

# **NORWOOD HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETICS**

**NORWOOD, MA**



**ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT HANDBOOK**

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## **FORWARD**

The Norwood High School Athletic Department Handbook is a reference guide for both coaches and student-athletes. The purpose of this document is to state the policies that govern interscholastic athletics at Norwood High School for student-athletes, parents, and coaches. The rules and regulations stated in this document are intended to help facilitate the organization and administration of teams at the high school level.

There is flexibility and discretionary power provided for all coaches at all levels. The athletic mission of Norwood High School and the athletic department remains fundamental to the structure provided in the handbook. Coaches and student-athletes should view this handbook as a guide; it is not intended to be all-inclusive. Adding to the school's values with sound reasoning and good judgment will be the basis by which all situations are ultimately evaluated.

## Statement of Purpose

### PHILOSOPHY

Norwood High School strongly supports the commitment to interscholastic athletic programs as an essential educational opportunity available to students. Secondary school educators have long recognized the educational value of sports. High school sports are conducted in all 50 states in a variety of sports for teams and individuals of either gender. For the participants, sports provide the opportunity to develop the skills and abilities essential to becoming a well-rounded individual and finding success in life.

Young men and women develop physically, mentally, emotionally, and socially through voluntary participation in properly conducted interscholastic athletic programs. Specifically, the improvement of self-image, self-esteem, character, and physical skills, along with the opportunity for achievement and the development of a desire to excel are all advantages associated with athletic participation.

The Norwood High School athletic philosophy parallels school goals of academic challenge. The athletic program and its coaches seek to create an environment in which students can develop themselves both as athletes and as individuals. Norwood coaches seek to challenge and develop student-athletes within this environment by utilizing positive coaching techniques and personalized praise. In return, Norwood High School student-athletes are expected to demonstrate that a pursuit of excellence in athletics is fully compatible with the pursuit of excellence in the classroom, and that a combination of the two endeavors lends itself to a more complete educational experience.

Norwood High School supports a comprehensive menu of athletic activities and encourages all students to participate regardless of their level of athletic ability. By learning to think critically, withstand pressure, respect themselves and others, adapt to change, respect authority, and hold themselves and others to high ethical and educational standards, student-athletes and coaches accomplish the more difficult task: discovering in oneself a fundamental worth that transcends athletic performance.

The Athletic Department encourages the active involvement of the greater Norwood community. The excitement generated through sport has the ability to create a bond between school and community. The Athletic Department wants every community member to be proud of the school and the student-athletes who represent the school and community in other cities and towns throughout the conference and throughout the state.

The ultimate goal of the athletic program is to strive for excellence, not perfection. The Athletic Department does not ask its student-athletes to be perfect, but it does ask them to strive to perform to the best of their ability. The true rewards of participation in sports are entirely intrinsic and do not require trophies or accolades to be known. The student-athlete will find this reward within himself or herself.

### CORE VALUES

The Norwood High School Athletic Program believes in the following:

- That student-athletes should strive for both academic and athletic excellence
- That young adult learning experiences are not restricted to the classroom
- That confidence can be built through learning and achievement by positive reinforcement and constructive criticism
- That all will teach, coach, learn and perform to the fullest extent of their abilities
- That all individuals deserve to be treated with dignity and respect
- Initiative will always be encouraged

- That individuals should take responsibility for their actions and will conduct themselves with moral courage and personal integrity
- That all will think, respect, and communicate

## MISSION STATEMENT

The Norwood High School Athletic Department is totally committed to the academic mission of our school. The athletic program is an extension of the classroom, not a diversion from it. With this in mind, the athletic program abides by the following guidelines:

- Encourage participation in a wide variety of offerings. All students will be encouraged to take a risk for success.
- Require student-athletes to meet reasonable standards in order to participate and maintain their eligibility. State association, league, and school requirements and guidelines define these standards. A genuine commitment and effort in any endeavor improves the quality of performance for the individual and team.
- Emphasize that respect for human differences and for the diversity of people must be at the center of the athletic experience. The athlete must realize that he/she is a representative of his/her school and community and that outside onlookers will judge our school and community by the performance and behavior of our student-athletes.
- Evaluate athletic, professional and personal progress regularly. Success is measured by more than wins and losses as winning and losing become by-products of the quality of effort. A dynamic athletic program is vital to the positive social, physical, mental, and educational development of student-athletes. It is the goal of the Athletic Department that athletics functions as an integral part of the total school curriculum.
- Foster moral awareness and civic participation by the example of daily behavior. Athletics offers the student-athlete the opportunity to serve the school, develop fellowship and good will among all of our students. Athletics must encourage the qualities of good citizenship, the ideals of good sportsmanship, and empathy for non-athletes, moral courage and ethical behavior throughout the school and community.

## SPORTS AT NORWOOD HIGH SCHOOL

Norwood High School offers 51 varsity and sub-varsity sports.

<u>FALL</u>	<u>WINTER</u>	<u>SPRING</u>
Football Varsity / JV / 9th	Boys Basketball Varsity / JV / 9th	Baseball Varsity / JV / 9th
Boys Soccer Varsity / JV	Girls Basketball Varsity / JV / 9th	Softball Varsity / JV / 9th
Girls Soccer Varsity / JV	Wrestling Varsity / JV	Boys Lacrosse Varsity / JV
Field Hockey Varsity / JV / 9th	Gymnastics Varsity / JV	Girls Lacrosse Varsity / JV
Girls Volleyball Varsity / JV	Boys and Girls Track Varsity / JV	Boys and Girls Track Varsity / JV
Boys and Girls Cross Country Varsity / JV	Boys Ice Hockey Varsity / JV	Boys Tennis Varsity / JV
Golf Varsity	Girls Ice Hockey Varsity	Girls Tennis Varsity / JV
		Boys Volleyball

Swimming  
Varsity / JV

Varsity / JV

Cheerleading  
Varsity

## GOVERNING BODIES

### MASSACHUSETTS INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION

The Norwood High School Athletic Department is a member of the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association (MIAA). As a member of this state association the Athletic Department is governed by the rules and regulations set forth by the MIAA. The Norwood School committee may set additional policies, rules, and regulations.

### BAY STATE CONFERENCE

Norwood High School is very proud to be a member of the twelve-school league known as the Bay State Conference. Norwood High School is an original member school of the conference. The League is governed by the MIAA and its own Constitution. A copy of the League Constitution is available from the athletic director. The Conference sets league only game schedules for all levels of competition.

The Conference is divided into two divisions for championship play. The Herget Division includes the smaller schools: Dedham, Milton, Natick, Norwood, Walpole, and Wellesley. The Carey Division includes the larger schools: Braintree, Brookline, Framingham, Needham, Newton North, and Weymouth. Each sport will crown a division champion for both the Herget and Carey Divisions.

## CERTIFICATION OF A TEAM MEMBER

The following is a list of important policies, rules and regulations that govern athletics at Norwood High School.

### ELIGIBILITY/PHYSICALS

1. Each coach of an interscholastic team must conduct a pre-season meeting of interested candidates and provide the following:
  - a. Students must register online at [www.norwoodmustangs.com](http://www.norwoodmustangs.com). The Athletic Director will see that each student has had a current physical examination. **An examination remains valid 13 months after it has been issued.**
  - b. Each candidate must return an Athletic Permission Form (to be filled out and signed by his or her parent(s) or guardian(s)). Students need to submit one form per year. Completed forms should be returned to the Athletic Director to be kept on file.
2. The Athletic Director will provide coaches and student-athletes with a list that provides information regarding the following:
  - a. What each candidate is missing (i.e. physical, permission)
  - b. Items needed to be returned (i.e. uniform, equipment)
  - c. Fees that need to be paid
  - d. Academic Eligibility

Students, who register for a team after the sign up date or once the season has started, will need a Participation Card. This card must be signed by the athletic office prior to attending practice.

