

Sturgis High School

Student/Parent Athletic Handbook

Department of Athletics
216 Vinewood
Sturgis, MI 49091
Phone (269) 659-1535
Fax(269) 659-1532
www.sturgisps.org



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Sturgis Public Schools Vision Statement, Mission, and Belief Statements

We support the academic, emotional, and social needs of Pre-Kindergarten through Adult Ed students, our staff, and the community.

Sturgis Public Schools Mission Statement

We support the academic, emotional, and social needs of Pre-Kindergarten through Adult Ed students, our staff, and the community.

Sturgis Public Schools Belief

We...

- *Serve others*
- *Have a growth mindset*
- *Have a positive attitude*

Section One: General Information

1. Philosophy.

VARSITY PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY

Varsity competition is the culmination of each athletic program. These teams are composed of the most skilled, dedicated members of the program, regardless of grade level. Seniors are not guaranteed a position on a varsity team. Participation on a varsity program one year does not guarantee a spot the following year.

Squad size at the varsity level is limited. The number of participants on any given team is a function of those needed to conduct an effective and meaningful practice and to play the contest. It is vital that each team member has a role and is informed of its importance. The number of roster positions is relative to the students' acceptance of their individual roles in pursuit of the team's goals. While contest participation over the course of a season is desirable, a specified amount of playing time at the varsity level is never guaranteed. A sound attitude and advanced level of skill are prerequisites for a position on a varsity team, as is the realization that a varsity sport requires a six-day-a-week commitment. This commitment is extended into vacation periods for all sports seasons.

The varsity coach is the leader of that sport's program and determines the system of instruction and strategy for that program. The communication among the freshman, junior varsity and varsity programs is the responsibility of the head varsity coach. Preparing to win, striving for victory in each contest with the realm of good sportsmanship and fair play, while working together to reach the group's and each individual's maximum potential are worthy goals of a varsity level team.

JUNIOR VARSITY PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY

The junior varsity level is intended for those who display the potential for continued development into productive varsity level performers. In certain situations, juniors who are expected to make future contributions at the varsity level will be considered for junior varsity participation. Also, freshmen may be included on a junior varsity roster. The junior varsity team can be comprised of freshmen, sophomores and juniors for teams that make cuts. On teams that don't cut and have unlimited participation in events, for instance, cross-country, tennis and track, seniors can compete on JV teams.

Athletes are expected to have committed themselves to the program. To this end, increased emphasis is placed on physical conditioning, refinement of fundamental skills, elements and strategies of team play in addition to socio-emotional development. Junior varsity programs work towards achieving a balance between continued team and player development and striving for victory. The outcome of the contest becomes a consideration at this level. The realization that practice sessions are important is a premise that is vital to a successful junior varsity team player. A specified amount of playing time is never guaranteed. Participants at this level are preparing themselves for the six-day-a-week commitment that is expected at the varsity level. Practice sessions are sometimes scheduled during school vacation periods. Since the goal of becoming a varsity athlete is clearly in sight, a high level of dedication and commitment is expected at the junior varsity level.

FRESHMAN PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY

Freshman programs help students make the transition from modified to high school athletics. We will try to maintain larger squads to encourage participation. At this level, athletes are expected to make a five-day-a-week commitment. Although it is not common, games and practices can occur on a weekend or holiday. The emphasis is on skill development while becoming a competitive team. It is the goal of each freshman coach to give all players an opportunity to gain game-type experience. However, practice, attendance, attitude, and participation at practice can affect this goal.

2. Statement of Non-Discrimination. In compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, and the Elliott-Larsen Civil Rights Act of 1977, it is the policy of the Sturgis Public School District that no personal shall, on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin or ancestry, sex, disability, height, weight, or marital status be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination during any program, activity, service or in employment. For information contact: Julie Evans, Assistant Superintendent, 107 W. West Street, Sturgis MI 49091. 269 659 1500.

3. Governances. The Board of Education is the ruling agency for athletic activities at Sturgis High School.

Sturgis Public Schools is a voluntary member of the Michigan High School Athletic Association (MHSAA). The MHSAA provides rules and regulations that ensure equity in competition for student athletes in a balance with other educational programs.

Sturgis High School is also a voluntary member of the Southwestern Michigan Athletic Conference (SMAC). The value of membership in the SMAC is the arranging of schedules, equalizing of competition, conducting of league meets, declaring

division or league champions and generally promoting quality programs of and for member schools through the establishment of conference standards and goals.

4. Offerings of Athletic Activities. Sturgis High School provides interscholastic athletic opportunities for both men and women in the following sports:

| WOMEN | | MEN | |
|-------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| Basketball | Soccer | Baseball | Swimming |
| Bowling | Softball | Basketball | Tennis |
| Competitive Cheer | Swimming | Bowling | Track & Field |
| Cross Country | Tennis | Cross Country | Wrestling |
| Golf | Track & Field | Football | |
| Sideline Cheer | Volleyball | Golf | |
| | | Soccer | |

5. Parent Commitment. Information contained in this document is presented to you as your son and/or daughter has indicated a desire to participate in interscholastic athletics. Your interest in this phase of school life is encouraged.

