

**SOUTHERN LEHIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT  
ATHLETIC CODE OF CONDUCT  
MIDDLE SCHOOL  
(Updated March 2025)**

**I. INTRODUCTION**

- A. The Southern Lehigh School District Athletic Code of Conduct shall govern all student-athletes, their conduct on school property, on school buses, and at any school-sponsored event including extracurricular and co-curricular activities or while representing the Southern Lehigh School District. Students know what is expected of them and they are aware of what happens when their actions interfere with others.
- B. Participation in athletics at Southern Lehigh School District is a privilege, not a right. In the exercise of this privilege, all student-athletes shall comply with the Southern Lehigh School District Athletic Code of Conduct beginning with the first day of each athletic season. As a condition and precedent to a student-athlete's participation in the first practice, scrimmage or contest of each season, the student-athlete and his or her parent/guardian shall acknowledge receipt of, and agree to abide by, this Athletic Code of Conduct by electronically signing through Family ID. One Code of Conduct consent is required for each season through Family ID.
- C. The Southern Lehigh School District Athletic Code of Conduct shall serve as a supplement to the Southern Lehigh Middle School Student Handbook.

**II. PHILOSOPHY OF THE SOUTHERN LEHIGH ATHLETIC PROGRAM**

- A. The athletic program at the Southern Lehigh School District is an integral part of the total educational program. The goal is to give student-athletes the opportunity to develop their athletic skills and the qualities needed to make a positive contribution to society. Everyone involved in the Athletic Program should have a sincere belief in the value of athletics and be willing to spend the time and effort necessary to influence the lives of others in a positive way. This is only possible if our main purpose is to help student-athletes understand the importance of the following:
  - 1. Accepting responsibility.
  - 2. Dedicating themselves to a set of beliefs and goals.
  - 3. Developing team unity and pride.
  - 4. Accepting discipline.
  - 5. Associating and working with others.
  - 6. Learning to deal with success and failure.
  - 7. Achieving their full potential.
  - 8. Developing good sportsmanship

**III. ATTENDANCE IN SCHOOL**

- A. In order for a student-athlete to participate in any athletic activity, including practice, the student-athlete must be in attendance at school before 9:00 AM on the day of the activity. Pre-approved educational trips, funerals, religious holidays, and medical/dental appointments are exceptions to this rule. The Middle School Principal or an identified designee is the only person that may waive the 9:00 AM rule. Student-athletes must be in school at start time prior to all

doctor appointments after 9:00 AM until appointment dismissal time and all student-athletes must return to school with a doctor's note. For example, school starts at 7:40 AM and the doctor's appointment is at 9:30 AM, the student-athlete must report to school on time and follow normal sign out procedures. A student-athlete who is absent from school may attend an activity as a spectator if the activity is open to the public.

- B. A student-athlete who leaves early during the school day may not participate in an athletic event unless prior permission is granted by the building Principal or their designee. Upon return to the athletic event, a note verifying the appointment must be given to the Head Coach. If the student-athlete returns to the practice/game without a medical professional's note the student-athlete will not be permitted to participate.

#### **IV. ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY**

- A. The extra-curricular programs offered in grades 7 and 8 at the Southern Lehigh Middle School are an important and integral part of the total school program of each student-athlete. It is the goal of the Southern Lehigh School District to educate each child to fully achieve the potential of the student-athlete. Our strong commitment to scholastic excellence, and philosophy of serving student-athletes, academic eligibility standards and guidelines were developed for all extra-curricular activities.
- B. The academic eligibility list is generated every Friday at 12:00 PM through the school district's student information system to determine the student-athletes who are failing two or more subjects. Head Coaches will be notified of ineligible student-athletes on Fridays by 3:00 PM. A student-athlete who is failing two or more subjects may not participate in practices or contests. A student-athlete will remain ineligible for one week at a time (Sunday to Saturday) until the student-athlete is no longer failing more than one course. If a student-athlete fails two or more courses at the end of a marking period, a student-athlete is ineligible for the next fifteen school days. All courses taken are included in the evaluation. When a student-athlete is academically ineligible for a third time during a season, the student-athlete may be removed from the team. The Principal or identified designee is the only person that may approve any changes to the ineligible list.

