

Oliver Ames High School Student-Athlete Handbook 2025-2026



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ATHLETIC PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Easton Public Schools Vision Statement:

The Easton Public School System educates children to become motivated, lifelong learners who, as confident and creative individuals, function to their full potential, understand and value differences, and are contributing members of their community able to meet the challenges of a global society.

MIAA Mission Statement:

The mission of the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association is to serve member schools and the maximum number of their students by providing leadership and support for the conduct of interscholastic activities which will enrich the educational experiences of all participants. The MIAA will promote interschool activities that provide lifelong and life-quality learning experiences to students while enhancing their achievement of educational goals.

Sportsmanship Responsibility:

Integrity, fairness, and respect are the principles of good sportsmanship, and these are lifetime values taught through athletics. You are the spokesperson for your school when you attend an athletic event. Your actions are viewed by family and friends, opposing fans, the local community and the media. Your display of good sportsmanship will demonstrate the most positive things about you and your school.

Oliver Ames High School Athletic Program Objectives:

- To provide opportunities for physical, mental and emotional growth.
- To develop confidence and self-esteem.
- To develop and improve time management skills.
- To develop and understand the concepts of individual and team play.
- To develop a sense of commitment, loyalty, cooperation and fairness.
- To learn that good sportsmanship means winning and losing with grace and dignity.
- To learn to make decisions under pressure.
- To foster town pride.

To obtain these objectives, the Oliver Ames administration has based the athletic program on sound principles. The following are most important:

- Extensive Offerings: Our program tries to include as many participants as possible. We offer a program that includes many sports, so that a student will discover a sport or sports in which they have both interest and ability. Varsity and junior varsity competition is offered at the high school level.
- Trained Personnel: Oliver Ames High School attempts at all times to have the most qualified and well-trained coaches available. Each coach realizes that all sports sponsored by

the school are part of the school program. As a result those in charge of such activities must utilize educational principles and educational aims if athletics are to be a worthwhile part of the overall school program.

· Controlled Competition: Life is competition, and the competition starts almost at the moment we were born. Competition is a life-long experience, and positive attitudes toward competition are developed through our athletic programs.

Easton Public Schools offers the following sports:

<u>Fall</u>	<u>Winter</u>	<u>Spring</u>
Cheerleading	Basketball (B/G)	Baseball
Cross Country (B/G)	Cheerleading	Lacrosse (B/G)
Field Hockey	Gymnastics	Outdoor Track (B/G)
Football	Ice Hockey (B/G)	Softball
Golf	Indoor Track (B/G)	Tennis (B/G)
Soccer (B/G)	Ski (B/G)	
Volleyball (G)	Swim (B/G)	
Middle School Field Hockey	Wrestling (B/G)	
Middle School Volleyball (G)	Middle School Basketball (B/G)	

PRE-TRYOUT REQUIREMENTS FOR PARTICIPATION

1. Arbiter Registration

Prior to the start of each season of participation, each student's parent/guardian must submit an online registration through Arbiter Registration prior to their first tryout or practice session. The registration link is located online on the Oliver Ames Athletics website and will be sent out via Parent Square.

Included in this registration are various acknowledgements including the student athlete handbook, participation agreement/parental permission, code of conduct, Mass. Hazing Law, MIAA Chemical Health Rule, Concussion Training Verification, ImPACT Testing Permission, Transportation Waiver, Medical Questionnaire, Pre-Participation Concussion Form, and Emergency Treatment Permission.

2. Physical Examination

Athletes must have an uploaded image of a current valid physical within Arbiter Registration before participation in any sport. No athlete will be permitted to play or tryout with an expired physical.

In order for a physical exam to be considered current and valid, it must have been given within 13 months of the date of any athletic involvement, have a “cleared for sports” or similar notation on the form, and must be signed by a doctor (electronic signature is acceptable)

3. ImPACT Baseline Concussion Test

All students that compete in contact/collision sports must complete an ImPACT Baseline Test. The ImPACT Baseline Test is a computerized test. In the event of an injury, this information can help assist the athletic trainer in diagnosis and treatment.

- Testing is offered through EPS at the beginning of each season. You **DO NOT** have to sign your child up for this test. Our Athletic Trainer will work with your child's coach to schedule this
- Tests are **valid for 2 years.** If the baseline test date is current and on file, this requirement is fulfilled.

4. Activity Fee

The Easton School Committee established an Activity Fee for students' participation in the Oliver Ames High School Athletic Program during the school year. The Activity Fee account will provide the supplementary funds required to maintain the athletic programs currently provided and will avoid the necessity of eliminating any sport from the program. Paying an Athletic Fee in no way guarantees a starting position or playing time.

The fee approved by the School Committee for the current school year is \$175 per student per sport (\$250 for Basketball, Football, Ice Hockey and Gymnastics) with a family cap of \$700.00 per year. Fee payment should be made as part of the online registration process via credit or debit card.

Activity fees are due prior to the first contest in a season. Failure to pay by the first contest without making accommodations in writing with the Oliver Ames athletic director will render an athlete ineligible.

A fee waiver is granted to athletes eligible for free or reduced lunch. Neither the athletic director nor the principal have the authority to waive athletic fees for any other reason. Other evidence that a hardship is involved should be brought to the school superintendent's attention.

Refunds:

Any student who is not selected for a team or quits prior to the first contest will be granted a refund. If the student decides to join a non-cut team, the payment will be applied towards the non-cut team.

Students who are on a team roster and quit or removed from the roster for disciplinary reasons after the first contest of a season are not eligible for a refund.

5. Academic Eligibility (MIAA Rule 58):

All athletes must meet all school and MIAA eligibility requirements which include but are not limited to:

A student must secure during the last marking period preceding a contest (e.g. second quarter marks and no semester grades determine third quarter eligibility) a passing grade, a full credit in the equivalent of four traditional year long major English courses.

A transfer student may not gain academic eligibility if they were not, or would not be, eligible at the sending school, unless transfer was necessitated by a move of parents and then eligibility would be determined by receiving schools eligibility standards.

To be eligible for the Fall season, students are required to have passed and received full credits grades for the previous academic year, the equivalent of four traditional year long major English courses.

Incoming freshmen are automatically eligible for the fall season when they enter high school. However, academic eligibility for freshmen will begin immediately as they join a high school team.

Summer school grades may count toward fall participation if the subject was pursued and failed during the immediately preceding academic year.

All cooperative team athletes must meet the eligibility standards of their own school as well as the host school.

6. Age Requirement (MIAA rules 59 & 60)

A student shall be eligible for interscholastic competition for no more than 12 consecutive athletics seasons beyond the first completion of the eighth grade.

A student shall be under 19 years of age, but may compete during the remainder of the school year, provided that his/her 19th birthday occurs on or after September 1 of that year. For freshmen competition, a student shall be under 16 years of age, but may compete during the remainder of the school year, provided that his/her 16th birthday occurs on or after September 1 of that year.

7. Health Insurance

All athletes must be enrolled in an HMO or health insurance plan. Families may purchase a

health insurance policy through the school system. Applications for this coverage are given to each student at the beginning of the school year.

MIAA RULES/ELIGIBILITY

As a member of the MIAA, we are required to adhere to MIAA rules. Below is a list of some of the pertinent MIAA rules regarding student eligibility. To see a full list of MIAA rules please visit miaa.net.

1. Rule 40 - Out of Season Activity

A Coach ***may not directly or indirectly require*** a student-athlete to participate in a sport or training program outside of the MIAA defined sports seasons. "Captains Practices" are not in any way sanctioned, encouraged, or recognized in any sport by the MIAA or Oliver Ames High School.

2. Rule 45-Loyalty to the High School Team: Bona Fide Team Rule

A student must not miss a high school practice or competition to compete in any MIAA recognized sport for a non-high school team. Students cannot be given special treatment (late arrival, early dismissal, etc.) for non-school athletic programs.

First Offense: Student athlete is suspended for one (1) contest and shall not participate in the next scheduled interscholastic competition that is part of their regular season schedule or in tournament play.

Second Offense: Student athlete is suspended for an additional 25% of the season.

3. Rule 48 & 49 Sportsmanship: Taunting

Students, coaches, and spectators can be ejected or suspended from a contest(s) for taunting, intending to injure another player, fighting, or other unsportsmanlike conduct.

4. Rule 62- Chemical Health/Alcohol/Drug/Tobacco

This rule is in effect from the first practice date for any sport in the fall until the completion of the final sport team in the spring or the end of the academic year, whichever comes last.

Once found in violation of the Oliver Ames High School Chemical Health Policy, students will be assessed the Oliver Ames penalties regarding school sponsored events (for example: dances, other teams sporting events) AND will lose contest eligibility based on MIAA Rule 62. Students found in violation will not be able to participate in scrimmages or play days until their full penalty has been served. Captains found in violation of the policy during their season will have their captaincy removed for the season.

