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MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Akron-Fairgrove Schools Athletic Department is to develop each student's athletic ability to excel physically, mentally, and socially as an individual and as part of a team.

ATHLETE'S CODE OF CONDUCT

- A. **The student athlete is expected to abide by all rules and regulations set forth in the Akron-Fairgrove Schools Student/Athletic Handbook and/or the Michigan High School Athletic Association.** A violation of the rules and regulations set forth in the Akron-Fairgrove Schools Student Handbook and /or the Michigan High School Athletic Association requirements will be considered as a violation of this Athletic Code and Policy.
- B. **On the field** of competition the athlete's behavior must always be beyond reproach: always showing respect for the opponent and the officials. The athlete is expected to put forth physically and intellectually his/her best effort to win.
- C. **In the classroom** the good athlete is also a good student. Student athletes at Akron-Fairgrove Schools are expected to put forth effort in the classroom as well as on the practice field. Classroom behavior and performance are important responsibilities for all students, including athletes.
- D. **In the community** and at school the way athletes look and act is of great importance. Athletes should be leaders and fellow students must be able to respect and follow them.
- E. The use of **vulgar or profane language** is unacceptable anywhere and at anytime.
- F. The athlete must also **demonstrate respect** and take pride in the equipment and facilities by helping to properly maintain and care for school property.
- G. **Stealing and/or other destruction** of Akron-Fairgrove Schools property or other property, misdemeanors, and violations of State law by an athlete is prohibited.

ATHLETIC HANDBOOK

The Akron-Fairgrove Schools Athletic Code and Policy must be signed by both the parent/guardian and the student for the current school year. The requirements and standards set forth in The Akron-Fairgrove Schools Athletic Code and Policy are in effect for one year from the date of signing and not only for the school or sport year (i.e. an athlete participating only in a winter or spring sport will remain under the jurisdiction of the Athletic Code and Policy until the following year winter or spring sport).

PHILOSOPHY AND SPORTSMANSHIP

Being an athlete at Akron-Fairgrove Schools is a privilege, not a right. With this in mind, we expect our athletes to conduct themselves in a manner to which other students can strive to emulate. Athletes are expected to maintain a level of eligibility through a predetermined academic standard. The athlete must exhibit good sportsmanship both on and off the field. He/she is to show respect for all other people he/she may come in contact with, including teammates, coaches, teachers, officials, opponents, etc. The athlete will be expected to attend and participate in all practices and team meetings and carry out the directives of his/her coaches. Athletes represent not only themselves, but the school, the entire student body and the community in which they live.

PRE-SEASON MEETING

All coaches will conduct a pre-season parent meeting to review team rules, expectations, practice/game schedules, team requirements and the athletic code.

ELIGIBILITY

SCHOLASTIC ELIGIBILITY

1. Student athletes at the High School level must maintain passing grades with no more than one "E" in the standard academic class load.
2. Student athletes at the Junior High level must maintain passing grades with no more than two "E's" in the standard academic class load, or MHSAA current policy.
3. Student eligibility will be checked every two weeks, on Friday. If eligibility requirements are not met, the student will forfeit participation in the scheduled games, beginning Monday of the next week, until grades are checked again the following two weeks.
4. Grades will carry from one school year into the next. If the student has not maintained the above grade requirements, in the last two weeks of the school year, they will not be eligible to play in the first scheduled date of competition in the fall sport in which they chose to participate.
5. A student who is academically ineligible at the end of a school year may participate in summer sport camps, practice and/or scrimmages.

SCHOOL SUSPENSION PENALTIES

1. Suspension Penalties
 - A. In School Suspension (ISS)
 - First and second days ISS will result in a missed practice for that day. Coaches will decide the penalty for the missed practice.
 - Three or more days ISS will result in sitting out on the next scheduled date of competition.
 - ISS penalties will not carry into the next semester.
 - B. Out of School Suspension (OSS)
 - First and second days OSS offenses will result in sitting out one scheduled game.
 - Three or more OSS offenses will result in removal from the team for the remainder of the sport season.
2. When a student is in violation of the Code of Conduct (Student Handbook, Athletic Handbook or a blend of the two) the above penalties will carry over into the next sport in which the athlete participates (i.e. a penalty incurred during football/volleyball would carry into basketball season, if necessary). Additionally, the penalties for violation of a more serious nature will apply anytime during the calendar year and will be determined by the Athletic Director. Other offenses not specified in this policy or in the Board policy will also be determined by the Athletic Council.
3. The school year is defined as being the time period between August 1 and July 31.