#### **V. DRUG AND ALCOHOL POLICY (227. CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES**

- A. A student-athlete who, on school grounds, during a school session, traveling to and from school or traveling to and from school-sponsored activities in a school owned or contracted conveyance, or anywhere at a school-sponsored activity is under the influence of alcohol or other mood altering substances or possesses, uses, dispenses, sells or aids in the procurement of alcohol, narcotics, restricted drugs, mood altering substances, or any substance purported to be a restricted substance or over the counter drug shall be subjected to criminal charges and discipline pursuant to the provisions and procedures outlined in the Board Policies. These regulations apply to student participation in all interscholastic and extra-curricular teams, clubs, and organizations at Southern Lehigh School District.
  - a. A student-athlete experiencing difficulty with drugs or alcohol may voluntarily come forward without any consequence if a request is made for assistance.

Confidentiality will be maintained. This action must be prior to any reported or known offenses.

- B. The following are the parameters for this policy:
1. Offenses shall be recorded cumulatively throughout the year, but shall not carry over from year to year.
  2. An offense shall include a verified incident involving the illegal possession, use, transfer, or sale of drugs or alcohol or performance enhancing substances. An offense may be verified by investigation by school officials and/or by arrest and conviction.
  3. In an effort to assist any student-athlete with a drug or alcohol problem, any self-referral or violation will be referred to the middle school Student Assistance Program (SAP). This SAP team will work with the student-athlete, family, and outside agencies to bring about private counseling, drug and alcohol assessments, hospitalization, or rehabilitation where appropriate. In addition, the SAP Team will monitor the student-athlete's curricular and extra-curricular progress.
  4. A first verified offense will result in:
    - a. A written notification to parents.
    - b. Assignment to the Student Assistance Program.
    - c. Suspension from participation in the interscholastic team, club or organization extra-curricular activities for 25 calendar days.
    - d. Normal disciplinary action through the school disciplinary code when applicable.
    - e. A second verified offense will result in:
    - f. Notification of parents in writing.
    - g. Continued efforts by the Student Assistance Program or use of appropriate outside agencies.
    - h. Removal from participation in all interscholastic team, club or extra-curricular activities for the remainder of the school year.
    - i. Normal disciplinary action through the school disciplinary code when applicable.

## **VI. TOBACCO POLICY (222. TOBACCO AND VAPING PRODUCTS)**

- A. All student-athletes will abide by the guidelines and regulations in School Board Policy 222. A student-athlete experiencing difficulty with tobacco may voluntarily come forward without any consequences if a request is made for assistance. Confidentiality will be maintained. This action must be prior to any reported or known offenses. The following are the parameters for this policy:
1. Offenses shall be recorded cumulatively throughout the year, but shall not carry over from year to year.
  2. An offense shall include a verified incident involving the possession, use, or sale of tobacco/smoking products or paraphernalia. (This includes a lighted or unlighted cigarette, cigar, pipe, or other smoking product or material, and smokeless tobacco in any form including electronic cigarettes or vape device).
  3. In an effort to assist any student-athlete experiencing difficulty with tobacco, any self-referral or violation will be referred to the middle school Student Assistance Program (SAP). The SAP Team will monitor the student-athlete's curricular and extra-curricular progress.

4. A first verified offense will result in:
  - a. A written notification to parents.
  - b. Assignment to the SAP Team.
  - c. Suspension from participation in the interscholastic team, club or organization extra-curricular activities for 14 calendar days.
  - d. Normal disciplinary action through the school disciplinary code when applicable.
5. A second verified offense will result in:
  - a. A written notification to parents.
  - b. Assignment to the SAP Team.
  - c. Suspension from participation in all interscholastic team, club or organization extra-curricular activities for 25 calendar days.
  - d. Normal disciplinary action through the school disciplinary code when applicable.
6. A third verified offense will result in:
  - a. A written notification to parents.
  - b. Continued efforts by the SAP Team or use of appropriate outside agencies.
  - c. Removal from participation in all interscholastic team, club or organization extra-curricular activities for the remainder of the school year.
  - d. Normal disciplinary action through the school disciplinary code when applicable.