In order to participate, a student-athlete must have met the aforementioned conditions. Coaches will enforce the roster they are given and only allow eligible student-athletes to compete or practice.

3. Each student-athlete must also meet the eligibility standards set by the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association (M.I.A.A.); the following section provides further information.

#### **Students are not eligible:**

1. If the student is not a resident of Norwood.
2. If the student does not currently live with his/her legal parent(s).
3. If the student was a member of a non-MIAA school for the two (2) months, exclusive of summer vacation months, preceding a contest.
4. If the student transferred from one high school to another, he/she is ineligible for a period of one (1) year. Unless he/she has changed his/her legal residence.
5. If the student is not currently taking or did not have a passing average in 20 credits of prepared coursework during the previous marking period. To be eligible for the Fall season, the student must have obtained a passing average in 20 credits of prepared coursework in the final marking period of the prior academic calendar year.
6. If, since the student entered Grade 9, twelve consecutive sports seasons have passed whether or not he/she participated.
7. If the student's 19<sup>th</sup> birthday came before September 1<sup>st</sup> of the present school year, he/she may no longer participate in interscholastic athletics.
8. If the student has graduated from any secondary school.
9. If the student was "persuaded" or influenced to transfer to his/her present school by a coach, athletic director, principal, or other person connected with the school.
10. If the student is put out of a game for fighting or flagrant unsportsmanlike conduct, he/she is not eligible to play in the next scheduled game. This includes, but is not limited to, the use of threatening, abusive, or obscene language. If it is the second time during the same season, then the student is disqualified from any further participation in the sport season for one full year.
11. If the student physically assaults an official, he/she is ineligible in all sports for one year.
12. If the student willfully, flagrantly, or maliciously attempts to injure an opponent, he/she will be immediately excluded from participation in that sport for one year.

Waiver of certain Bay State Conference or MIAA Eligibility Rules may be submitted, allowing a student-athlete to participate. Students who wish to apply for a waiver of an eligibility rule should meet with the Athletic Director several weeks prior to the start of the season in question.

The violation of any eligibility rule may result in forfeiture of a game won or tied. A mistake could spoil a good season's record. If, in your opinion, there is any doubt concerning your eligibility, consult the Athletic Director. The rules apply to all teams, Varsity and Sub-Varsity, and both to boys and girls sports. The Committee on Athletics of the M.I.A.A. or Baystate Conference will resolve all questions on eligibility.

## **ATHLETIC TEAM TRYOUTS**

Tryouts for programs are open to all students providing they have met the standards for participation set by the MIAA and Norwood High School. During the tryout period the coaches must explain the expectations of the student-athletes and the criteria they will use to select players for the team. It is the student-athlete's responsibility to demonstrate that they understand the information and can meet the criteria. It is the coaches' responsibility to evaluate and communicate with each student-athlete during the tryout period and decide which students will be placed on the team.

In certain sports, more students try out than can be kept on a team. When this situation occurs, cutting is necessary. Cutting students is a difficult and agonizing process, and all coaches should realize that sensitivity and communication are essential. Students who do not make the team should be informed in person by the coach as to the reasons for the cut. If the student is an underclassman then the coach should offer suggestions as to how the student might improve his/her chances the next year.

Coaches have discretionary authority in choosing their teams. Students cut from one team will be encouraged to try out for another team if there is space available on that team.

Due to the academic calendar and date report cards are issued. Students who are not academically eligible for the start of the winter season will be ineligible to try out for a winter team. Students, who are not academically eligible for the start of the spring season, will be allowed to tryout for a spring team. If the academically ineligible student does make the team, he/she must attend all practices and games until term 3 report cards are issued. If the student is declared academically ineligible after report cards are issued, the student will not be allowed to participate in the spring sport.