PHYSICAL EXAMINATION

1. No student shall participate in any phase of the athletic program, who does not have a physical examination card for the current year on file in the Athletic office. This card must be signed by the physician, physician's assistant or nurse practitioner that performed the physical examination.
2. Physical exams must take place after April 15th of the previous school year.
3. An emergency medical authorization form must be signed by a parent or guardian and submitted to their coach.

4. The parent or guardian of the student must sign the student/parent consent form before the student participates in a sport.
5. Parents and athletes must recognize that participation in sports can be dangerous, possibly resulting in catastrophic injury, including death. *******Due to the seriousness of permanent damage from head trauma, any athlete that sustains a fall or hit resulting in some form of altered mental status will no longer be able to compete in that contest and/or until documentation from a physician, physicians assistant or nurse practitioner is obtained clearing the athlete for competition.*******

INSURANCE

1. The MHSAA provides insurance for all students that participate in Interscholastic Athletics. The medical policy will cover any athletic injury over \$25,000 and up to \$125,000. If you wish to purchase additional insurance through G.T.L., forms are available in the athletic office.
2. Akron-Fairgrove Schools does not assume responsibility for medical, hospital or ambulance expenses incurred because of athletic injuries. Athletics is a voluntary program in which students participate if they so desire and they do so at their own risk.
3. Akron-Fairgrove Schools **DOES NOT** carry insurance for students or athletes.

ATTENDANCE

1. Students must be in attendance at school during the entire day. Failure to be in attendance will result in the student being denied the opportunity to participate in practice or contests on the day of the absence.
2. Exceptions to this will be made in cases involving prearranged absences. In those cases, the parent/guardian must notify the high school office before the absence occurs.

TRANSPORTATION

1. Athletes must ride school transportation to the sporting event.
2. Athletes are strongly encouraged to ride the bus home from sporting events. However, parent(s)/guardian(s) may sign their student(s) out with the respective coach.
3. Exceptions to this policy will be considered in advance by the Athletic Director.
4. All coaches and supervisors are to ride the bus.
5. Coaches are to remain at the student drop off point until all students have been picked up.
6. Students are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct and its rules for students when riding school vehicles.

MOVING AN ATHLETE TO A HIGH LEVEL TEAM

Our philosophy is that most players should be playing in their respective ability levels. Freshman/Sophomores may only be considered for varsity competition by following the procedures listed below:

1. The coaches are to first seek the approval of the athletic director before any mention is made to parents, players or staff.
2. The coach and the athlete should discuss the possible move.
3. The coach is to discuss the possible move with the parents of the athlete.
4. The move must be approved by the principal and/or athletic director.
5. Freshman/Sophomores should not be moved up to varsity level of competition unless the coach has an expectation that the athlete will be assured reasonable playing time.
6. Final approval for the move must be given by the athletic director based on the wishes of all parties involved ((a form signed by the parent(s)).
7. This does not apply to sports that do not have a junior varsity team.

8. This same procedure will be used in advancing a seventh grader to the eighth grade level of competition. This will only be considered when there are not enough players for an eighth grade team.

DRESS

All athletes are expected to dress in a manner that will bring honor to themselves and their schools.

The athlete dress code should include the following:

1. Jeans or dress slacks are acceptable.
2. For the male athletes, they should wear either shooter shirts or dress shirts and a tie.
3. For the female athletes, they should wear either shooter shirts, team T-shirts, blouses or sweaters.
4. Female athletes may wear a skirt or dress if they wish.
5. All of the players should wear the same style of outfit in order to look like a team.
6. Athletes failing to meet the dress code on game days will not be eligible to play.

PLAYING TWO SPORTS IN ONE SEASON—DUAL PARTICIPATION GUIDELINES

1. **Preference Sport:** If a student decides to participate in more than one sport in one season, he/she must declare one of the sports as the preferred sport. This selection is to be made at the beginning of the season. The involved coaches, the athlete and his/her parents will sit down and discuss his/her responsibilities to both teams. If a student decides to do dual sports after the first game of a sport that he/she is already participating in, the new sport must become the secondary sport.
2. **Practice vs. games:** All contests take preference over practice. Athletes will not be penalized for attending contests.
3. **Practice:** Athletes will split practice time with each sport. Example: A student who participates in a dual sports i.e. basketball and/or cross country. If a student in cross country runs 3 to 5 miles per day; on the same day when attending basketball practice he/she will not be required to run any type of endurance running. This student could run sprints, or do other drills related to his/her sport while the other athletes are doing their endurance running.
4. **League and non-league contests:** League will always take preference over non-league games.
5. **State Competition:** State competition will take preference over non-league contests. Athletes will attend state contests over league in preference sport, if on the same day.
6. Once an athlete has chosen dual participation, he/she is committed to both teams for the entire season for those sports. Further, it will be understood that any athlete participating in dual sports has ten (10) days from the first week of played competition of both sports to decide whether he/she wants to continue dual sport participation. After this time, if he/she chooses to quit one of the two sports he/she will automatically eliminate himself/herself from the second sport.
Special Note: With the school district philosophy of not wanting to put the athlete in the middle of a coaching dispute, both coaches must agree to the athlete's dual participation and to mutually work out a practice/game schedule.