First Violation Minimum Penalties:

The student shall lose eligibility for the next consecutive interscholastic events totaling 25% of all interscholastic contests in that sport. For the student, penalties will be determined by the current or next season of participation. NO EXCEPTION is permitted for a student who becomes

a participant in a treatment program. It is recommended that the student be allowed to remain at practice for the purpose of rehabilitation.

# of Events/Season	# of Events/Penalty
1-7	1
8-11	2
12-15	3
16-19	4
20 or over	5

Second and Subsequent Violation Minimum Penalties:

The student shall lose eligibility for the next consecutive interscholastic events totaling 60% of all interscholastic contests in that sport. Penalty can be reduced to 40% with the completion of an approved program.

# of Events/Season	# of Events/Penalty	# of Events/Season	# of Events/Penalty
1-3	1	12-13	7
4	2	14	8
5-6	3	15-16	9
7-8	4	17-18	10
9	5	19	11
10-11	6	20 or over	12

TEAM ORIENTED INFORMATION

1. Tryouts

Attendance at tryouts is mandatory. Tryouts will be a minimum of 3 days.

Tryout Schedule:

Fall: Starts the second Monday preceding Labor Day (Football begins on the 3rd Friday preceding Labor Day)

Winter: Starts the first Monday after Thanksgiving

Spring: Starts the third Monday in March

Cheer: In accordance with the regulations governed by the Massachusetts Secondary School Administrators' Association (MSSAA), Cheerleading tryout dates for the next Fall Season occurs in May or June of the current school year. This will be the only tryout granted to potential candidates in grades 8 through 11. An additional tryout may occur in

August on an individual basis due to extenuating circumstances (injury with doctor's note, transfer student, etc.). Requests should be made to the Athletic Director's office.

2. Team Selection

Students should understand that participation in athletics is a privilege. Students try out voluntarily and for some programs there is a risk of not being selected to a team. It is the judgment of the coaches that dictates the selection and number of participants for teams. Before the tryout process begins, coaches will provide an explanation of their expectations and tryout criteria. It is the student's responsibility to demonstrate that they can meet those expectations. Students who do not make a team will be informed as to the reasons by the coach. All students have the ability to join any non-cut team up to two weeks following the official start date of a season.

It is also important to remember that there are no guarantees and student athletes who have previously played on a team are not automatically rostered the following year with the exception of seniors who have participated in the program for the previous 3 years. Additionally, a student-athlete's participation on a youth, club, travel, and/or previous school team does not guarantee membership on a team at Oliver Ames High School.

3. Playing Time

It is important to remember that participation on an athletic team at Oliver Ames High School is a **PRIVILEGE** that is **EARNED** and not a right. Unlike recreational teams, equal or guaranteed playing time does not exist.

To maintain membership on the team, student-athletes must accept all the responsibilities and commitments of a student-athlete (ex., attend practice, work hard, be a good teammate). These are the minimum requirements for all student-athletes and do not guarantee and/or help increase playing time. Although this may be difficult to accept and may lead to frustration at times, this is not indicative of unfair treatment by the coach.

Education Based Athletics provides an opportunity for our student-athletes to learn values and skills that help prepare them for the future well beyond graduation. These values and skills can be developed through participation regardless of the level of play and/or amount of playing time.

Every coach has the responsibility and authority to determine playing time including which athletes should start, who should play what position, and how long each student-athlete should play. These decisions are made by the head coach with the help of their staff. These decisions are often difficult and are approached very seriously. Ultimately, decisions are made in the best interest of the team. Philosophies regarding playing time are different at each level of play. Additionally, a student athlete's participation, including the level of play, amount of playing time, captainship, and/or status as a starter on a youth, club, travel, and/or previous school's team, does not guarantee those will be the same at Oliver Ames High School.

4. Purpose of Sub Varsity

Subvarsity teams exist to provide a developmental level where athletes learn skills and strategies to prepare them for varsity competition. While the student-athlete's age, size, or skill level may be the limiting factor in not making the varsity team, participation on a JV or Freshman team may enhance the student-athlete's potential to make the Varsity team in the future. Seniors may not play on JV teams. JV teams may consist of Juniors, Sophomores, and Freshman. Froshmore teams may consist of Sophomores and Freshman. Only Freshman can be members of the Freshman team.

At the subvarsity levels, the emphasis is balanced between participation, skill development and winning. Every coach has the responsibility and authority to make decisions on all student-athletes playing time. The coaching staff will play all team members for as much time as is practical. Most student-athletes will play, but playing time will not be equal.

5. Purpose of Varsity

Varsity teams exist to provide student-athletes with a chance to compete at the highest level of interscholastic athletics and have a greater emphasis on winning. Varsity teams may consist of Seniors, Juniors, Sophomores, and Freshman.

In an effort to win on the varsity level, a coach will use the most competitive, skilled team members and those players will get the most playing time. However, teams cannot be successful without committed substitutes or "non-starters". These athletes have to be ready to step up when needed, and practice hard to help make the team the best it can be. They should constantly strive to move up to the "starting" role.

Not every student athlete will play in, and in some cases, dress for every game. Playing time will not be equal.

6. Commitment/Attendance Requirements

Participating in high school athletics is a significant commitment for both student-athletes and families.

Practices:

Our teams practice up to six times a week for 2+ hours per practice. Practice times range approximately from 2:30PM-8:00PM and include weekends and school vacations. Practices may include reviewing game films, strength training, and team meetings. Attendance at practice is mandatory.

Games:

Our teams compete in up to 20+ games per season. Game times range from 3:30PM-8:00PM and include weekends and school vacations. The host school is responsible for setting the date/time of the game. Attendance at games is mandatory.

All athletes are excused from team activities for illness, injury, academic assistance, family emergencies, or religious holiday observation reasons.

*It is extremely important that a coach be notified if a student-athlete is not going to be present at a practice or game. Practice is where plans for upcoming contests are developed and perfected. Suspension or dismissal from the team may take place as a result of such unexcused and or unnotified absences.

Attendance Requirement:

All students must be in attendance at school the **ENTIRE** day in order to participate in a practice or game scheduled for that day. Any student athlete who accrues an unauthorized absence from a class will not be allowed to participate in a practice or game scheduled for that day.

Any student absent the day preceding a contest may be ineligible to participate in the contest unless the coach and athletic director/principal agree the absence was excused. This includes weekends and holidays. Exceptions to the above policies may be granted only by the principal, assistant principal or athletic director. Any student who is absent from school and participates in a contest/practice without the aforementioned authorization shall be suspended from that team for five days. This suspension shall be imposed by the athletic director.

A student that is tardy or misses any part of the school day resulting from not feeling well, being tired, or any illness, regardless of whether or not they have a doctor's note, is **NOT eligible** to participate in athletics that day. Example: a student comes in late because they didn't feel well in the morning, went to an urgent care center and got a doctor's note. That student is not eligible that day.

A student who has a pre-scheduled doctor's appointment and misses part of the school day is eligible provided they meets the following criteria:

- a) The student must be in school as much of the day as possible. They must come to school in the morning if the appointment is later and come back to school after the appointment. Consideration will be given based on the location of the doctor's office and travel time.
- b) The student must provide a signed doctor's note approved by the athletic director or principal verifying the visit. The note needs to include either a clearance to participate in athletics, or that it was a well visit (i.e a physical).

The school nurse has eligibility discretion for any student they send home or to the doctor for an issue requiring immediate attention (ex: suspected serious contagious illness like strep, cellulitis, unidentified rash or any other similar urgent medical issue). The eligibility decision by the school nurse will be based on the following:

- a) The Student returns to school that day with minimal school time missed including

timely return from home or the doctor visit.

b) Whether the suspected illness or injury is ruled out by a doctor (ex: strep throat). A doctor's clearance note is required.

c) Whether the issue treated by the doctor is resolved and does not affect the student's ability to compete. A doctor's clearance note is required.

School/Family Vacations

Every team member is expected to be present for all team practices and games including those over school vacations. Because of scheduling parameters, many of our teams practice and/or play during scheduled school vacations. During vacation periods, students may be excused from participation to accompany parents or to participate in family activities, on a written request of the student's parent or guardian to the coach or athletic director.

Students who miss activities during vacation periods will be required to attend as many practices as they missed before being eligible to resume participation in contests and take the chance of losing their positions to other competitors. However, they will not otherwise be penalized.

7. Team Rules and Regulations

At the beginning of each season a coach, with the approval of the Athletic Director, may issue a set of rules and regulations for their team. These rules supplement, but do not replace or supersede and cannot conflict with MIAA, Oliver Ames High School, or department rules. It is suggested that these rules be in written form and passed out to the team to sign in agreement.