It can be very difficult to be a parent of a student athlete. There may be times of frustration for both your child and you as a parent. Frustrations could be caused by a variety of reasons ranging from injury, coaching decisions or unmet expectations.

If you wish to speak with a coach about a concern, please use established lines of communication outlined in Section Two of this document. By doing so, the likelihood of a resolution of concerns in a positive manner is enhanced.

A student who elects to participate in athletics is voluntarily making a choice that requires self-discipline. Good conduct and training habits are necessary. Failure to comply with the expectations outlined regarding behavior in the Sturgis High School Student Handbook, the Sturgis High School Athletic Handbook, and other related documents will result in progressive disciplinary procedures. We recommend that parents and students spend time reading and discussing the information presented in this and related documents.

6. Student-Athlete Commitment. Being a member of a Sturgis High School athletic team carries with it certain traditions and responsibilities.

Responsibilities to Yourself

It is important that you progressively mature and develop positive strength of character. You owe it to yourself to gain the greatest possible good from your high school athletic experiences within the guidelines of the team and school. Your academic studies and your participation in other student activities as well as in sports help prepare you for your life as an adult.

Responsibilities to Your School and Community

Sturgis High School can only maintain its position of being an outstanding school if you participate to the maximum of your ability. By doing so, you contribute to the reputation of your school in a constructive way.

You assume a leadership role when you are on an athletic team. The student body and citizens of our school district and other school districts judge our school partially by your conduct, attitude and athletic ability, both on and off the competition venue. Because of this leadership role, you can contribute greatly to school spirit and community pride.

Responsibilities to Others

When you join a team, you bear a heavy responsibility to your fellow team members and coaches. When you have lived up to all the training rules, when you have practiced to the best of your ability every day, when you have played with focus and intensity, you can increase your self-respect as a result of your contribution to the team. You can be justly proud when younger students follow your positive example. Don't let them down. Be a good role model.

Over the years, there have been many successes in Sturgis athletics. Our teams have achieved many league and tournament championships. Individuals have set records and won all-state and all-conference honors. We have also received many awards for our sportsmanship. Such tradition is worthy of the best efforts of all concerned. We desire to win, but only with honor to our athletes, our school and our community.

We wish you great success as you participate in high school athletics!

7. Behavior and Sportsmanship Expectations of All Persons. It is the expectation of Sturgis Public Schools that participants and spectators exhibit appropriate decorum. Positive support of individual players and the team is encouraged. Negative behavior that detracts from the positive experience athletics can provide is not acceptable.

Participants and spectators exhibiting disruptive and/or negative behavior may be removed from the premises by school personnel or police. Persons exhibiting repeated negative behavior may be restricted from further attendance at school events.

Section Two: *Communication / Resolution of Conflict*

It is the goal of Sturgis Public Schools to encourage and promote effective communication among all persons. Coaches are expected to hold pre-season meetings with players and parents to outline procedures and expectations for participating on the team.

During activities such as athletics, there are times when emotions run high. It is essential that communication occurs at appropriate times and is measured in tone. The following expectations regarding communication will help enhance appropriate communication.

A. It is essential that coaches know of significant events in the life of a student that may affect participation in practice, games and other activities. Parents are requested to communicate such situations to the coach. Please make a contact at school by leaving a message or requesting to talk with the coach personally. A return contact will be made when appropriate.

B. It is equally important that the coach keep parents informed of significant events that may happen within the activities of the program. If the student has experienced an especially frustrating situation or has a significant accomplishment, it is expected the coach will communicate with parents so that parents may have information and perspective.

C. It is the expressed policy of Sturgis Public Schools that coaches are not to be confronted in a negative manner by parents or players before, during or after a contest or practice.

D. Parents and players should use the following procedures if concerns arise regarding a possible coach/player/parent conflict.

1. The student and/or parent should contact the coach to discuss the situation.
2. If the student and/or parent do not feel satisfied, they should contact the Director of Athletics.
3. If there is not resolution to the concern of the player and/or parent after talking with the Director of Athletics, the player and/or parent may request that the Director of Student Services & Athletics convene the Athletic Review Committee for further review.
4. An Athletic Review Committee is established to review conflict situations between coaches/students/parents when an impasse appears to have developed for issues relating to a coach's decision. The Athletic Review Committee is not designed for, and will not be convened for, issues relating to High School Student Handbook and/or Student Athletic Handbook disciplinary rules and/or actions/decisions.

The committee membership will consist of three coaches appointed by the Director of Student Services & Athletics from an off-season sport and one parent appointed by the Director of Student Services & Athletics and the Principal or Assistant Principal.

