules set forth by the Kentucky High School Athletic Association (KHSAA). Students will abide by the rules and regulations of the KHSAA Constitution and Rules handbook. Copies of the handbook are available online at www.khsaa.org.

Middle School Athletics

Students in grades 7 & 8 may participate at the high school level in a sport that is not offered in the middle school. If a sport is offered at the middle school level students may not participate at the JV or Varsity level until the completion of the Middle School Season and only with Parent, Coach, AD & Principal approval. In doing so the total number of contests for that player (middle school & high school) may not exceed the Limitation of Seasons set by the KHSAA. Football and soccer are contact sports. Middle school students cannot practice or play with high school students in grades 10 and above.

High School Athletics

Athletic participation at the Varsity level is more competitive than the Middle School program, and the Junior Varsity (JV) program functions as a transition between the two. Varsity competition is based on ability, and participation in this program requires a significant commitment of time as well as adherence to more stringent team and Athletic Department rules. Parents and athletes are advised to take this into consideration when deciding to participate at the JV or Varsity level. In order to fully appreciate a family's commitment to JV/Varsity competition and to avoid miscommunication and unrealistic expectations, parents and students must understand that practices/contests are often scheduled on Saturdays and during vacation periods.

Eligibility

No student shall be kept from participation in athletics at Fort Knox due to his or her race, religious beliefs, gender or socioeconomic status. Students are required to meet certain academic requirements as set forth by the Kentucky High School Athletic Association (KHSAA). Examples of these policies include:

- Physical Examination, Parental Consent
  Each student who is trying for a place as a participant on an athletic team or cheerleading squad must present a KHSAA physician's certification signed by a physician which shall state that he or she is physically fit to participate without undue risk. The parent's consent for the child's participation and acknowledgment of receipt of the eligibility rules as promulgated by the Association and Kentucky Board of Education regulations in writing shall also be required on KHSAA Form GE04. **NEW FORM DATED AUGUST 2019**
- Age
  A student who becomes nineteen (19) years old before August 1 shall be ineligible for interscholastic athletic competition. A student who becomes nineteen (19) on or after August 1 shall remain eligible for the entire school year.
- Enrollment
  A student shall be enrolled as a full-time student in at least four hours of instruction (of the six hours of instruction required) acceptable to graduation at the member school he or she desires to represent in order to be eligible for athletics. In terms of Fort Knox Schools, that would mean 5 classes at the middle/high school.
- Academic Eligibility
  Adequate Yearly Progress - On the first day of each school year, a student shall be at his or her proper grade level. To be considered to be at the proper grade level, a student shall have been enrolled as a full-time student during the previous grading period, and shall be on schedule to graduate with his or her class on the first day of school. For a student to be considered on schedule to graduate, that student shall have received the following school/district credits towards graduation prior to the first day of school:

  Grade 7-9=Promotion from the previous grade to the next consecutive grade.

  10th Grade = 6 Credits

  11th Grade = 12 Credits

  12th Grade = 19 Credits

Weekly Athletic Grade Checks

On a weekly basis, a student shall be making continual progress during the school year by passing cumulatively 5 subjects (of the 7 required instruction units) in which he or she is currently enrolled to be eligible to participate in athletics for that week. This weekly check of grades shall be conducted on each Monday. Students found to be failing 3 or more subjects are deemed ineligible immediately and for the duration of the subsequent week (Monday through Sunday period) and through the next opportunity to examine grades in this manner. No participation to include practicing is permitted during this ineligibility period. Coaches will have the opportunity to check grades on Wednesday of each week to be proactive and may suspend students from participation until grades are passing.

- Domestic & Non-Domestic Transfer
  Students transferring to Fort Knox from another school district after starting 9th grade must request a Domestic Transfer of Eligibility ruling from the KHSAA prior to participating in athletics. A Non-Domestic Transfer of Eligibility ruling is required for participation by Foreign Exchange Students. This process is initiated through the Athletic Director and should be done as soon as possible upon enrollment as the process can take anywhere from 3 days to 3 months to complete.
- Daily Attendance
  Per DoDEA Attendance Policy, students involved in after school extra-curricular activities, including athletic contests and practices, must be in attendance to participate. For this purpose, students must be in attendance all day to be counted present. Student/Athletes not in attendance according to these requirements shall not be eligible to participate that day. Exception: if a student comes in tardy AND it is excused AND attendance at school will still be at least ½ day, the student may be approved to play. **Student must bring tardy slip to see athletic director as soon as he/she arrives at school.** Students not following these guidelines are also subject to disciplinary action under the district's attendance policy. Students considered truant due to excessive absences or tardies to school may be excluded from participation in extracurricular activities including athletics. In school or out of school suspensions are considered absent and affect participation. When a student is suspended, he/she is then ineligible for the next official contest in his/her sport upon his/her return to the classroom.