A coach has the right to enforce all rules related to tardiness or absence from practices and games, profanity, theft, vandalism, or any other inappropriate behavior which are deemed to be detrimental to the team. The Athletic Director also has the right to suspend/dismiss team members for such behaviors should it be deemed necessary.

Students ejected from games due to unsportsmanlike conduct have to complete all MIAA sanctions, including the Sportsmanship training class in order to regain eligibility to participate.

8. Parent Meeting with Coaches

Each High School Program will hold a preseason informational meeting for parents after rosters are finalized. At this meeting, information will be distributed covering but not limited to the following:

- Team Rules & Expectations
- Attendance Policies
- MIAA Policies
- Practice Policy/Weekends
- Coach Contact Information

9. Changing Sports During a Season:

Student-athletes may participate in only one MIAA sanctioned sport in any season (Fall, Winter, or Spring). The Athletic Department discourages changing from one sport to another after a season begins. Athletes will only be allowed to change teams if they are a member in good standing after notifying both coaches involved and receiving permission from the athletic director. Sport specific restrictions may prohibit changing of sports once the season has begun as well.

ATHLETIC TRAINER

Oliver Ames contracts a full time, licensed Athletic Trainer (AT) to evaluate, treat, and rehabilitate athletic injuries as they occur. The AT provides medical coverage for most athletic contests and practices. The AT is available to student athletes at the conclusion of the school day until duties and responsibilities are completed.

At certain times of day and during different seasons the athletic training facility gets crowded, and the athletic trainer is extremely busy. During these times, only athletes who need treatment or taping should be present. Athletic training services will be granted on a first come, first served basis on practice days. On game days, athletes will be treated in an order that will allow bus or game commitments to be met.

The AT will be on site for home contests, which may include weekends and holidays as determined by the Athletic Department. In the event of an injury, the AT will evaluate and recommend the direction of care and clearance level.

All athletic related injuries, even though minor, must be reported to the Athletic Trainer or coach immediately, and an injury report placed on file. Any significant injury or a change in the student athlete's health subsequent to the pre-participation physical that affects the health and safety of the student-athlete (to include injuries that have occurred outside of OA athletics) must be reported to the Athletic Training Office.

Return to Play (RTP)

After any injury, a student may not return to competition without clearance by the athletic trainer.

Any time a student athlete visits their own provider, a note is required to come back with a diagnosis and status of participation. Student athletes will remain ineligible until a valid note is received from the appropriate physician (MD/DO, PA-C, NP) that clears them to play. The licensed Athletic Trainer may clear the athlete for participation only when this requirement has been met. Note: In some situations, a return to play protocol may be required to be completed prior to returning to full athletic participation.

The Athletic Trainer has final say on medical clearance for return to play, and is the schools' designated healthcare professional for all such decisions.

Head Injuries

Any student athlete who exhibits signs, symptoms or behaviors consistent with a concussion shall be immediately removed from the practice or competition and cannot return to practice or competition that day. Whenever a student-athlete is suspected to have sustained a concussion while participating in the athletic program, the injured athlete's parents/guardians shall be notified in a timely fashion.

COMMUNICATION/CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Participation in athletics should be a rewarding experience for all parties involved; student, coach and parent. There is no doubt that participation tends to be emotionally charged, and dealing constructively with these emotions can be an excellent learning experience. From time to time conflicts and issues between a student athlete and their coach may arise. When this happens, it is important that it be addressed immediately and as directly as possible.

Communication Protocol

Student athletes and their parents are asked to use the following process when seeking a resolution to conflict or issues between a student-athlete and a coach. If there is no satisfactory resolution reached, they will move to the next step. Every effort should be made to resolve issues at the lowest level possible. In order for this to happen, coaches are to make all team members feel they are approachable and reasonable.

Step 1: Athlete goes directly to coach

Important note: One of the most important teaching and learning opportunities in educational athletics is for young people to learn to address and resolve issues affecting them and to advocate for themselves. Therefore, unless there are extenuating circumstances, parents should **only** approach a coach regarding an issue **after** the student-athlete has spoken to the coach and attempted to resolve the issue.

Step 2: Athlete & parent go directly to coach

In order for the discussion between a parent and coach to be productive, parents should request an appropriate time to speak to the coach about an issue. It is **not** appropriate to approach a coach to discuss an issue in any of the following situations:

- Either prior to or immediately following a game
- During a practice session
- During a time when other teammates are present
- A time when it is apparent that there will not be sufficient time to allow for a complete

discussion

Step 3: Athlete or parent contacts Athletic Director

The Athletic Director will inform the coach that this meeting will take place. If the discussion between the parent(s) and Athletic Director does not result in a satisfactory conclusion, then a meeting will be scheduled with the parent(s), student, coach and athletic director in an attempt to reach a satisfactory resolution.

Step 4: Athlete and/or parent contacts Principal

The Principal will inform the Athletic Director that this contact has been made.

Step 5: Submission to Superintendent and/or School Committee

When conflicts arise which cannot be resolved by the building principal, the conflict will be submitted to the Superintendent and/or the School Committee in a timely fashion for appropriate action.

Appropriate concerns to discuss with coaches:

- The treatment of your child, mentally and physically.
- Ways to help your child improve & develop.
- Concerns about your student-athlete's behavior.

It is difficult to accept your child not playing as much as you may hope. Coaches are professionals and make decisions based on what they believe to be best for all students involved. As you have seen from the list above, certain things can be and should be discussed with your child's coach. Other things, such as those listed next, must be left to the discretion of the coach.

Issues NOT appropriate for parents to discuss with coaches:

- Playing time
- Team strategy
- Play calling
- Other student-athletes

Retribution

Oliver Ames High School and its coaches are committed to ensuring that there shall be no "retribution" in any form for student-athletes or parents who express an issue or concern. Student-athletes and parents should feel confident that there will be no penalty or "retribution" for any issue or concern that is expressed appropriately. If at any time a student-athlete or their parents suspect that any form of "retribution" is surfacing, they should contact the athletic director immediately.

STUDENT ATHLETE EXPECTATIONS

Academic Expectations:

Oliver Ames High School athletes are expected and encouraged to maintain the highest level of academic achievement possible. Extra help sessions and make-up work are expected to be completed as soon as possible.

On a practice day, athletes should stay after school to make up work whenever necessary. Students should inform coaches in advance when practice time will be missed due to academic obligations. Once the obligations are completed, athletes are expected to report to practice as soon as possible.

If advance notification was not given to the coach, students should ask their teacher for a note explaining their tardiness. Students arriving late to practice due to make-up work or extra help will not suffer an athletic team penalty provided they inform the coach in advance or bring a note from their teacher.

On game days, if time allows, students should ask their classroom teacher if make-up work or extra help may be postponed to a practice day. A classroom teacher may or may not grant a postponement.

Code of Conduct:

Student-athletes are considered representatives of Easton Public Schools and the Code of Conduct in the Student Handbook will apply to student-athletes as they participate in tryouts, practice, and competition. Participation in EPS athletic programs is a privilege that carries with it serious personal commitment and responsibilities, and can be revoked at any time if school rules are broken.

Decisions for dismissal or suspensions from a sport for infractions of the Athletic code will be made by the head coach, athletic director and principal.

School Discipline - Detention:

An athlete with a school discipline obligation or detention is expected to fulfill the discipline obligation before reporting to practice and/or game. Students cannot expect and should not request discipline action to be postponed or canceled for any athletic reason. An athlete may be removed from the team for excessive disciplinary problems, but may be reinstated upon sufficient evidence of improvement. It is expected that athletes at Oliver Ames High School will be model citizens both in and out of school.

School Suspensions:

Any athlete suspended from school, including in school suspensions, may not practice, play, or be with the team on the days in which they are serving the suspension.

Physical Education Attendance:

An athlete excused from physical education class due to illness or injury, may not participate in a practice, scrimmage, or game for that day.

Captain Expectations

- Captains are expected to be leaders on the field, in school, at off season sporting events and in the community.
- Captains are expected to have an in-depth knowledge of team rules and assume duties as outlined by their coach as well as all student/athlete responsibilities
- Captains must communicate with their coaches and their teammates and be a liaison in the event of any problems affecting the team or its members.
- Captains may be asked to meet with the Director of Athletics during the school year to discuss their athletic programs.

Captains of teams may be relieved of their position by the coach, in consultation with the Director of Athletics at any time for violation of any MIAA, team, department, school rule or if the head coach determines their behavior is not consistent with the leadership expectations of an Oliver Ames captain. This includes but is not limited to displays of poor sportsmanship, disrespect or lack of cooperation with coaches, poor work ethic during practices or games, bad attitude, negative leadership, missing competitions etc.