Procedures for the Athletic Review Committee are as follows:

- a. After consideration of a request from a parent or student, the Director of Student Services & Athletics, acting as chairperson, may convene the Athletic Review Committee.
- b. If the Athletic Review Committee is convened by the Director of Student Services & Athletics, the coach or coaches of the team on which the student athlete participated shall provide a written synopsis of events along with other thoughts and perspective regarding the grievance of the parent/student.
- c. The parent and/or student shall also be requested to provide a written statement of concerns to the Athletic Review Committee.
- d. The Athletic Review Committee shall review the written information from the grievant and coach/coaches.
- e. The Athletic Review Committee may decide to meet with the grievant or coach/coaches if the Athletic Review Committee deems it necessary.
- f. The Athletic Review Committee shall provide insight, perspective and assessment for the consideration of the Director of Student Services & Athletics.
- g. The Director of Student Services & Athletics shall consider information from the committee and other sources and make a final decision.

Any person believing that the Sturgis Public School District or any part of the school organization has inadequately applied the principles and/or regulations of (1) Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, (2) Title IX of the Education Amendment Act of 1972, (3) Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, or (4) Title II of the Americans with Disability Act of 1990 may bring forward a complaint, which shall be referred to as a grievance to:

Nicole Airgood, Assistant Superintendent
Sturgis Public Schools
107 W. West Street
Sturgis, MI 49091
269-659-1500

The person who believes a valid basis for grievance exists shall discuss the grievance informally and on a verbal basis with the Assistant Superintendent, who shall in turn investigate the complaint and reply with an answer within five (5) business days.

If the complainant feels the grievance is not satisfactorily resolved, s/he may initiate formal procedures according to the following steps.

Step 1

A written statement of the grievance signed by the complainant shall be submitted to the Assistant Superintendent within five (5) business days of receipt of answers to the informal complaint. The Assistant Superintendent shall further investigate the matters of grievance and reply in writing to the complainant within five (5) business days.

Step 2

A complainant wishing to appeal the written (or Step 1) decision of the Assistant Superintendent may submit a signed statement of appeal to the Superintendent of Schools within five (5) business days after receipt of the Assistant Superintendent's response. The Superintendent shall meet with all parties involved, formulate a conclusion, and respond in writing to the complainant within (10) business days.

Step 3

If still unsatisfied, the complainant may appeal through a signed, written statement to the Board of Education within five (5) business days of receiving the Superintendent's response in Step 2. In an attempt to resolve the grievance, the Board of Education shall meet with the concerned parties and their representative within forty (40) days of the receipt of such an appeal. A copy of the Board's disposition of the appeal shall be sent to each concerned party within ten (10) days of this meeting. The decision of the Board of Education shall be final.

The local Assistant Superintendent, on request, will provide the complainant with a copy of the district's grievance procedure and investigate all complaints in accordance with this procedure.

A copy of each of the Acts and the regulations on which this notice is based may be found in the Assistant Superintendent's office.

Section Three: *Insurance*

Sturgis Public Schools will no longer be offering supplemental insurance to student-athletes.

All Sturgis Public Schools students must have medical insurance to participate in SPS athletics. Each student-athlete must provide proof of insurance ID number prior to trying out for any SPS athletic team.

The SPS Athletic Office will provide contact information to purchase insurance from an independent agency. The SPS Athletic Office and district will not be involved in any insurance claims involving the independent agency.

Section Four: *Requirements for Participation*

1. **Physical Examination.** A yearly physical examination is required. A physical form must be completed by a physician and submitted to the Office of Athletics prior to participation.

There is an opportunity for students to receive a physical examination at school, usually in May, at no charge. If passed, a physical covers all sports for the entire school year provided the examination occurred after April 15 of the preceding school year. A copy of the completed form is kept in the Office of Athletics. Athletes should watch for information regarding physicals during the spring.

2. **Emergency Medical Authorization.** Each athlete's parents/guardians are required to complete the Sturgis High School Athletic Physical Examination Form that grants permission for the school to initiate treatment by a physician or hospital when the parent/guardian is not available.

3. **Parental Acknowledgement of Athletic Policies.** Upon entering high school or at the time a student tries out for an athletic team, she/he will be presented with this Athletic Handbook, which contains all necessary information for participating in athletics. Additional copies may be secured in the Office of Athletics and online. A parent or guardian must read all the material and certify they understand and accept the athletic eligibility rules and policies of the school district. The Director of Athletics keeps this signed document on file. In order to participate in athletics, a valid parent acknowledgement must be on file.

4. **Participation Fee.** The school district assesses a minimal participation fee for each season a student participates on an athletic team, established annually, that helps cover costs of insurance, an athletic trainer and basic medical supplies.