Making the Team/Cut Policy

Coaches may have to cut players from their teams due to established roster limits, ability levels, etc. In order to try out for a team, an athlete must be present during the designated try-out period. Players shall be notified as soon as possible whether or not there will be cuts. Squad selection is made at the discretion of the coach based on ability, effort, and attitude using a rubric with criteria made known to students prior to tryouts. Parents should NOT purchase expensive clothing or equipment until they are certain that their son or daughter has made the team.

Once regular season competitions begin "playing time" including starting lineups and in-game substitutions are made at the discretion of the coach. A player cut from a squad or team is eligible for other sports immediately. Upon the start of the competition schedule a player that is suspended or quits one sport is ineligible to participate in other sports during that season.

Multiple Sports & Extracurricular Activities

Playing multiple sports during the same season can be done with a written agreement between coaches of the various sports and the player/parent before the sport season begins. The player must designate one sport as their "primary activity." Coaches will work together with the student & parent in designating which practices/games the student will attend. In a case of conflict the "primary activity" will take precedence.

The Athletic Department recognizes that students should have an opportunity to engage in a broad range of learning experiences. However, a student attempts to participate in too many extracurricular activities will, undoubtedly, be in a position of conflicting responsibilities. Students are cautioned not to overextend themselves. Participation on athletic teams requires a demanding commitment of time to a rigorous schedule of practice and competition. Parents and student-athletes have the responsibility to notify a coach immediately whenever a conflict arises, and they should attempt to resolve the conflict. If it becomes apparent that conflicts will continue on a regular basis and a student cannot fulfill his/her obligation, he/she should withdraw from one of those activities.

Practices & Contests

Athletes are required to participate in all in-season practices/contests unless excused by the coach. Excessive unexcused absences will result in disciplinary action, which might include dismissal from the team. Excused absences must be approved in advance between the student, parent and head coach. Students who miss events without prior arrangements may face penalties as outlined by each Head Coach. Student athletes who repeatedly arrive late to or leave early from practice are subject to penalties at the recommendation of the Head Coach.

Student Athlete Code of Conduct

Participation on a Fort Knox athletic team is a privilege and the participants must earn the right to represent the school by conducting themselves is such a way that the image of Fort Knox would not be tarnished in any manner. Any participant whose conduct is judged to reflect a discredit upon him/her, the team, or the school will be subject to the disciplinary action as determined by the coach, and/or school Principal. It does not matter whether the conduct in question takes place during or outside school hours and sessions of sport seasons.

- Sportsmanship

  Because the players are respected and admired, they exert a great deal of influence over the actions and behavior of the spectators. Their display of sportsmanship is to be expected, encouraged, and rewarded. The following sportsmanlike behavior is to be adhered to by our players as they accept seriously the responsibility and privilege of representing the school and the community:

  a. Shake hands with opponents before (captains) and after the game.

  b. Respect the official's judgment in interpretation of the rules. Never argue or indicate a dislike for a decision.

  c. Accept both victory and defeat without being boastful or bitter. Be gracious whether the team wins or loses.

  d. Cooperate with the coach and fellow players in promoting good sportsmanship.

  e. Players are expected to refrain from the use of profanity, vulgar language, and rude gestures.

Coaches will establish rules and regulations for their athletes that fall under the umbrella of these guidelines and have the authority to assign consequences to players who violate them which may include, but not be limited to: running, pushups or other exercises, benching, or suspension from the team depending on the severity of the situation and the number of times the issue has been addressed. They shall have the full support of the Athletic Director and building Principals in making decisions regarding these issues. The intent of this policy is to create a reasonable set of minimum standards for athletes to promote the ideals of class and integrity throughout the athletic program. Individual athletic programs will have team sport specific rules in addition to this handbook. All team rules are submitted and approved through the athletic office.

- Relationship with Teachers

  Athletes are expected to be examples of good behavior in all aspects of their school life. If a faculty member reports an incident of unacceptable behavior or negative classroom attitude, the act will be discussed with the player and disciplinary action - if necessary - will be determined by the principal, athletic director and coach.

- Stealing

One purpose of the athletic program is to develop respect for the rights and property of others. If an athlete takes the property of another person or of the school or becomes knowingly involved in theft by receiving stolen property he shall be denied participation for one week of all athletic activity (practice & competition). If a student has a second violation he/she will be dismissed from the team.