## **VII. SPORT RULES**

- A. All practices/contests are mandatory unless there is prior approval from the Head Coach.
  1. For the first unexcused absence the student-athlete will not be able to participate in the next game/contest.
  2. For the second unexcused absence the student-athlete may be dismissed from the team.
  3. Excused absences include situations such as: funerals, school field trips, family commitments, and illness/injury.
- B. If a student-athlete is not able to participate in a practice, the Head Coach has the discretion to determine if the student-athlete will be able to participate in the next game/contest.
- C. Head Coaches have the right to schedule five to six mandatory practices per week during the regular season .
- D. A student-athlete may not join a team after the starting date unless there is approval from the Head Coach and Director of Athletics. All student-athletes are required to stay for the entire contest unless they have prior approval from the Head Coach.
- E. All student-athletes are required to travel with the team to and from away contests unless there are extenuating circumstances which would require the completion of an Athletic Transportation Form. Athletic Transportation Forms should be distributed by the head coach of that particular sport.
- F. A student-athlete who is out-of-school suspended, in school suspended, or in an alternative educational setting is not eligible to participate in school activities from the time the disciplinary action starts. The student-athlete becomes eligible at the start of the school day immediately following the last day of suspension/alternative educational setting. Therefore, a student-athlete out-of-school suspended, in-school suspended, or at an alternative educational setting on a Friday is not eligible for any weekend activities.

- G. Any school disciplinary issues including after-school detentions can affect a student-athletes ability to participate in a game or practice. This would be determined by the building principal or designee.
- H. All student-athletes are expected to practice good sportsmanship/behavior.
  - 1. The first written referral to the Director of Athletics by a coach will result in the student-athlete not participating in the next game/contest.
  - 2. The second written referral to the Director of Athletics by a coach will result in the student-athlete being dismissed from the team.
- I. The Building Principal, Director of Athletics and Head Coach reserve the right to make decisions that involve circumstances not addressed in this policy.
- J. Playing time is at the discretion of the coaching staff. The student-athlete is responsible to engage in conversation with the head coach with regard to any playing time issues.

## VIII. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

- A. A student-athlete must be an amateur in order to participate. A student-athlete shall be ineligible for interscholastic athletic competition upon attaining the age of 15 years (with the following exception: if the age of 15 is attained on or after July 1, the student-athlete shall be eligible, age-wise to compete through the school year).
- B. The maximum middle school (grades 7 and 8) participation shall be four (2) years in any one sport. According to Article XIX Section 3 (A) of the PIAA By-Laws, “No student-athlete is eligible for Practice for or participation in interscholastic athletics prior to entry into seventh grade.”
- C. Each student-athlete that participates in any sport or activity must acknowledge that all school-issued equipment or supplies must be returned at the end of the season, regardless of the condition of the equipment. Any item not returned or returned in an unacceptable condition will be charged a “single item” replacement price. The student-athlete is ineligible to participate in any sport or activity until the obligation is satisfied.
- D. Student-athletes shall conduct themselves at all times showing good sportsmanship, courtesy to fellow players as well as coaches, referees, and opposing team members.
- E. A student-athlete must be a team player and avoid any actions that would be detrimental to the unity of the team. Examples of this would be physical or verbal harassment of others, exclusion of a player by team members, disrespecting other team members, purposely trying to hurt another team member. The Southern Lehigh Hazing Policy states the practice of hazing in connection with any District sport, club, or activity sponsored by or affiliated in any way with the Southern Lehigh School District is strictly forbidden. See School Board Policy 247, 248, 123.4.
- F. A student-athlete may be permitted to change from one sport to another, within the same sport season, with the approval of the Head Coaches involved in addition to the Director of Athletics and Building Principal.
- G. Student-athletes are not permitted to play more than one sport in a given season.
- H. A student-athlete will adhere to the student code of conduct when representing the Southern Lehigh School District.

- I. Before participating in any athletic activity, practice or contest, the student-athlete must complete an insurance waiver and parental permission form through Family ID. The student-athlete must pass a physical examination by a licensed physician.
- J. Before participating in any athletic activity (practice and/or contest), the student-athlete must pay the \$25 pay to participate fee (does not apply to Club Sports) for each sport season that the student athlete participates in. See the district website under “Athletics” for pay to participate family discounts.