5. **MHSAA Eligibility.** To be eligible for interscholastic competition, an athlete must comply with the following MHSAA rules:

A. **Enrollment.** For interscholastic eligibility during the first semester or the first and second trimesters of the school year: A student must be enrolled in a high school not later than the fourth Friday after Labor Day. For interscholastic eligibility during the second semester or the second or third trimester of the school year: A student must be enrolled not later than the fourth Friday of February.

B. **Age.** Must be under nineteen (19) years of age at a time of contest unless the nineteenth birthday occurs on or after September 1 of a current school year, in which case student is eligible for balance of that school year in all sports.

C. **Physical Examinations.** A student must have passed a current year physical examination. Record must be on file in athletic office.

D. **Seasons of Competition.** A student once enrolled in grade 9, shall be allowed to compete in only four first and four second semesters or four first, four second and four third trimesters.

E. **Semester/Trimesters of Enrollment.** A student must not have been enrolled for more than eight (8) semesters or twelve (12) trimesters in grades nine to twelve (9-12), inclusive. Seventh and eighth semesters/trimesters must be consecutive. Enrollment in a school beyond the fourth Friday after Labor Day (of the first semester or trimester) or fourth Friday of February (of the second semester) or the fourth Friday of the second or third trimesters, or competing in one or more interscholastic athletic scrimmages or contests, shall be considered as enrollment for a semester or trimester, respectively.

F. **Undergraduate Standing.** To be eligible to participate in MHSAA athletic events, a student must not be a high school graduate.

G. **Previous Semester/Trimester Record.** No student shall compete in any athletic contest that does not have to his or her credit in the official records of the school to be represented, at least 66 percent of full credit load potential for a full-time student for the last semester/trimester during which he or she shall have been enrolled. A student entering the 9th grade for the first time may compete without reference to his/her record in the 8th grade.

H. **Current Semester/Trimester Record.** Academic eligibility checks of not more than 10 weeks (semesters) or seven weeks (trimesters) are required. If a student is not passing at least 66 percent of full credit load potential for a full-time student when checked, that student is ineligible for competition until the next check (but not less than for the next Monday through Sunday). If the next eligibility check reveals the student is still not passing at least 66 percent of full credit load potential for a full-time student, that student is ineligible for competition for not less than the next Monday through Sunday, and so on until the student is passing 66 percent of full credit load potential for a full-time student from the start of the semester or trimester through the most recent eligibility check.

I. **Transfers.** Generally, the student must have had an accompanying change of residence by the athlete's parent, guardian or other persons whom the athlete has been living during the period of her/his last high school enrollment, into the district or service area of the school, to be eligible during the first semester in attendance. Please see the Director of Athletics for further information.

J. **Awards.** A student must not have accepted any award or merchandise exceeding \$25.00 in value for athletic performance. Athletes accepting memberships, privileges, services, negotiable certificates or money are in violation and may receive sanctions.

K. **Amateur Practice.** Not have accepted money, merchandise, memberships, privileges, services or other valuable consideration for participation in any form of athletics, sports or games or for officiating interscholastic athletic contests, or have signed a professional contract. Reinstatement will not be considered for one (1) year.

L. **Limited Team Membership.** Not have participated in any outside competition in a sport during the season after the athlete has represented his or her school in that sport except individual participation in a maximum of two individual sports meets or contests; not have participated in a so-called all-star, charity, exhibition or national event.

6. **Local Scholastic Eligibility.** Sturgis High School has local requirements in addition to MHSAA. In order to participate on a Sturgis High School athletic team, each athlete must have passed at least four out of six classes the semester/trimester prior to participation. This requirement does not apply to the first semester/trimester of the ninth grade. .

7. **Risk of Participation.** Athletes and parents acknowledge and accept that there is a risk of serious injury as a result of athletic participation as stated and acknowledged on the Sturgis High School Athletic Physical Examination Form, which requires parent and student signatures.

8. **Trojan Sports Medicine/Athletic Training Department.** Sturgis High School offers a comprehensive athletic injury health care system to each participating student/athlete. The free services include injury prevention, evaluation of injuries, treatment/rehabilitation of injuries, management, referral service and education. By signing this handbook, parents and athletes understand and agree to the following:

- A. Medical information regarding student athletes will be shared among school officials who include but are not limited to: athletic trainers, coaches, assistant coaches, athletic director.
- B. Permission will be given by evaluating physicians, physician assistants, nurse practitioners, podiatrists, chiropractors or any other health care provider to share medical information with the licensed/certified athletic trainer.
- C. The student athlete's injuries will be managed by the licensed/certified athletic trainer and all policies and procedures are considered "team rules" of their sport. The injured athlete will abide by the following rules: reporting injuries, reporting to the licensed/certified AT for evaluation, management, treatment/rehabilitation, functional testing for return to action. All injuries WILL funnel through the athletic training department.
- D. In the event a student athlete is evaluated by a physician, the athletic training department will need documentation (i.e. referral form, signed note) from the attending physician as to the injury management procedures for a safe return to action. If it has been suggested by an outside health care provider NOT to seek management, etc., of an injury by our department, it is understood the sports medicine department will make the final decision as to a safe return to action. This communication will take place from our department through the coach. Constant communication is required as to the status of an injured athlete to make an informed decision for a safe return to action.
- E. Communication regarding outside evaluation of injuries will be shared with licensed/certified AT, not the coach alone.
- F. Permission is given for the licensed/certified athletic trainer to provide clinical treatment and/or emergency care treatment if so arises.
- G. If in the licensed/certified AT professional judgment an athlete is deemed unsafe to return to action, that athlete will not be released for participation.
- H. If the athlete does not report an injury occurrence to the supervising coach and/or to the licensed/certified AT within 24 hours, a loss of insurance coverage for that injury can occur
- I. There is a State of Michigan rule that dictates concussion management of any injury occurrence sustained to the head. Any symptom of concussion will place the athlete under this State rule. Athletes are responsible to report any such sign or symptom to the certified athletic trainer.
- J. Concussion Management for Sturgis of Sturgis Public Schools
 - a. Return to Learn: Student athletes must demonstrate the capabilities to function through a 7 block day at school symptom free prior to returning to physical activity.
 - * Teachers will be notified that the student athlete must have academic accommodations during the healing process.
 - i. First school day post-concussion- DO NOT ATTEND SCHOOL

- ii. Attend school progressively the second day i.e. blocks 1-3 - go home
 - iii. Attend school full day.
- b. Return to Physical Activity:
- If signs and symptoms of concussion are present, athlete will be referred to the nearest medical facility. A post-concussion examination will be performed, if possible, prior to referral.
 - Following initial evaluation, the player's parent/guardian will make an appointment with family physician 1-3 days after initial medical evaluation.
 - Physician will sign the official MHSAA "Return to Competition" document when player is ready to be released to participate.
- Release to participation: "Return to Competition" will be accomplished by utilizing a progressive 5-step Return to Activity Process as recommended by the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Michigan Department of Community Health (MDCH).
- **Begins after one full symptom free day.
 - 1. Light aerobic exercise.
 - 2. Speed & agility work/weight training.
 - 3. Non-contact sport specific drills with team at practice.
 - 4. Full contact practice.
 - 5. Full practice.
- Player will move to the next phase if signs and symptoms do not return each 24 hours during the 5-step Return to Activity Process.
 - Player will regress to Step 1 should any signs or symptoms return during any of the 5-Step Return to Activity Process.
 - All activities and time limits for each phase will be under the direction and supervision of a Licensed Athletic Trainer as he/she sees fit.
- C. The MHSAA has a Concussion Insurance policy. You will receive information a few days after the episode.

Section Five: Athletic Department Procedures and Rules

1. **Dual Participation.** An athlete may typically participate in only one sport per season. An athlete that wishes to compete in more than one sport during the same season must receive permission in writing from the Director of Athletics with concurrence of the coaches involved. Freshmen will not be considered for dual participation.

2. **Dropping or Transferring Sports.** Once an athlete has begun a season, the athlete is expected to remain a member of the team for the entire season. On occasion, however, an athlete may find it necessary to drop a sport for a unique reason. Quitting a team is a serious decision.

If an athlete wants to leave a team, the following procedure must be followed:

- A. Consult with coach.
- B. Conference may be held with the Director of Athletics after a meeting with the coach.
- C. All equipment must be returned in acceptable condition.

It is the expressed intent of Sturgis High School that athletes remain committed to the athletic team they join for the entire season. Therefore, athletes will not be allowed to change sports once they join a team. Only under extreme circumstances will a deviation from this intent be considered.

During possible consideration, the coaches and Director of Student Services & Athletics would need to be convinced a change or quitting would be in the collective best interest of the team and individual needs.

Athletes that have dropped a sport may not participate in pre-season conditioning for another sport without the prior approval of the Director of Athletics.

3. **Equipment.** Athletes are responsible for the proper care and security of uniforms and equipment issued to them. School furnished uniforms and equipment may only be used for practice or contests unless expressly approved by the coach or by the Director Athletics. The athlete has a financial obligation for any loss or damage of equipment. All financial obligations for school equipment must be fully paid to the school before the athlete may begin another sport.

Any personalized equipment/uniform parts (shooting shirts, sweatshirts, warm-ups, etc.) that team members purchase to keep after the season must be paid in full prior to the personalized equipment/uniforms being ordered.

4. **Internet Policy.** Participating in athletics at Sturgis Public Schools is a privilege, not a right. Uniforms distributed to student athletes to represent Sturgis Public Schools are the property of Sturgis Public Schools and it is always our intent to present a positive image. Therefore, any images of a student-athlete wearing a Sturgis uniform, posted on an internet

site, must be in good taste and the text accompanying them **MUST NOT** contain any reference to drugs, alcohol, violence, sexual content or any other subject that Sturgis Public Schools deems inappropriate. Violation of this policy will result in disciplinary action, up to dismissal from the team.