- Hazing

Hazing is defined as any act or coercing another, including the victim, to do any act of initiation into any student or other organization that causes or creates a substantial risk of causing mental or physical harm to any person. A charge of "hazing" does not require serious or substantial physical or mental harm, but only the substantial risk of mental or physical harm. Therefore - in theory - any fear, embarrassment or pain caused by an act of hazing is not acceptable.

- Dress Code

Student-athletes represent the school to their peers, parents, and members of this and other communities. It is therefore important that they look, act, and play like athletes. Coaches are responsible for ensuring that the players do so in a manner that represents the individuals, the team, the school and the community in a positive light. Players who fail to abide by these rules are subject to disciplinary action and may have their participation withheld until they comply with the coaches' rules. Below is a list of expectations.

- Uniforms - both game and practice uniforms - should be regularly washed and properly cared for by the athlete. Coaches determine what will be worn on game day-jerseys or dressing up for school. Players are expected to dress according to a coach's specifications and should dress in a way that reflects the unity of the team. Each athlete is responsible to dress and groom appropriately while attending away competitions. The wearing of inappropriate attire could result in the removal from team competition on the specific day the infraction occurs. See your coach or athletic director if you are concerned about specific attire. Please take pride in your appearance and your team.
- During contests players' uniforms are to be worn as specified by the coaches/KHSAA rules according to what is appropriate for that sport and that uniform. For example: jerseys tucked in or matching undergarments. These determinations are expressed by the coach at the beginning of the season, and will be included in a coach's team rules and regulations.
- Players may not wear earrings or other jewelry while competing in their sport. Visible tattoos which are determined to be objectionable or offensive are to be covered during interscholastic contests.
- During practices students are to wear proper attire. If a practice uniform is provided they are to wear the practice uniform. Coaches may make rules and establish consequences for those athletes who do not bring their practice clothes. Players are not to take shirts off during practice (no "shirts vs. skins") and female athletes must wear appropriate tops over sports bras. While shirts and shorts do not have to adhere to the policies specified in the student dress code for school, a degree of modesty is expected and clothing shall not be excessively revealing or worn inappropriately.

- Tobacco, Alcohol & Drugs

The use and or possession of tobacco products, alcohol, or drugs are prohibited and any student who violates this rule is subject to the provisions of the Student Discipline code. The rules apply to all students during school hours and at all school activities including while being transported by any school vehicle. As has been stated in this handbook, participation in extra-curricular activities is a privilege not a right. It is a voluntary act on the part of the participants, and is therefore subject to more stringent requirements than are placed upon students not involved in extra-curricular activities. An athlete that uses illicit drugs or alcohol is vulnerable to added risk of injury to themselves or others.

Uniforms & Equipment

Athletes are responsible for the proper care of any school issued uniforms or equipment assigned by their coaches. All uniforms and equipment must be turned in to the coach **within one week of the completion of the season.** It is the athlete's responsibility to return equipment to the coach on the appointed days during this seven day period. Any lost or damaged uniform or equipment must be paid for by the student in order to be replaced. An athlete is ineligible to participate in any interscholastic competition until the athlete has turned in all equipment and uniforms from the preceding sport. For senior athletes, exclusion from participation in activities such as graduation may be enforced if uniforms, equipment, or payment are not received by the school. For spring sports, any student withdrawing who has not cleared with his/her coach will not receive final grades or records at their receiving school until cleared by the coach.

Transportation

It is the coach's responsibility to ensure that his/her athletes behave responsibly while on the bus. The following rules apply to all bus trips:

a. No food or beverages on the bus.
b. Athletes shall clean off their cleats before boarding, and not wear their cleats on the bus.
c. All trash (paper, tape, wrapping, bandages, etc.) shall be picked up before getting off.
d. Heads, arms, & hands shall remain inside the bus.
e. Athletes shall remain seated, refrain from throwing objects, and keep their hands to themselves.
f. Students will refrain from loud conversation, yelling, or making abrupt noises such as clapping that may distract the driver.
g. All equipment (bags, pads, and equipment) shall be placed so all emergency exits are clear.
h. Male & female athletes are not to sit together on the bus.
i. **No cell phone usage** – talking, texting, picture taking, recording, etc-is not permitted while on a school bus.