Captain Selection:

Captains shall be selected before the start of the season (any time from the last day of the previous season up to the 1st scheduled contest of the next season)

The following process will be executed when selecting all Team Captains:

1. Players interested in being named a captain should write a paragraph / letter on why they want to be captain including why they would be a good captain. The letter will only be viewed by the coach, not open to the public. Completion of the letter will result in the player's name on the ballot for the player advisory vote.
2. The coach shall submit a list of all captain candidates to the Athletic Director **prior** to the advisory vote. That list will be screened by the Administration for any school violations (i.e. suspensions or other behavior deemed detrimental to the school) that would render the candidate ineligible to be elected. A screened and approved list of candidates will be returned to the coach by the AD.

3. Players make recommendations to the coach on captains by voting. Each player can cast a single vote for up to 2 nominees.
4. Coach has complete discretion. The coach can go with the player's advisory vote or can adjust based on coach's expertise.
5. The number of captains each year is determined by the head coach based upon needs and makeup of the current team. If more than 2 are requested then the Athletic Director must approve.

Team Travel

Oliver Ames High School provides transportation to most away games/events. All team members are required to travel to and from all away games/events on transportation provided by the Athletic Department.

Exceptions to this policy must be requested in writing to the athletic director by an athlete's parent at least 24 hours prior to the event. Under certain circumstances licensed students with written parental permission will be allowed to transport themselves to and/or from away contests.

Under no circumstances are students allowed to transport other students to or from away events. Any practice venue will be treated like a home venue for these purposes.

Athletes are expected to conduct themselves in a proper manner on all bus trips. Yelling at passing cars, obscene gestures, unruly conduct, or other forms of inappropriate behavior will not be tolerated and will result in disciplinary action.

Appearance:

Appearance while representing the school shall at all times be reasonable and neat. The athletic dress code pertains to both home and away games. Coaches may refuse to take a player to any away game if their appearance would dishonor the school.

Nutritional Needs of Athletes:

It is essential that all athletes are educated regarding their nutritional needs and the consequences that may result from poor nutrition and eating disorders. Eating disorders are serious conditions which compromise one's health and wellbeing. Athletes concerned with eating behaviors, need to seek professional medical assistance. The coaches, athletic trainer, guidance counselor, school psychologist, clinical counselor, and school nurse are good resources for counseling and advice.

An athlete who practices or plays in a high school game during the day should eat a nutritional dinner, study to maintain good grades, and go to bed at a reasonable hour. Proper diet and rest are essential for maintaining good academic and athletic performance.

ATHLETIC FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT

1. Locker Rooms

Student athletes are not permitted in the locker room without the supervision of a coach. Student-athletes are responsible for locking up their personal belongings and should avoid leaving anything of value in the locker room. Locks are issued to teams utilizing the locker room at the beginning of the season. Oliver Ames High School cannot be responsible for any lost, damaged, or stolen items.

2. Care of Facilities

Students are expected to treat all facilities, both home and away, with proper care. Oliver Ames High School prides itself in the quality facilities that have been provided for use by area athletes. Only proper care and respect will keep them this way. Vandalism is cause for dismissal from a team and further disciplinary action by the school administration. Teams are responsible for cleaning up the area around their bench and the locker room before leaving the premises after practice and games. Be especially vigilant about picking up water bottles from gyms and fields. Please do not leave food items anywhere other than a trash receptacle. If locker rooms or facilities are consistently kept in disarray, the team will forfeit the privilege of using school facilities.

Athletic Shoes: At no time should shoes with cleated soles be worn inside the building as they track dirt, grass, debris into the school. Serious injury can also occur from slipping on cement or tiled surfaces.

Weight Room: The weight room is available to student-athletes with the supervision of their coach. All students must be supervised and treat the facilities with care.

3. Equipment and Uniforms:

Student athletes are responsible for all team-issued uniforms and equipment and for its proper care and retention from the date of issue to the date of return. Student athletes must return all team-issued uniforms and equipment to their coach at the termination of team membership (within 24 hours) or the conclusion of the season, whichever occurs first. Athletes failing to return all issued equipment/uniforms, or returning equipment damaged through misuse are responsible to pay the current replacement cost at time of the loss. In the event that the equipment is found and/or returned after the payment a refund may be made.

1. Parents will be notified that their child owes equipment/uniform or must pay the replacement cost.
2. An athlete will become ineligible to try out and/or participate on an athletic team or co-curricular activity if they have not submitted reimbursement.
3. A senior athlete who has failed to return equipment or failed to pay for lost items will not be allowed to walk at graduation and may have their high school diploma withheld.

SPORTSMANSHIP

Sportsmanship is a top priority at Oliver Ames High School. The Athletic Department expects all parties present at an event to display the highest possible level of sportsmanship. Players, coaches, and spectators should treat opponents, game officials, and visiting spectators with respect.

All athletic events are conducted in accordance with the rules and regulations of the MIAA, the NCAA or the National Federation. Any form of baiting or taunting of officials, players or fans will not be tolerated at any Oliver Ames High School athletic event. Likewise, profanity, objectionable cheers, or gestures have no place at an athletic event, be it at Oliver Ames High School or at an away game/event.

Any Oliver Ames student-athlete who engages in the use of inappropriate or unsportsmanlike social media directed toward another person, team, or school is subject to suspension from the team and other possible disciplinary action.

The MIAA reserves the right to warn, censure, place on probation, or suspend up to one calendar year any player, team, coach, game, school official or school determined to be acting in a manner contrary to the standards of good sportsmanship. Oliver Ames High School, in turn, reserves the right to impose the same penalties on spectators displaying poor sportsmanship at any athletic event, home or away.

Attendance as a Spectator at School Activities:

Students and their guests are expected to maintain high standards of behavior and sportsmanship before, during and after athletic events.

These standards include appropriate use of social media. Students who engage in the use of inappropriate or unsportsmanlike social media directed toward another person, team, or school will be subject to disciplinary action.

Students who violate these standards will have their privilege of attending school activities denied for a period of one month or more. A student's permission to return to school activities may be conditioned on being accompanied by and sitting with their parent(s)/guardian(s). In addition, the student may be placed on administrative probation for a specified period, and subsequent problems could result in the loss of the privilege of attending all activities for that year.

Oliver Ames Fan Code of Conduct

- Tolerance
- Integrity
- Goodwill
- Enthusiasm
- Respect

- Spirit

Acceptable Fan Behavior

- Be respectful of game officials, players, coaches, opposing fans and facilities
- Recognize outstanding performances on both teams.

Unacceptable Fan Behavior

- Making derogatory chants, songs, or gestures
- Negative cheering and chants directed towards the either team
- Calling out an opponent's name or number
- Calling opponents derogatory nicknames
- Using horns or noise makers of any kind
- Throwing objects into a crowd or at an individual
- Distracting participants, obstructing vision, or directly affecting play

Consequences

In addition to all local ordinances and policies, Oliver Ames school officials may enforce upon unruly fans the following:

1. A warning for the behavior that is considered unsportsmanlike
2. Ejection from the contest
3. Suspension from future Oliver Ames contests, both home and away
4. Report made to the MIAA and/or local police

ATHLETIC AWARDS

Varsity Letter/Pins/Certificates

Over the course of their high school career, student athletes are eligible to receive:

- One chenille varsity letter "OA" the first time they meet the varsity letter requirements
- One sports-specific pin for each year, in each varsity sport they participate
- One captains pin for each year they were a captain of a varsity team
- One varsity certificate for every year they were a member of a varsity team

Letters and service pins are distributed at the conclusion of the season, typically at the end of the season banquet.

Varsity Letter Requirements

To receive their varsity letters athletes must complete the season in good standing according to the MIAA regulations, school handbook, team rules and Code of Conduct. The Student-Athlete has to compete in a minimum of 50% of all varsity scheduled contests to be considered for a varsity letter. Certain sports including cross country, swim, indoor and outdoor track etc. have more specific requirements.

At the discretion of the coach, a senior who has been part of the program for at least two years may be awarded a letter for faithful participation with the team even though failing to meet varsity letter playing requirements.

Injury which prevents the participation of a player after the season has started, may not prevent the awarding of a letter if the coach recommends it. Student-athletes who participated on the sub-varsity level but are included on a varsity roster for the postseason are not granted a varsity letter.

The coach of each team is responsible for giving the names of athletes receiving awards to the athletic department at the conclusion of the season.

Team Awards

Any awards recognized at the end of the season banquet is at the discretion of the head coach (ie: Team MVP, Unsung Hero, etc)

Hockomock League Awards

Hockomock League MVP, All-Stars and Honorable Mentions are selected by league coaches in each sport at the conclusion of the season. MVP or All-Star recipients will receive a plaque by the athletic department.