PRACTICING

1. **Practicing:** Athletes will be required to attend at least six team practices or games before participating in a contest. This policy is to help ensure that athletes have a minimum level of fitness and instruction before competing in contests.

2. **Mandatory practices will not be scheduled on Sunday or on the following days:**
 Labor Day (before 5:00 pm.)
 Thanksgiving Day
 Christmas Eve Day
 Christmas Day
 New Years Day
 Good Friday
 Memorial Day (before 5:00 pm.)
 Independence Day
3. **Early Dismissal:** in the event of early dismissal from school, because of weather or safety issues, practice will be cancelled.
4. **Snow Days:** practice is not mandatory.
5. **Practice Schedule:** The athletic director will post the practice schedule for each month. Coaches who have specific requests for practice slots should make sure requests are submitted well in advance of the making of the schedule. When possible the varsity players will be given the later (evening) time slots.
6. **Injured athletes** are to attend all practices and contests, as a spectator, unless a special situation exists in which the non-attendance has prior approval.

AWARDS

The Akron-Fairgrove athletic department shall grant the following awards:

1. **Certificates:** To every participant, trainer and manager who completes the season.
2. **Individual Sport Patches:** To every varsity participant, trainer and manager who completes the season.
3. **Varsity Letters:** To those who meet the criteria outlined by their head coach. Criteria must be pre-determined prior to the season and approved by the athletic director.
4. **Limit Of Three Plaques For Each Sport.**

SUMMER AND OFF SEASON ACTIVITIES

Before getting involved in any summer or off-season activities with school athletics, the coach should consult with the most recent M.H.S.A.A handbook.

TEAM RULES

All team rules must be in agreement with the policies and procedures of the Akron-Fairgrove Schools, the NCTL, the M.H.S.A.A., and the principles of due process. The punishment for any infraction cannot be more severe than what is specified in the school athletic policy. All rules must be in writing and be given to every team member and the athletic director before the season begins. Team members, who join late or those who missed the pre-season meeting should not be overlooked.

WEIGHTROOM

No one may use the weight-room without direct supervision by a coach or qualified personnel.

EQUIPMENT

1. Equipment and uniforms are the property of Akron-Fairgrove Schools.
2. Athletic equipment being loaned out to athletes must first be approved by the Athletic Director.
3. Any school issued uniforms or equipment are to be turned in to the coach at the end of the season.
4. Athletes are responsible for replacing any uniforms or damaged equipment.

ADDITIONAL COACHING GUIDELINES AND POLICIES

1. **Playing Time Philosophy:** We believe in participation by all members of any team. Below the varsity level, all players will play in all contests unless there are some team rule violations. At the varsity level, playing time is at the discretion of the coach.
2. **Players Quitting A Team After The Team Is Selected:** The coach must notify the athletic director as soon as possible.
3. **Players Quitting One Team and Joining or Continuing With Another:** Anytime an athlete quits a team he/she must have the approval of both coaches involved, and the athletic director in order to participate in another sport during the same season. The athlete must have a rational reason for quitting a team and wishing to join another team, or seek approval from both the athletic director and the principal. (See dual sports section of this handbook.)

SQUAD SELECTION

Philosophy: In accordance with our philosophy and our desire to see as many students as possible participate in the athletic program at Akron-Fairgrove Schools, we encourage coaches to keep as many students as they can without destroying the integrity of their sport. Obviously, time, space, facilities, equipment, personal preference, and other factors will place limitations on the most effective squad size for any particular sport. However, when developing policy in this regard, coaches will strive to maximize the opportunities for our students without diluting the quality of the program. The Akron-Fairgrove Schools Board of Education will seek the employment of coaches who fully support this philosophy.