Students unable to follow these rules may receive punishment from the coach and/or principal, including being suspended from bus travel. Students are not permitted to drive their own vehicles to away contests. Parents are permitted to drive their own children to or from contests with the Coaches permission. In those instances parents must speak to the coach prior to the contest and put their request in writing.

Injuries & Insurance

All students of Fort Knox Schools must have in place insurance. Typically, our students are insured through Tri-care. In the event that an athlete sustains an injury (fracture, sprain, concussion, laceration, bruise), serious enough to require a physician's examination and treatment, the athlete must obtain written permission from a physician and his/her parent/guardian before being allowed to resume practice/competition. All such injuries must be reported to the nurse's office by the athlete, parent, or coach within 24 school hours of the injury. All doctors' notes regarding the injury and the athlete's fitness regarding ability to resume participation including rehabilitation steps and physical restrictions must be submitted to the nurse's office/athletic director to be noted and kept on file in the student's health record. In the event that a question arises regarding an injury/illness, the office should be contacted immediately.

Concussions

KHSAA has specific return-to-play protocol. This protocol requires that clearance to return must be determined and in writing from a medical doctor (M.D.)-not a Nurse Practitioner or Physician's Assistant.

Spectators

It is expected that all individuals involved with interscholastic athletics will display behavior that reflects the ideals of sportsmanship at all times. Courtesy should be shown toward opponents, officials, supervisors, spectators and administrators. It is important for all to recognize that the purpose of athletics is to promote the physical, mental, moral, social, and emotional well-being of the individual players. Most of all, it is the duty of all concerned with school athletics to remember that each athletic contest is only a game and should be kept in that perspective. Spectators are expected to:

a. Conform to accepted standards of good sportsmanship & behavior,
b. Respect officials, coaches, and players and extend all courtesies to them,
c. Refrain from disrespectful remarks and the use of noisemakers,
d. Obey regulations of the school. Those who do not conform will be brought to the attention of the school authorities,
e. Understand that schools are responsible for the conduct of their respective spectators, whether at home or away,
f. Refrain from the use of tobacco products while on school grounds.

The Kentucky High School Athletic Association (KHSAA) has implemented a Spectator Conduct Provision effective SY 2019-2020. It reads as follows:

Any adult spectator (adult who is not listed on the current roster of coaches for the school) at any KHSAA sanctioned interscholastic event (scrimmage, regular or postseason contest) who is removed by school administrators or by law enforcement (whether or not referred by an official) shall be suspended from attending, at minimum, the next contest at that level of competition and all other contests at any level in the interim.

As a Parent/Guardian, I:

1. Pledge to provide positive support, care, and encouragement for my child participating in sports,
2. Help my child enjoy the sport's experience by doing whatever I can; such as attending as many games as possible, being a respectable fan, or sharing in transporting my child to and from practices,
3. Realize that my child's playing time is determined by his/her awareness of the game, his/her ability, his/her maturity and the coaches' evaluations,
4. Place the emotional and physical well-being of my child ahead of my personal desire to win,
5. Support coaches and officials working with my child, in order to encourage a positive and enjoyable team experience for all,
6. Do my very best to make sports fun for my child,
7. Remember that the game is for the students-not the adults,
8. Conduct myself in such a manner as to bring positive feedback to our athletes, our school, and our community,
9. Refrain from undermining or spreading ill will by passing on gossip, rumors, and innuendos which would or could destroy team moral or cohesiveness,
10. Give my child space and time after games, except for encouragement,
11. **Support the 24 hour rule:** ***Parents are not permitted to discuss athletic concerns with the coach for at least 24 hours after an issue arises at a game, practice, or other instance. I will schedule an appointment with the head coach if an issue arises.***

SPECTATOR CONSEQUENCES (in incidences not related to KHSAA Spectator Conduct Provision)

1. **Verbal/written reminder of rules and regulations in student parent athletic handbook and removal from school property, as necessary.**
2. **Suspension from a minimum of one contest in which son/daughter's team is participating.**
3. **Suspension from rest of season in which son/daughter's team is participating.**
4. **Suspension from future seasons in which son/daughter's team is participating.**

***If parent reaches consequence #2 or above, a conference must be held with the athletic director before being permitted to return as a spectator.**

Communication

While it is hoped that all athletes, parents and staff members work for the common good of the individual and the school, disagreements are a part of high school athletics. For the purpose of improving relations between all parties involved, the following guidelines shall be followed.