All-Scholastic Awards

At the conclusion of each season, various media outlets select all-scholastic teams. Media outlets ask coaches to nominate student-athletes to be considered for all-scholastic team selections. Coaches are not required to nominate student-athletes, and nominations are not restricted to seniors. Once the nominations are sent, the media staff determines who is selected. Oliver Ames High School and/or its coaches are not included in the selection process.

Oliver Ames Athletic Department Awards

Ed Rollinson Award:

Condition: Intended for the true unsung hero who has not received awards or other recognition. There is no criterion for the number of years the athlete played the sport. Captains are not excluded from selection for the award as long as they fit the other criteria.

Val Muscato Award:

Condition: the most outstanding OA male athlete based on athletic performance (multiple sports is a plus), leadership & citizenship

Sue Rivard Award:

Condition: the most outstanding OA female athlete based on athletic performance (multiple sports is a plus), leadership & citizenship

APPENDICES

The following policies and laws are included in, and apply in their entirety, as part of the Oliver Ames Student –Athlete Handbook:

Appendix SAH-1: Student & Coach Eligibility: Chemical Health/Alcohol/Drugs/Tobacco (MIAA Rule 62); and Serving Chemical Health Suspensions (OAHS Policy)

Appendix SAH-2: Sportsmanship – Athlete, Coach Disqualifications/Suspensions (MIAA Rule 49.3-49.10)

Appendix SAH-3: Taunting (MIAA Rule 48)

Appendix SAH-4: Bona Fide Team Member (MIAA Rule 45)

Appendix SAH-5: Hazing Law (Mass State Law 269 Sections 16-19)

Appendix SAH-6: Concussion and Suspected Head Injury Policy (EPS)

Appendix SAH-7: Policy Prohibiting and Addressing Bullying (EPS)

Appendix SAH-8: Harassment Policy (EPS)

Appendix SAH-1: Chemical Health; Drugs, Alcohol, Tobacco (MIAA Rule 62) & Serving Chemical Health Suspensions (OAHS Policy)

As a member of the MIAA, Oliver Ames High School will strictly enforce the following rules:

62.1 From the earliest fall practice date, to the conclusion of the academic year or final athletic event (whichever is latest), a student shall not, regardless of the quantity, use, consume, possess, buy/sell, or give away any beverage containing alcohol; any tobacco product(including e-cigarettes, VAP pens and all similar devices); marijuana (including synthetic); steroids; drug paraphernalia: or any controlled substance. This policy includes products such as “NA or near beer,” inhalants (defined as any substance that produces a mind-altering effect when inhaled), and misuse of over-the-counter medications and substances used for the purposes of altering one’s mental state. It is not a violation for a student to be in possession of a legally defined drug specifically prescribed for the student’s own use by their doctor.

This MIAA statewide minimum standard is not intended to render “guilt by association”, e.g. many student-athletes might be present at a party where only a few violate this standard. This rule represents only a minimum standard upon which schools may develop more stringent requirements.

If a student in violation of this rule is unable to participate in interscholastic sports due to

injury or academics, the penalty will not take effect until that student is able to participate again.

Minimum PENALTIES: (also see Rule 32.8 – Ineligible Students)

First violation: When the principal confirms, following an opportunity for the student to be heard, that a violation occurred, the student shall lose eligibility for the next consecutive interscholastic contests (regular season and tournament) totaling 25% of all interscholastic contests in that sport. No exception is permitted for a student who becomes a participant in a treatment program. It is recommended that the student be allowed to remain at practice for the purpose of rehabilitation. During the suspension the disqualified student may not be in uniform and their attendance at the competition site is determined by the high school principal. All decimal part of an event will be truncated i.e. all fractional parts of an event will be dropped when calculating the 25% of the season.

Second and subsequent violations: When the principal confirms, following an opportunity for the student to be heard, that a violation occurred, the student shall lose eligibility for the next consecutive interscholastic contests (regular season and tournament) totaling 60% of all interscholastic contests in that sport. All decimal parts of an event will be truncated i.e. all fractional parts of an event will be dropped when calculating the 60% of the season.

If after the second or subsequent violations the student of their own volition becomes a participant in an approved chemical dependency program or treatment program, the student may be certified for reinstatement in MIAA activities after a minimum of 40% of events provided the student was fully engaged in the program throughout that penalty period. The high school principal in collaboration with a Chemical Dependency Program or Treatment Program must certify that the student is attending or issue a certificate of completion. If a student does not complete the program, the penalty reverts back to 60% of the season. All decimal part of an event will be truncated i.e. All fractional parts of an event will be dropped when calculating the 40% of the season.

Penalties shall be cumulative each academic year, but serving the penalty could carry over for one year. Or, if the penalty period is not completed during the season of violation, the penalty shall carry over to the student's next season of actual participation, which may affect the eligibility status of the student during the next academic year. (e.g. A student plays only football: he violates the rule in winter and/or the spring of the same academic year: he would serve the penalty [ies] during the fall season of the next academic year). If a student is not an athletic participant for one full year after affirmation of a violation, then the penalty period would close and the student would face no consequence. Prior to any chemical health violation a student's request for and enrollment in a substance abuse treatment shall not in and of itself constitute a violation of the chemical health/alcohol/drugs/tobacco Rule 62.

62.2 During practice or competition, a coach shall not use any tobacco product (penalty: same as students').

62.3 Anabolic androgenic steroid use and performance enhancing drugs (PED's) are of grave

concern. Coaches need to send a clear, unequivocal message that unauthorized steroid use and PED's are not acceptable. This discussion should highlight the fact that the penalties for other substance use apply. Short and long-term health effects can also motivate student-athletes to protect their future. Coaches should take a proactive role, learning about steroids, and then providing this information to their athletes.

Steroids can, with proper diet and weight training, increase muscle development; however, as is typical with most "get-rich-quick" schemes, steroid use has serious short and long term consequences.

Normal and equal musculature development can occur without steroid use. Although the natural process takes longer, muscle tone will last longer and does not carry the harmful side effects of steroids.

Most coaches would not promote steroid use intentionally. Total silence by coaches however condones use in some young people's minds. Even though steroids may not be mentioned when it is suggested to an athlete that their success is limited only by a lack of weight and/or strength, without a disclaimer the statement can be a motivation to use steroids. The pervasiveness of the drugs that allow for development of increased weight under the aforementioned circumstances is a coercive power that is difficult for young athletes to resist without knowing what the side effects of the drugs may be.

The issue goes beyond protecting the integrity of sport. The use of steroids in sports is cheating. We must oppose the use of steroids for both health and ethical reasons.

OAHS Rule Pertaining to MIAA Rule 62

In spite of the fact that student-athletes are ineligible to participate in contests during Chemical Health suspensions, they are expected to practice with the team during the suspension. Any student-athlete must complete the season in which they are serving any portion of a Chemical Health suspension in order for the suspended contests to count toward the suspension. In other words, if a student athlete quits before the end of a season in which they are serving a suspension, none of the contests in that sports season will count toward the suspension.

Student-athletes ineligible under MIAA rule 62 are **not** allowed to attend competitions, home or away, during the suspension.

Appendix SAH-2: Sportsmanship – Athlete, Coach Disqualifications/Suspensions (MIAA Rule 49.3 - 49.13)

49.3 Any student-athlete, who is disqualified from a competition, including a jamboree, scrimmage, etc., shall not participate in the next scheduled interscholastic competition that is

part of their regular season schedule, or in tournament play. The disqualified student-athlete is ineligible to participate in any contest at the same level of play in that sport until the next contest, or the next two (2) contests in the sports of baseball, ice hockey, and soccer, have been completed. (Note: In the sport of wrestling, the disqualified student-athlete is ineligible to participate in any and all contests during the next scheduled date of competition).

Disqualifications in the following sports per specific sport rules: field hockey-Rule 68.3; basketball-five (5) personal fouls; girls' lacrosse (2) yellow cards; ice hockey - six (6) minutes in penalties and game misconduct (Rule 72.16); wrestling-technical disqualification, do not apply to the above prescribed penalties. During the suspension the disqualified student may not be in uniform and their attendance at the competition site is determined by the high school principal.

49.3.1 A two (2) game suspension will be given to any student-athlete who is ejected from any contest for the following reasons:

- o Fighting
- o Punching or kicking an opposing player
- o Spitting at someone

49.4 Any coach disqualified by an official from an inter-school competition (including a jamboree, scrimmage, etc.) is ineligible to coach any competition in that sport at the same level (e.g. junior varsity, varsity, etc.) until the next contest, or the next two (2) contests in the sports of baseball, ice hockey, and soccer, has/have been completed. (Note: In the sport of wrestling, the disqualified coach is ineligible to participate in any and all contests during the next scheduled date of competition). During the suspension the disqualified coach may not be present at the competition site. Whenever a coach is disqualified by an official from an inter-school competition, the official shall file a written report of the incident with the coach's principal. The coach also shall file the completed form designated for that purpose. Both reports should be completed and forwarded by the official and coach within 24 hours of the competition. The principal should immediately forward copies of the reports to the athletic director, superintendent, and MIAA executive director. If the game official fails to file their report, the coach is still bound by the suspension. An official who fails to complete the form required as a result of an athlete or coach ejection shall be suspended from officiating any MIAA contest in that sport for at least two weeks or until the form is completed and received by the principal of the disqualified athlete or coach.