CUTTING POLICY

1. **Responsibility:** In accordance with the philosophy of the Akron-Fairgrove Schools, the decision to make cuts (the method, numbers, etc.) must have prior approval from the athletic director and administration before any and all discussion with students. This process, once approved, will then become the responsibility of the coaches of those squads.
2. **Prior to trying out:** The coach shall provide information to all potential candidates (and their parents) for a team.
 - Dates of the try out period.
 - Criteria used to select the team.
 - Approximate number to be selected.
 - Practice commitment if they make the team.
 - Game commitments.
3. **Procedure:** When a squad cut becomes necessary, the process will already have been discussed with school administration and will include three important elements.

Each candidate shall:

- Have completed a minimum number of practice sessions.
 - Have performed in at least one intrasquad-game if possible.
 - Be personally informed of the cut by the coach, the reason for the action, and possible recommendations.
4. **Cut list is not to be posted.**
 5. Coaches will discuss alternative possibilities for participation in the sport, or other areas in the activities program.
 6. If a coach foresees difficulties arising as a result of squad cuts, he/she should discuss the situation with the athletic director and principal.

APPEALS OF DISCIPLINARY ACTION

1. A parent or an athlete may appeal the disciplinary action taken for a violation of the code of conduct or any other disciplinary dispute.

2. The athletic director must be notified in writing, within two (2) scheduled school days that an appeal is desired.
3. An athletic council consisting of the athletic director, the coach, a teacher, a principal and the superintendent will meet within two (2) scheduled school days, after the appeal is received, to review the appeal and render a final decision. Until a decision has been rendered, the athlete will be ineligible to participate in practice or scheduled competition.
4. Student suspension will remain in force until completion of the appeals process occurs.

RESOLUTION OF PARENTAL CONCERNS

If a parent has a problem or concern with a specific sport, the following is the expected channel of communication:

1. Set up a conference with the coach.
2. If resolution is not met, the parent/guardian **may request a meeting** with the Athletic Director and/or Principal.
3. If the Athletic Director and/or Principal deem it necessary, **a meeting** with parent/guardian, coach, and Athletic Director **will be arranged.**
4. If the parent/guardian is still not satisfied with the results, he/she should **request in writing**, within 48 hours of prior meeting, a **meeting with the Athletic Council.**
5. A final appeal may be made in writing to the Board of Education within two (2) scheduled school days. A meeting/hearing will be set up in ten (10) school days.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

1. **Being under the influence of, use of, possession of, or distribution of tobacco products, alcohol, controlled substances, performance enhancing or behavior altering drugs, steroids, or banned substances by an athlete is strictly prohibited. In addition, any athlete who having become aware of a violation and remains “in the presence of” the violation shall be deemed to have committed a violation.**
2. **Violations will result in twenty five (25) in-season days of ineligibility for the first offence, and fifty (50) days for the second offense. Third offenses will lead to exclusion from all athletic programs for one calendar year.**
3. **Other violations of criminal code will lead to a review by the Athletic Council and possible disciplinary action.**

Note: the intent of this rule is to restrict our athletes from gatherings, parties or situation where forbidden activity is occurring. (If an athlete is at a location and discovers the violation, but leaves immediately, he/she is not in violation of the policy.) This policy does not apply to parental/guardian activity in the privacy of the athlete’s home.

**SIGNATURE FOR ACCEPTANCE
POSTING OF PICTURES FOR THE SCHOOL WEB SITE
AND
PERMISSION TO CARE FOR INJURED ATHLETE**

I, the undersigned parent/guardian, have read and understand the rules and regulations of The Viking Athletic Code and Policy of the Akron-Fairgrove Schools. I further understand that my child must comply with the rules in order to participate in the athletic program at Akron-Fairgrove Schools. I also understand the requirements and standards set forth in the Viking Athletic code and Policy are in effect for one (1) year from the date of signing. *I further give my permission to allow Akron-Fairgrove Schools to post pictures of my son/daughter/ward on the school web site.* In addition, I give my permission to care for my son/daughter/ward as an injured athlete as stated on the M.S.H.A.A. "Medical History and Consent Form". (See copy on page 10 of this handbook.)

Date: _____
Signature of Parent/Guardian

I, the undersigned athlete, have read and understand the rules and regulations of the Viking Athletic Code and Policy of the Akron-Fairgrove Schools. I also understand the requirements and standards set forth in the Viking Athletic Code and Policy are in effect for one (1) year from the date of signing.

Date: _____
Signature of Athlete

Please sign and return this sheet to the Akron-Fairgrove Schools Athletic Department.

The mission of the Akron-Fairgrove Schools Athletic Department is to develop each student's athletic ability to excel physically, mentally, and socially as an individual and as part of a team.

Akron-Fairgrove Schools, in its policies, program, and practice, does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, or ancestry, age, sex, disability, height, weight, or marital status, nor toward qualified handicapped individuals, in all activities and employment.