If a parent has a complaint about a coach, the parent may contact the coach to establish a meeting to discuss their complaint. If - after this meeting - the matter is not resolved, the parent shall contact the Athletic Director to establish a meeting. If the matter is not resolved at this second meeting, the parent shall then contact the Principal for a third meeting. If the matter is not resolved at this third meeting the Superintendent will be contacted to intervene, and the Superintendent's decision shall be final. Coaches, parents and the administration shall not discuss other players or family members. Conferences shall focus on the complaint and a remedy to the problem that is most agreeable to all the parties involved. Part of established policy is that coaches are not obligated to play all players equally. The determination of who plays and who does not, or their assigned positions are determined by the coach at his or her discretion based on criteria including, but not limited to: ability level, experience, work ethic, attitude and past performance. A coach's system, strategy or play calling ability is not a subject up for discussion or debate in meetings.

If board members or administrators are contacted by parents about a concern regarding a player or coach, they shall inquire as to whether or not the issue has been addressed with the coach first. When appropriate, these parties shall direct the inquiring person to contact the coach, Athletic Director, Principal or Superintendent (in order). Any written correspondence should be passed on to the appropriate personnel, giving them the opportunity to respond. Anonymous notes, letters, and phone calls will receive no attention or official action. If school officials believe that the safety or well-being of student athletes may be in jeopardy, an investigation may be undertaken.

Coaches will establish their own rules and practice schedules (supported by the athletic director) within guidelines that have been established by the KHSAA. It shall be up to the coach when to have practice, how long to practice and what to practice. Both players and their parents should be given important information at the beginning of the season. Preseason parent meetings are where questions regarding a coach and his or her rules should first be addressed.

Athlete Recognition

- Varsity Letters are awarded to athletes based upon criteria developed by each Head Coach. This information should be shared at preseason parent meetings.
- Junior varsity and freshman certificates are given to those that meet the criteria developed by each Head Coach.

Coaches will determine which end-of-season awards are given and methods whereby recipients are elected.

Booster Club

Some of our athletic teams have a booster club in place that is composed of team parents. The members of the Athletic Department are not members of the booster clubs, therefore, they do not make booster related decisions. Booster clubs support such team activities as:

- Athletic Banquet
- Financial assistance for team trips and activities
- Purchase of uniform and equipment needs
- Team meals
- Concessions at home events

Booster clubs must comply with post requirements and maintain up to date and approved bylaws and constitutions through the ACS office and the Garrison Commander. A copy of the signed bylaws and constitution along with approval letter from Garrison must be kept on file in the athletic director's office. These must be renewed every two years.

In addition to the Post requirements, Fort Knox Middle High School is required to comply with state and federal guidelines in regards to Title IX. Booster Club expenditures must be reported to the school.

Fort Knox Athletics Contract

As a student athlete, I understand my responsibilities for participating in the Fort Knox Middle High School athletic program. I also understand the consequences for violating any of the expectations outlined in this contract.

As a student athlete, I, _____ pledge to:

- Communicate my sports schedule well in advance to my parents and teachers. Schedule my personal life so that it does not conflict with team expectations.
- Give my coach notice well in advance of any commitments I have that conflict with the
- team schedule.
- Discuss issues of concern with my coach, team captains and parents before they become
- problems.
- Maintain academic eligibility.
- Abide by all the training rules set forth by my coach, the athletic department, and school district.
- Make a commitment to my teammates and coaches to continually strive to contribute to the program and exercise responsible sportsmanship.
- Adhere to Athletic Student-Parent Handbook.

_____ _____

Signature of Student Athlete Date

Parent Copy Do Not Sign

As a parent/guardian, I, _____ pledge to:

- Grant permission for my daughter/son to participate in the program.
- Stay informed about my daughter/son's athletic schedule to minimize conflicts between our family schedule and the athletic schedule.
- Support my daughter/sons decision to commit to the team by attending as many team meetings, contests and special events as my schedule will permit.
- Work closely with all school personnel to assure an appropriate academic and athletic
- Experience for my daughter/son throughout her/his school career.
- Discuss issues of concern with my daughter/son and the coach before they become problems.
- Assure that my daughter/son attends all practices, contests, special events and follows all training rules.
- Affirm that it is the responsibility of the coach to determine strategy and player selection.
- Work cooperatively with coaches, other parents, and school personnel to assure a wholesome and successful athletic program for the school.
- Encourage good sportsmanship by demonstrating positive support for all players, coaches, and officials at every game, practice, or other sports event.
- Adhere to Athletic Student-Parent Handbook, specifically, in reference to pages 8 & 9- "Spectators/Spectator Consequences/Communication".

_____ _____

Signature of Parent/Guardian Date

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_____ _____

Signature of Parent/Guardian Date