5. **Season Defined.** A season in an interscholastic sport at Sturgis High School is defined as the time between the first official day of practice as recognized by MHSAA for the sport and the end of the scheduled season, post-season competition, or sports award banquet, whichever comes last.

6. **Travel.** All athletes are encouraged to travel to and from away athletic contests in transportation provided by the school. Exceptions may occur, as follows:

A. With the coach's knowledge and approval, an athlete may accompany her/his own parent/guardian home after the contest after signing an appropriate written document.

B. The parent/guardian of an athlete may request, in writing, prior to a contest that her/his child be allowed, with the Director of Athletics' knowledge and approval, to transport themselves, or accompany a parent of another athlete from the team after a contest using private transportation.

C. Administrator discretion for unexpected situations.

7. **College Recruitment Policy.** College recruitment information is available from the Director of Student Services & Athletics. Athletes considering playing at the collegiate level should confer with the Director of Student Services & Athletics before a college contact occurs. In the event a college recruiter contacts an athlete personally, she/he has an obligation to notify the coach and the Director of Student Services & Athletics immediately to help assure knowledge of the specific and important rules and regulations regarding recruitment.

8. **Conflicts With Other Than Athletic Student Activities.** A student who attempts to participate in several school sponsored student activities may be in a position of conflict between two obligations. Sturgis High School recognizes that each student should have the opportunity for a broad range of experiences in school sponsored student activities, and to this end, will attempt to schedule events in a manner to minimize conflicts.

Students have a responsibility to do everything they can to avoid conflict. This includes being cautious about belonging to too many activities. The student must talk to the coach and the other activity sponsor prior to becoming involved in more than one activity.

If a conflict arises, the student must bring it to the attention of the coach and sponsor in a timely manner. The sponsor and coach will attempt to work out a solution so the student does not feel caught in the middle. If a solution cannot be found through that process, the Director of Athletics will make a final decision based on the following criteria:

- A. The relative importance of each event.
- B. The relative contribution the student can make to the activity.
- C. The importance of each event to the student.
- D. The importance of each event to the school program.
- E. How long each event has been scheduled.
- F. Conversation with parents.

Once a decision has been made and the student has abided by that decision, the student shall not be penalized in any way by a school employee. If it becomes obvious that a student cannot fulfill the obligation of a school activity on an ongoing basis, she/he should consider the effect of multiple commitments and possibly discuss withdrawal from an activity with the Director of Student Services & Athletics.

9. **School Attendance.** To be eligible to compete in an athletic contest or practice, the athlete must be in attendance at every class during the day of the contest or practice, except as excused by the principal, Director of Student Services & Athletics or designee. Students absent from school on Friday when a contest occurs on Saturday will be eligible to participate provided the absence has been approved by the Director of Student Services & Athletics, principal or designee.

10. **Grooming and Dress.** A member of an athletic team is expected to be well-groomed. Once a person becomes a member of a team, they must uphold standards expected of athletes determined by the school.

The following grooming and dress rules will be expected of all team members.

A. An athlete shall dress according to team policy as determined by the coach while representing the school on trips or at other events.

B. Only uniforms issued by the school will be permitted to be worn for contests.

11. **Vacations.** Vacations of athletic team members during a sport season are discouraged. Parents and athletes are

encouraged to schedule vacations and family trips at times other than during the season. Absences for vacations while school is in session will typically not be excused. Absences for vacations during scheduled school vacations at Thanksgiving, winter break and spring break will be excused. Due to the need for conditioning, the period of time sanctioned by MHSAA for practice during August prior to the start of school is not considered a scheduled school vacation. Prior to participation in a contest, the student must have met conditioning and team commitment requirements.

For the purpose of school athletics, school vacations will be determined to begin after practice or contest on the last day of school preceding a scheduled vacation. Vacations will be determined to end at the beginning of the first school day following scheduled school vacations.

Depending on the length of the absence from participation and/or practice due to an emergency, vacation, or injury, an athlete may be required to do conditioning prior to resuming full participation.

12. **Team Selection.** Coaches are responsible for selecting participants for the teams. Coaches are encouraged to keep as many students as possible while maintaining the integrity of their coach/player relationship.

Students must be present and participate in tryouts to be eligible for joining a team. Exceptions to this requirement for such things as emergencies and conflicting activities will be considered on a case-by-case basis by the Director of Athletics. Prior to trying out, the coach shall provide the following information to all candidates for the team:

- A. Extent of the try-out period.
- B. Criteria used to select a team.
- C. The expected practice commitment if a student makes the team.
- D. Game commitments if the student makes the team.