49.5 A student or coach ruled out of a contest (pre-season, scrimmage, jamboree/play-day, regular season or MIAA Tournament) twice in the same season shall be suspended from further participation in that sport and in all sports during that season for a year from the date of their second disqualification. A senior and/or a student in their last year of eligibility, who has a second disqualification at any point in the season, will be penalized during the next season in which they are a participant. (Exception: See soccer rule 78.2.6 and 78.2.7).

49.5.1 A coach who is twice disqualified in a season must officially enroll in the Coaches' Education course or recognized MIAA certified program before returning from suspension. The course must be completed before the start of the next season for that sport (also see Rule

49.11).

49.6 A student or coach who physically assaults an official shall be expelled from the activity immediately and banned from further participation or coaching in all sports for one year from the date of the offense.

49.7 Any student in any sport who willfully, flagrantly, or maliciously attempts to injure an opponent shall be removed from the contest immediately and shall be ineligible in all sports for one year from the date of the incident. ("Fighting" does not apply to this section unless warranted in the judgment of the game official.)

49.8 Fighting and unsportsmanlike conduct penalties will be within the authority of the official at all times at the contest site. The official's authority extends to pre and post-game oversight.

49.9 Some of the reasons that an official may disqualify a student or coach from a contest that would lead to a game disqualification are:

49.9.1 Fighting

49.9.2 Flagrant unsportsmanlike conduct which is defined but not limited to violent action toward a player, official, or spectator, the use of foul or abusive language, taunting, trash talk, and the like.

49.10 If a coach or student is ruled out of the last contest, or the next to last (in some sports) contest, of the season, the penalty carries over to the following year in that same sport season. However, if a team is playing in tournament competition, it is considered an extension of the sport season. A senior and/or a student in their last year of eligibility who is disqualified from the last contest, or the next to last contest, of the season will be penalized at the start of the next season in which they are a participant.

49.11 Any coach who is disqualified from an MIAA interscholastic athletic contest or had three (3) student-athlete disqualifications during their sport season will be required to attend a Sportsmanship Compliance meeting before being eligible to coach interscholastic events the following year in that sport or before coaching any other sport at any MIAA member school.

49.11.1 Any coach who fulfills the Sportsmanship Compliance meeting requirement stated in rule 49.11 and is then suspended from another MIAA interscholastic athletic contest, either in the same sport or a different sport, or had three (3) student-athlete disqualifications during their sport season, will be required to officially enroll in the Coaches' Education course or a recognized MIAA certified program. The course must be completed before the start of the next season for any sport that the coach is eligible.

49.11.2 Any third and subsequent coach contest disqualification (over their coaching career) will result in the school principal, athletic director and coach being required to meet with the MIAA Sportsmanship Committee on the coach's eligibility.

49.12 In addition to being in violation of Massachusetts General Laws, hazing is a most flagrant example of lack of respect for both self and others. Massachusetts General Law Chapter 269, section 17-19 was enacted in 1988. The law requires that secondary schools provide all school groups (e.g. athletic teams) a copy of the law. Click [here](#) to access the "hazing law".

49.13 Any student-athlete who is disqualified (see Rule 49.3) from any interscholastic contest must complete the National Federation Sportsmanship on-line course – “Sportsmanship”, before reestablishing eligibility. This course is free.

Appendix SAH-3: Taunting (MIAA Rule 48)

48.1 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 deeds or words are vulgar or racist. Included is conduct that berates, needles, intimidates, or threatens based on race, gender, ethnic origin or background, and conduct that attacks religious beliefs, size, economic status, speech, family, special needs, or personal characteristics.

Examples of taunting include but are not limited to: "trash talk", defined as verbal communication of a personal nature directed by a competitor to an opponent by ridiculing their skills, efforts, sexual orientation, or lack of success, which is likely to provoke an altercation or physical response; and physical intimidation outside the spirit of the game, including "in the face" confrontation by one player to another, standing over/straddling a tackled or fallen player, etc.

48.2 Athletic participants may wear sun glare black only under their eyes.

48.3 In all sports, officials are to consider taunting a flagrant unsportsmanlike offense that disqualifies the offending bench personnel or contestant from that contest/day of competition. In addition, the offender shall be subject to all existing MIAA Disqualification Rules. A review of the MIAA taunting policy and a warning shall be given to both teams by game officials prior to each contest.

48.4 At all MIAA contest sites and tournament venues, contest management may give spectators one warning for taunting. Thereafter, spectators who taunt players, coaches, game officials, or other spectators should be ejected.

Appendix SAH-4: Bona Fide Team Rule (MIAA Rule 45)

A bona fide member of the school team is a student who is consistently present for, and actively participates in, all high school team sessions (e.g. practices, tryouts, competitions).

Bona fide members of a school team are precluded from missing a high school practice or competition in order to participate in a non-school athletic activity/event in any sport recognized by the MIAA. Students cannot be given special treatment (late arrival, early dismissal, etc.) for non-school athletic programs. Saturday and Sunday practices ONLY may be excluded from this rule and no waiver is required.

First Offense: Student-athlete is suspended for 25% of the season (see chart on Rule 62).
Second Offense: Student-athlete is suspended for an additional 25% of the season, and is ineligible for tournament play immediately upon confirmation of the violation. See Rule 98 for additional tournament restriction and Rule 88 for waiver guidelines.

45.1 A student-athlete must be a Team Member for 50% of the regular season schedule for that sport to participate in any MIAA Tournament competition (team member: any student-athlete who attends practices or games for their sport teams – e.g. Freshman basketball player moved to JV and then Varsity).

45.2 If ineligible, cannot be in uniform. Attendance at event to be determined by High School Principal

OAHS Rules Pertaining to MIAA Rule 45

Although the MIAA does not require a waiver for missing Saturday or Sunday practices, OAHS policy **does** require it. Student-athletes who miss a Saturday or Sunday practice during the season must submit the MIAA waiver form and supporting documentation to the OA athletic director at least one week in advance of the missed practice(s). The waiver request will be reviewed and approved or denied by the principal and athletic director. Parents should be forewarned that the OA administration is generally opposed to waivers of this sort due to the disruptive effect they have on teams during the season.

Student-athletes ineligible under MIAA Rule 45.2 are not allowed to attend competitions, home or away, during the suspension.

Appendix SAH-5: Hazing Law (Mass State Law 269 Sections 16-19)

269.17 – Hazing; Organizing or Participating, Hazing Defined.

Whoever is a principal organizer or participant in the crime of hazing, as defined herein, shall be punished by a fine of not more than three thousand dollars or by imprisonment in a house of correction for not more than one year, or both such fine and imprisonment.

The term “hazing” as used in this section and in sections eighteen and nineteen, shall mean

any conduct or method of initiation into any student organization, whether on public or private property, which willfully or recklessly endangers the physical or mental health of any student or other person. Such conduct shall include whipping, beating, branding, forced calisthenics, exposure to the weather, forced consumption of any food, liquor, beverage, drug or other substance, or any other brutal treatment or forced physical activity which is likely to adversely affect the physical health or safety of any such student or other person, or which subjects such student or other person to extreme mental stress, including extended deprivation of sleep or rest or extended isolation.

Notwithstanding any other provisions of this section to the contrary, consent shall not be available as a defense to any prosecution under this action.

269. 19 – Failure to Report Hazing

Whoever knows that another person is the victim of hazing as defined in section seventeen and is at the scene of such crime shall, to the extent that such person can do so without danger or peril to himself or others, report such crime to an appropriate law enforcement official as soon as reasonably practicable. Whoever fails to report such crime shall be punished by a fine of not more than one thousand dollars.

269.19 – Copy of sections 17-19; issuance to students and student groups, teams and organizations; report

Each institution of secondary education and each public and private institution of post secondary education shall issue to every student group, student team or student organization which is part of such institution or is recognized by the institution or permitted by the institution to use its name or facilities or is known by the institution to exist as an unaffiliated student group, student team or student organization, a copy of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen; provided, however, that an institution's compliance with this section's requirements that an institution issue copies of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen to unaffiliated student groups, teams or organizations shall not constitute evidence of the institution's recognition or endorsement of said unaffiliated student groups, teams or organizations.