Coaches are encouraged to be sensitive to students' needs when cuts are necessary. Coaches may discuss alternative possibilities for participation in a sport or other areas in the co-curricular program that may be available to students that are cut.

13. **Reporting an Injury.** All injuries that occur while participating in athletics must be reported to the coach. The coach is responsible for reporting the injury to the Athletic Trainer by completing an Injury Report Form. (Please refer to Section 4, Item 8 regarding Athletic Training Department)

14. **Locker Room Regulations.** Students are not permitted in the locker room unless she/he is under the supervision of a coach. The following regulations have been established to ensure the safety of all participants.

- A. Roughhousing and throwing towels and other objects is prohibited.
- B. Hazing of other players is prohibited.
- C. All showers must be turned off when showers are complete.
- D. No one except coaches and assigned players are allowed in the locker room.
- E. No glass containers are permitted in the locker rooms.
- F. All spiked or cleated shoes must be put on and taken off outside of the building.
- G. No metal or hard plastic spikes are ever allowed in any part of the school building.
- H. Cameras of any type may not be used in restrooms or locker rooms.

15. **Athletic Awards.** The school, as special recognition of athletic performance, gives various athletic awards. Coaches will inform athletes at the start of the season about qualifications for receiving varsity letters and other honors. Teams other than varsity teams will receive a certificate of merit as a symbol of their accomplishment for participation.

16. **Athletic Code of Conduct.** Athletes in an interscholastic program represent both themselves and the school district. An athlete's conduct shall bring credit to the athlete, parents, team, school and community. This supplemental Athletic Code of Conduct contained in this document is superseded by the Sturgis High School Student Handbook. This section provides additional reference regarding some unique information related to athletes.

A. **Commitment.** Athletes participating in interscholastic athletics at Sturgis Public School must pledge, with the concurrent support of their parent/guardian, to abide by all conditions of the Athletic Code of Conduct prior to participation by completing and returning the acknowledgment form provided with this handbook.

B. **Team Rules Developed by Coaches.** Coaches may establish reasonable rules and regulations for their respective sports subject to the approval of the Director of Student Services & Athletics prior to distribution of the rules to players by the coach. Written copies of the rules developed by coaches must be on file with the Director of Student Services & Athletics.

Rules, after approval by the Director of Student Services & Athletics, must be given by the coach, in writing, to all team members and fully explained at the start of the season.

C. **General Unacceptable Behavior.** Unacceptable behavior based on attitude, emotion, anger or frustration will be addressed by the coach or administrative personnel using established procedures in the Sturgis High School Handbook. Unacceptable behavior can be, among other infractions, theft, vandalism, a

demonstration of a negative attitude in word or deed short of fighting, closely following an opposing player during a disturbance or making a taunting gesture or sound toward a team member, coach, opponent, official or spectators.

D. Fighting. Fighting is an unacceptable response to frustration, difference of opinion and/or conflict of another type during any student activity. In athletics, it is expected that referees/officials will take initial appropriate action. However, if a contest official does not see or make a call that is considered fighting per the Sturgis High School Handbook or High School Athletic Handbook, school administrators will administer disciplinary conditions for fighting as defined in the Sturgis High School Handbook. Athletes and parents should realize that if fighting occurs, the result will be a suspension from school as well as other athletic program consequences.

E. Tobacco Products. Athletes are not to use tobacco products in any form.

F. Prohibited Substances. Athletes may not be in possession of, use, or be under the influence of any form of alcohol or any mind or body altering substance to include over-the-counter performance enhancement products not prescribed by a physician.

G. Felony. Athletes are not to commit an act that would constitute a felony offense. Non-compliance shall be determined at the time reasonable determination of guilt for school-related purposes has been established.

H. Suspension from School. If a student-athlete is suspended out of school, the athlete may not participate in a contest or practice during the period of the out of school suspension. The suspension period will end at midnight of the last day of suspension. Students assigned to in-school restriction may participate in practices and/or contests unless otherwise directed by an administrator.

I. Conditions for Non-Compliance. Following are some conditions that may affect the consequences for non-compliance:

1. Consequences for non-compliance shall begin at the conclusion of a conference between the athlete and coach and/or the Director of Student Services & Athletics or designee in which it is determined consequences shall be assigned.
2. Consequences for non-compliance shall be cumulative by category (i.e. fighting, tobacco, etc.) during the entire time the athlete attends high school.

J. Administration of Non-Compliance.

1. Non-compliance with the Athletic Code of Conduct. Possible infractions will be assessed by the Director of Athletics based on information supplied from one or more of the following sources.

- a. The athlete reporting the non-compliance personally.
- b. A report from the athlete's parent/guardian of non-compliance, unless the student has declared Age of Majority status according to established procedures prior to the non-compliance.
- c. Reported observance of non-compliance by a school employee.
- d. Non-compliance as determined by information confirmed through a public agency.