Each such group, team or organization shall distribute a copy of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen to each of its members, plebes, pledges or applicants for membership. It shall be the duty of each such group, team or organization, acting through its designated officer, to deliver annually, to the institution an attested acknowledgement stating that such group, team or organization has received a copy of this section and said sections seventeen and eighteen, that each of its members, plebes, pledges, or applicants has received a copy of sections seventeen and eighteen, and that such group, team or organization understands and agrees to comply with the provisions of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen.

Each institution of secondary education and each public or private institution of post secondary education shall, at least annually, before or at the start of enrollment, deliver to each person who enrolls as a full time student in such institution a copy of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen.

Each institution of secondary education and each public or private institution of post secondary education shall file, at least annually, a report with the board of higher education and in the case of secondary institutions, the board of education, certifying that such institution has complied with its responsibility to inform student groups, teams or organizations and to notify each full time student enrolled by it of the provisions of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen and also certifying that said institution has adopted a disciplinary policy with regard to the organizers and participants of hazing, and that such policy has been set forth with appropriate emphasis in the student handbook or similar means of communicating the institution's policies to its students. The board of higher education and, in the case of secondary institutions, the board of education shall promulgate regulations governing the content and frequency of such reports, and shall forthwith report to the attorney general any such institution which fails to make such report.

Appendix SAH-6: Concussion and Suspected Head Injury Policy (EPS)

The Easton Public Schools. has adopted this policy to address the identification and proper handling of suspected head injury for students in grades 6-12 who are participating in school-sponsored extracurricular athletic activities in accordance with Mass. Gen. L. c. III, Section 222 and accompanying regulations (105 CMR 201. Et seq.) ("Regulations"). Affirmation of an Interim Policy was provided to the Department of Public Health on school letterhead in January 2012, with affirmation of the Final Policy to be provided by March 1, 2012. Review and affirmation of the Policy will again be provided no later than September 30, 2013, and bi-annually thereafter.

I. Definitions

The definitions of terms used in this policy are those set forth in the Regulations at 105 CMR 201.005. The following are selected for reprinting here:

Coach means an employee or volunteer responsible for organizing and supervising student athletes to teach them the fundamental skills of Extracurricular Athletic Activities. The term coach includes both head coaches and assistant coaches (and per the definition of Extracurricular Athletic Activity below, marching band directors).

Concussion means a complex disturbance in the brain function due to direct or indirect trauma to the head, related to neurometabolic dysfunction, rather than structural injury.

Extracurricular Athletic Activity means an organized school sponsored athletic activity generally occurring outside of school instructional hours under the director of coach, athletic director or band leader. (Among the examples listed in the definition are cheer leading and marching band. Thus, any reference to Extracurricular Athletic Activities in this policy includes the Oliver Ames High School Marching Band.)

Head Injury means a direct or indirect trauma to the head including a concussion or traumatic brain injury. Second impact syndrome means a potentially lethal condition that can occur when a person sustains a head injury prior to the complete healing of a previous brain injury causing deregulation of cerebral blood flow with subsequent vascular engorgement.

Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) means a complex pathophysiological process affecting the brain, induced by traumatic biomechanical forces. TBI may be caused either by a direct blow to the head, face, neck or elsewhere on the body with an impulsive force transmitted to the head. TBI includes, but is not limited to, a concussion.

II. Roles and Responsibilities

Athletic Director

The Athletic Director shall be responsible for the general implementation of this policy and any accompanying procedures. These responsibilities include:

1. Supporting and enforcing protocols, documentation, training and reporting requirements.
2. Supervising, reviewing and properly distributing all documentation received.
3. Reviewing the policy every two years and recommending changes and/or updates to the school committee for adoption.
4. Reviewing and recommending updated training programs and student/ parent handbooks at least once every two years.
5. Coordinating outreach to parents who have not provided required pre-participation forms and documentation. School Nurse and other School Based Staff As reflected throughout this policy, various members of the school staff play an important role in implementation of this policy. The School Nurse's role is particularly important, involving responsibilities for:

1. Reviewing or having the school physician review completed Pre-Participation Forms indicating a history of head injury that have been forwarded to her by the AD.
2. Communicating with athletic trainers regarding a student's history of head injury.
3. Following up with parents and students as needed prior to the student's participation in Extracurricular Athletic Activities.
4. Reviewing Department Report of Head Injury During Sports Season Form which a coach or trainer submits as a result of a head injury that has occurred during an extracurricular athletic activity or that a parent submits as a result of head injury that has occurred outside of an extracurricular athletic activity but that takes place during the extracurricular activity season, with follow-up reporting requirements outlined herein.

Athletic Trainer

The Athletic Trainer also has specific responsibilities, including but not limited to:

1. Reviewing all Pre-Participation Head Injury/Concussion Reporting for Extracurricular Activities Forms ("Pre-Participation Forms") and forwarding to the athletic director and school nurse those forms that indicate a history of head injury and to identify students who are at greater risk for repeated head injuries.
2. Identify students with head injuries or suspected conditions that occur in practice or competition and removing them from play.

Coaches

As reflected in this policy, coaches also have a key role in its implementation. In addition to their other responsibilities listed herein, all coaches are required to:

1. Instruct students in form, technique and skills that minimize athletic-related head injury and are required to discourage and prohibit students from engaging in any unreasonably dangerous athletic technique that endangers the health and safety of a student, including using a helmet or any other equipment as a weapon.
2. Identify athletes with head injuries or suspected concussions that occur in practice or competition and remove them from play.

Students

In addition to their other responsibilities listed herein, all students are required to:

1. Adhere to skills and instructions designed to minimize athletic related injuries. Students who engage in unreasonably dangerous behavior while participating in Extracurricular Athletic Activities may be excluded from the privilege of further participation and, further, may be subject to disciplinary consequences in accordance with the code of conduct.

III. Training

The following personnel, both those employed and those serving in a volunteer capacity, shall be required to participate in an annual training approved by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (MDPH) in the prevention and recognition of a sports-related head injury, including second impact syndrome: coaches (as noted above, this term includes marching band directors), certified athletic trainers, school physicians, school nurses, Athletic Director and game officials. In addition, students who wish to participate in an Extracurricular Athletic Activity and their parents shall be required to participate in such training annually. Annual Concussion Training:

Required Concussion Training for school staff, parents/guardians and student athletes must be approved by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (MDPH). Training courses are online, available free of charge, and last only about 30 minutes. The courses approved by the Mass DPH are listed at the following link:

<http://www.mass.gov/eohhs/docs/dph/com-health/iniurv/sports-concussion-training-materials.pdf>

Mass DPH approved concussion training materials are also available at the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association website http://www.miaa.net/contentm/easy_pages/view.php?sid=38&pageid=98 or at the Oliver Ames High School website: <http://www.oliverames.org/sports/>

Hard copies are available in the Oliver Ames High School Athletic Handbook.

Individuals who are required to participate in the training must submit documentation verifying their completion of the training on an annual basis to the Athletic Director.

IV. Prerequisites Related to Head Injuries for Student Participation in an Extracurricular Athletic Activity

Prior to a student beginning (or continuing) participation in any Extracurricular Athletic Activity, whether involving tryouts, practices, contests, or performances, the following must take place:

1. Parents and students must submit to the Athletic Director a certification that they have completed the training requirements described in Section III above. Once submitted, the certification is valid for one school year. This certification may be completed online.
2. Prior to a student's participation in an Extracurricular Athletic Activity, the parent and student must provide to the Athletic Director a completed form for Pre-Participation Head Injury/ Concussion Reporting For Extracurricular Activities Pre-Participation Form"). The information required in the Pre-Participation Form may be collected online and shall include:
 - a. A comprehensive history with up-to-date information relative to concussion history, any history regarding head, face or cervical spine injury and/or any history of co-existent concussion injuries; and
 - b. Signatures of both the parent and the student;
3. During the season of participation if a student sustains a head injury outside of the extracurricular activity, his/her parent is required to complete and submit the Department Report of Head Injury During Sports Season Form to the Athletic Director.
4. The Athletic Director will forward to the coach copies of the Pre-Participation Forms and all Reports of Head Injury During Sports Season for each student member of that coach's team. In addition, the Athletic Director will forward the Pre-Participation Forms indicating a history of head injury and all Reports of Head Injury During Sports Season to the school nurse, who will consult with the student's primary care physician and/or school physician, as needed, and athletic staff regarding whether the student will be allowed to begin (or continue) to participate and if so, whether limitations may apply.
5. In order to better manage concussions sustained by our student-athletes, the district will utilize a software tool called ImPACT (Immediate Post Concussion Assessment and Cognitive Testing). ImPACT is a computerized neuropsychological exam utilized in many professional, collegiate, and high school sports programs across the country to successfully diagnose and manage concussions. If an athlete is believed to have suffered a head injury during competition, ImPACT is used to help determine the severity of head injury and when the injury has fully healed. This non-invasive test takes about 20-30 minutes to complete. Essentially, the ImPACT test is a physical of the brain that tracks information such as memory, reaction time, processing speed, and concentration. It is not an "IQ" test. There is no charge to the student/athlete for ImPACT testing.