It is deemed a responsible behavior if a student athlete seeks out the Director of Student Services & Athletics to report an infraction of a rule/rules on her/his own part before it is reported through another source. Such behavior will be considered noteworthy evidence that the student athlete understands the need to demonstrate integrity while striving to earn back trust that likely was tarnished due to the behavior that caused a non-compliance consequence to be administered (see Item 3 below).

2. Listing of Levels of Consequences for Non-Compliance of Athletic Code of Conduct based on regularly scheduled non-tournament contest dates. Consequences for non-compliance of the Athletic Code of Conduct are as follows:

- a. LEVEL AH 1. Suspension from full participation, on a case by case basis, as determined by the coach with the concurrence of the Director of Student Services & Athletics. Maximum consequence typically up to one contest day.*
- b. LEVEL AH 2. Minimum suspension from athletic contest days typically is as follows:
 1. If season of a sport has between one and ten contest days, the student athlete shall be suspended for one contest day.
 2. If a season of a sport has eleven or more contest days, the student athlete shall be suspended for two contest days.

c. **LEVEL AH 3.** Minimum suspension from athletic contest days typically is as follows:

1. 20% of contracted contest days.

d. **LEVEL AH 4.** Minimum suspension from athletic contest days typically is as follows:

1. 50% of contracted contest days.

e. **LEVEL AH 5.** Student athlete shall be prohibited from participation from athletics during the student's high school years.

* An "athletic contest date" is defined as a day when one or multiple contests occur on one date.

3. **Additional Conditions Regarding Consequences.** Reinstatement to full athletic contest participation, as determined by the Director of Athletics, will depend on the following conditions:

a. Successful meetings with school intervention personnel, coach, school administrators and other counseling opportunities that help demonstrate the understanding of the severity of the infraction by the student athlete.

b. A convincing commitment by the student athlete to refrain from such behavior in the future that caused the consequence to occur.

c. Demonstrated positive attitudes and demeanor by the student athlete in athletic practices and other school activities during the period of suspension.

d. Past behavior of the student athlete that may provide perspective regarding the likelihood of positive behavior change on the part of the student athlete.

e. Acceptance of a probationary status with the understanding by the student athlete that future participation in athletics will depend on how well the student athlete maintains appropriate decorum during the school day and other activities, as well as conditions of the Sturgis High School Athletic Handbook, High School Handbook and related school documents.

4. **Charts for Levels of Consequences by Category for Non-Compliance of the Athletic Code of Conduct:**

**Athletic Consequences Related to General Unacceptable Behavior (16 C)
in Addition to Sturgis High School Handbook**

| | |
|-----------------------|------------|
| <i>First Offense</i> | LEVEL AH 1 |
| <i>Second Offense</i> | LEVEL AH 2 |
| <i>Third Offense</i> | LEVEL AH 3 |

**Athletic Consequences Related to Fighting (16 D)
in Addition to Sturgis High School Handbook**

| | |
|-----------------------|------------|
| <i>First Offense</i> | LEVEL AH 2 |
| <i>Second Offense</i> | LEVEL AH 3 |
| <i>Third Offense</i> | LEVEL AH 4 |

**Athletic Consequences Related to Tobacco Products (16 E)
in Addition to Sturgis High School Handbook**

| | |
|-----------------------|------------|
| <i>First Offense</i> | LEVEL AH 2 |
| <i>Second Offense</i> | LEVEL AH 3 |
| <i>Third Offense</i> | LEVEL AH 4 |

**Athletic Consequences Related to Alcohol, Mind or Body Altering
Substance Not Prescribed by a Physician (16 F)
in Addition to Sturgis High School Handbook**

| | |
|-----------------------|------------|
| <i>First Offense</i> | LEVEL AH 3 |
| <i>Second Offense</i> | LEVEL AH 4 |
| <i>Third Offense</i> | LEVEL AH 5 |

**Athletic Consequences Related to an Act
that would Constitute a Felony (16 G)
in Addition to Sturgis High School Handbook**

| | |
|-----------------------|------------|
| <i>First Offense</i> | LEVEL AH 4 |
| <i>Second Offense</i> | LEVEL AH 5 |

Elastic Clause. In the event the Sturgis High School Student Handbook, the Athletic Handbook or other school policies or procedures do not clearly address unique situations that may arise, the administration and/or the Board of Education reserve the right to administer such rules, conditions, and consequences deemed necessary to respond to the unanticipated unique circumstances.

Let's compete to the best of our ability . . . winning or losing with class . . . always showing pride and positive attitude.

Good Sports are Winners!

The Sturgis Board of Education does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin or ancestry, sex, age, disability, height, weight, or marital status, or any other legally protected characteristic in its programs and activities, including employment opportunities.
Please contact the Superintendent of Schools, 216 Vinewood, Sturgis MI 269-659-1500 with inquiries regarding non-discrimination policies.

Student Signature

Date

Parent Signature

Date