Students must take a "baseline" ImPACT test prior to first participating in all Extracurricular Athletic Activities beginning at the Middle School level and then every two years thereafter prior to the beginning of the sports season in which they are participating. Testing is optional for Unified Sport Athletes. If a concussion is suspected, the athlete will be required to re-take the ImPACT test prior to resuming participation. In the event a parent and/or student has not provided the documentation set forth above to the Athletic Director in a timely manner, or has not taken the ImPACT test as required the student will be ineligible to begin (or continue if applicable) participation in an Extracurricular Athletic Activity until all documentation has been received and reviewed by appropriate school personnel.

V. Removal Due to Head Injury and Protocols for Reentry

Any student who sustains a head injury or suspected concussion, or exhibits signs and symptoms of a concussion, or loses consciousness, even briefly, during participation in an Extracurricular Athletic Activity shall be removed from the activity immediately and may not return to the activity that day even if the condition seems to resolve itself. If there is an athletic trainer on site, the coach must immediately report the suspected injury to the trainer or on-site school nurse for a medical assessment. If no trainer or school nurse is on-site, the coach is responsible for notifying the student's parents and contacting EMS for emergency service and transport to a local hospital if in their reasonable judgment such intervention is appropriate. In all circumstances, the coach or trainer must complete a Department Report of Head Injury During Sports Season Form and follow all Reporting Requirements outlined below in Section

VII.

Any student removed from an Extracurricular Athletic Activity due suspected head injury must provide a Department Post Sports-Related Head Injury Medical Clearance and Authorization Form completed by a licensed medical professional (physician, nurse practitioner in consultation with a physician, certified athletic trainer in consultation with a physician, or neuropsychologist in coordination with the physician managing the student's recovery) to the Athletic Director prior to the student's return to normal physical activities (including physical education class). The Athletic Director will consult with the School Nurse in reviewing such forms if appropriate. In the event a student exhibits symptoms of head injury following return to participation, the coach will immediately remove the student from the activity and will inform the Athletic Trainer, School Nurse and/or the parents in order to initiate further consultation.

VI. Graduated Reentry Plan and Medical Clearance following Diagnosis of Concussion

In the event the student has been diagnosed with a concussion, the student may not resume full participation in Extracurricular Athletic Activities until he/she has participated in a graduated reentry plan and provided a completed Department Post Sports-Related Head Injury Medical Clearance and Authorization Form to the Athletic Director. If a concussion is suspected or diagnosed, the student will be required to re-take the ImPACT test, which will be made available to the student's treating physician, and used to determine when it is safe and appropriate for the injured student-athlete to return to activity. In addition, school personnel, including but not limited to teachers, school nurse, and certified athletic trainer, along with parents shall develop a written graduated entry plan for return to academics and other school based activities, including Extracurricular Athletic Activities. Accommodations, may include, as appropriate: provision for physical or cognitive rest; graduated return to classroom studies; estimated time intervals for resuming activities; assessments by the school nurse; periodic medical assessment by a licensed medical professional (physician, nurse practitioner in consultation with a physician, certified athletic trainer in consultation with a physician, or neuropsychologist in coordination with the physician managing the student's recovery) until the student is authorized to full classroom and extracurricular activities. The school physician and/or student's physician may be consulted as appropriate in

devising the graduated entry plan.

VII. Additional Communication and Reporting

The Athletic Director shall disseminate to each coach copies of the completed Pre-Participation Form for each member of that coach's team or student group. The information required in this Form may be provided to coaches online. The Athletic Director shall ensure that the nurse receives a copy and reviews any forms that indicate a history of head injury, with review by the school physician and certified athletic trainer if appropriate. The Athletic Director shall also ensure proper dissemination and review of any Department Report of Head Injury During Sports Season Forms. All coaches are required to report any circumstances in which the student under their supervision was removed from participation for suspected head injury, suspected concussion, or loss of consciousness and the nature of the suspected injury to the student's parent in person or by telephone as soon as is practical, and at the latest, immediately after the competition or practice, with written confirmation to the parent by paper or electronic format no later than the end of the next business day. The Coach must also notify the Athletic Director and school nurse of the removal from play and the nature of the suspected injury no later than the end of the next business day. The coach is responsible for ensuring that a Department Report of Head Injury During Sports Season Form has been completed and provided to the Athletic Director, parent, certified athletic trainer and school nurse.

The School Nurse shall inform the principal and guidance counselor of the injury so that an appropriate academic accommodation plan can be initiated as needed. The School Nurse and/or Athletic Trainer may require that a student suspected of having a concussion be evaluated by a duly licensed medical professional (physician, nurse practitioner in consultation with a physician, or neuropsychologist in coordination with the physician managing the student's recovery) after the injury. Documentation regarding the results of the head injury evaluation from the duly licensed medical professional will then be required by the School Nurse or Trainer. This information will be reviewed by the School Nurse, guidance counselor, and/or athletic trainer and utilized to help coordinate the student's recovery program. Written documentation regarding student concussions will be maintained in the student health records.

VIII. Maintenance of Records and Confidentiality

Copies of all documentation received by the school department under this policy will be maintained for a minimum of three years. Such documentation includes Verification of Training Completion, which may be submitted and stored online by the Athletic Director. The School Nurse shall maintain copies of Pre-Participation Forms that indicate head injury/concussion history (which may be submitted and stored online), Reports of Head Injury During Sports Season, Department Report of Head Injury During Sports Season, Department Post Sports Related Head Injury and Medical Clearance and Authorization Forms, and any Graduated Reentry Plans that may be necessary. Medical information received by the district in implementing this policy is part of the student health record and may be disclosed only as authorized by the laws governing student records. Generally, authorized school personnel

who work directly with the student in an instructive (academic or athletic), administrative, or diagnostic capacity will have access to the information on a need to know basis. Authorized school personnel should be instructed not to disclose the information to others. Notwithstanding these limitations, there may be times when school officials may or must disclose health or related information to others in order to protect a student's health or safety.

IX. Notification of Policy Information to Parents and Students

The Athletic Director in consultation with the Principal shall disseminate to parents and students on annual basis information regarding this policy, including but not limited to:

1. Pre-requisites for students to participate in Extracurricular Athletic Activities, including opportunities

for students and parents to fulfill their obligations to participate in training under this policy;

2. Requirements for parents to report to the Athletic Director a head injury occurring outside of school;

3. Procedures for notifying parents of a student's removal from play due to head injury;

4. Protocols for medical clearance prior to return to participation;

5. Contact information for key personnel

In addition, information regarding this policy is available in the Oliver Ames High School Student Handbook. The Student Handbook is available at: <http://www.oliverames.org/> School staff will work with parents of limited English proficiency to facilitate effective notice of this policy and effective communication regarding suspected head injury. In the event an interpreter is needed, parents and/or staff should contact the Principal's office.

X. Consequences

The Easton Public Schools takes the safety of student athletes seriously. All members of the school staff are expected to follow the policies and protocols set forth herein and in Massachusetts law to support the health and safety of students who participate in Extracurricular Athletic Activities. The underlying philosophy of these policies is "when in doubt, sit them out". Failure to comply with the letter or spirit of these policies could result in progressive discipline for staff and/or forfeiture of games. If students or parents have concerns that the policies are being violated, they should contact the Superintendent or Principal.

Parents are also expected to do their part in supporting the health and safety of students by ensuring that all documentation required by this policy is submitted in a timely manner. Each student must also adhere to the rules of safe play as instructed by their coaches. Students must also immediately inform a coach or other adult in the event the student believes he/she may have been injured during an activity. No student will be permitted to participate in an Extracurricular Athletic Activity unless the student and his/her parents have complied with their obligations under this policy.

Forms: Pre-Participation Head Injury/ Concussion Reporting For Extracurricular Activities Form
Link:

<http://www.mass.gov/eohhs/docs/dph/com-health/injury/preparticipation-reporting-form.pdf>

Department Post Sports-Related Head Injury Medical Clearance and Authorization Form

Link:

<http://www.mass.gov/eohhs/docs/dph/com-health/injury/posthead-injury-clearance-form.pdf>

Department Report of Head Injury During Sports Season Form

Link <http://www.mass.gov/eohhs/docs/dph/com-health/injury/in-season-report-form.pdf>

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 111:222

105 CMR 201.000 et seq.

603 CMR 23.07 (Access to Student Records)

REF: Student Handbook Policies

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