## **TRYOUT DATES**

**Fall:** End of August (Football is an exception with an earlier starting date)

**Winter:** First Monday after Thanksgiving

**Spring:** Third Monday in March

## **ATHLETIC TEAM SELECTION**

It is reasonable to expect that varsity teams will be comprised of the best players. It is also important to recognize that high school student-athletes who work hard and can contribute to a team's success should also be given the opportunity to be on a varsity team. The athletic department must, therefore, work to balance desire and talent through a sincere effort to include as many student-athletes as possible within the varsity experience.

## **VARSITY/ JUNIOR VARSITY TEAMS**

Players who have participated as members of junior varsity teams should be given every consideration to be on varsity the following season. However, a coach must evaluate that player's attitude and effort against all other candidates for the team. Varsity team membership is an earned privilege not a guaranteed entitlement for senior student-athletes.

Coaches are discouraged from playing seniors on their junior varsity teams. An exception may be made for a first year senior who requests the opportunity to play at the Junior Varsity level as long as the coach is sure that the senior player is not reducing participation of developmental players on the sub varsity squad.

## **FRESHMAN ON VARSITY TEAMS**

It is very rare to place a freshman on a varsity squad in most team sports. "Individual" sports such as cross country/track, gymnastics, wrestling, gymnastics or golf may be exceptions. In the case when a coach feels that a ninth grader has the skill and maturity to participate at the varsity level then the coach has the discretionary authority to move that student onto the varsity roster. However, it is always far better for a freshman to "play" at the sub - varsity level than to "sit" at the varsity level. Freshmen should never be placed on a varsity squad as simply "practice players." The Athletic Director will have a conversation with any and all coaches who plan on using freshmen as varsity players.

## **DROPPING/CHANGING SPORTS**

Student-athletes may participate in only one MIAA sanctioned sport in any season (Fall, Winter, or Spring), including tournaments and/or championships in that season. A student-athlete officially becomes a member of his/her team for the sport season on the date of the first regular season contest in that sport.

If a student-athlete violates this rule, according to MIAA rule, he/she will be declared ineligible for that season and all contests in which he/she participated in any sport during that season must be forfeited.

Once a student-athlete has voluntarily chosen to leave an athletic team during the season, it is at the discretion of the coach whether or not that student-athlete is allowed to rejoin the team should they choose to.

## TEAM MEMBER REQUIREMENTS AND POLICIES

### REQUIREMENTS FOR PARTICIPATION

A student must be eligible according to MIAA Eligibility Rules and those of Norwood High School in order to be a candidate for a Freshman, Junior Varsity or Varsity team. The head coaches of all varsity programs will conduct a preseason meeting with all team candidates to communicate expectations, team rules and responsibilities.

### USER FEE

According to Norwood Public Schools, each student-athlete at Norwood High School is required to pay a fee in order to participate in the interscholastic athletic program. The amount of the fee is determined each year by the Norwood School Committee. **No student will be excluded from athletic participation due to financial hardship.** Paying a user fee in no way guarantees playing time on a varsity or sub-varsity squad.

**Fee Schedule** - Each season, each sport requires a fee (to be determined by the NSC). The Norwood School Committee will determine an upper limit for individual families.

**Due Dates** - Fees are due before the first contest. Checks should be made payable to Norwood Public Schools via the Athletic Director. The Athletic Director will consult with the coach the eligible team rosters. Athletes who are cut from a team and do not join another team will have their check returned.

**Fee Waivers** - A waiver request must be made to the Athletic Director in writing prior to the start of the season. The coach may represent his or her athletes with the request in writing if the students are uncomfortable with making the request themselves. It is the goal of the Athletic Department to include all students in the Athletic Program regardless of their financial situation. Every effort will be made to avoid placing the student or their family in an embarrassing position over the user fee. Any student-athlete or parent(s) with concerns regarding the fee for athletic participation should contact the Athletic Director.

**Refunds** - Any student who voluntarily leaves a team or is dropped from its roster for eligibility or disciplinary reasons after the start of the regular season will not be granted a refund. In special instances upon a request from a student, a refund may be granted. Refunds are in the form of a credit for the next season of participation. If the credit is not used, a check for the refund will be issued.

### ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY

**Academics** - All students are required to participate in their regularly scheduled classes. Students who are medically excused from Physical Education classes may not participate in a practice or contest on the same day.

Academic "extra help" sessions and make-up work are expected to be completed as soon as possible. On a practice day student-athletes should stay after school to complete work whenever necessary. Students-athletes should inform coaches in advance when practice time will be missed due to academic obligations. Once the obligations are completed, student-athletes are expected to report to practice on that day, as soon as possible. If the student-athlete did not give advance notification to the coach, they should ask their teacher for a note explaining the tardiness. Student-athletes arriving late to practices due to make-up work or extra help will not suffer any athletic team penalty.

The athletic department reserves the right to remove a student from a team for poor academic performance and may reinstate the student upon sufficient evidence of improvement. Reinstatement cannot be granted if students do not meet MIAA scholastic eligibility requirements. Coaches may place athletes on academic probation "academic progress reports" when it becomes known that a student is performing poorly in the classroom.

## **ATTENDANCE POLICIES**

**Daily Attendance, Homeroom, Class Cuts** - Students are expected to attend all scheduled periods during the school day. Athletes must be in school and report to all periods in order to practice or play on that day. Exceptions such as doctor's appointments and college visits must be cleared by the coach in advance, whenever possible.

**Absence and Tardy** - Any student absent from school for any reason may not participate in a practice or a contest on the day of the absence, unless approved in advance by the Principal or Athletic Director. Tardy students must be in school no later than 11:00 AM in order to be eligible for a practice or game the day of the late arrival. Coaches will make every attempt to check the daily school attendance of their student-athletes.

The Principal or Athletic Director determine eligibility and may review absences, dismissals, and tardies for reasons other than medical. Planned absence requests should be submitted at least twenty-four hours in advance to the Athletic Director who will inform all necessary parties.

Students absent on a Friday will not be eligible to compete during the weekend unless they have obtained approval in advance from the Athletic Director. The Athletic Director will decide the athlete's eligibility for a practice or contest. The Athletic Director's decision may be appealed to the Principal. The athletic department reserves the right to remove a student from a team for excessive cuts or truancy and may reinstate the student upon sufficient evidence of improvement.

**Time Spent in the School Health/Nurse's Office** - Students who spend excessive time in the nurse's office during the school day due to illness may not be allowed to participate in any athletic activities on that day. A member of the athletic department may check the nurse's log daily.

**Early Dismissal** - Certain away games will require early dismissal from classes. A list of these dismissal times and bus departure times will be available to all teams. Final permission to leave classes for early dismissal rests with the Principal. It is essential that the teams be prepared to leave on the early busses at the scheduled time(s). Students should have all essential equipment with them and proceed directly from class to the locker room. The Athletic Director will submit a list of players to be dismissed to the office for the daily bulletin. Coaches will update list as necessary.

## **IN-SEASON ELIGIBILITY**

At Norwood High School, student athletes are expected and encouraged to maintain the highest level of scholastic achievement possible. They are also expected to maintain the highest level of citizenship. To promote these goals the following policies are in effect:

### **PRE SEASON PARENT ATHLETE MEETING**

Prior to each season a mandatory parent/athlete meeting will be sponsored to review the MIAA and Norwood High Athletic rules. Coaches will be present to take attendance and discuss team rules for the parents and athletes. Parents and athletes need to only attend one meeting per year, the first season the student participates. Athletes who do not attend the pre-season meeting will be required to make an appointment with the athletic department to view a taped presentation of the program prior to being allowed to compete in their first contest.

### **ATHLETIC ADVISORY COUNCIL**

The Athletic Advisory Council is a group of parents and staff whose focus is to share information between parents and the athletic administration. The council will consist of parents of Norwood High Athletes, Booster President, Athletic Trainer and Athletic Director. Each varsity athletic team will be represented with new members chosen at the end of the school year. Council members will be the liaison between their sons/daughters team and athletic department. The council will make suggestions for the athletic handbook and on how to improve the overall athletic program.

## **SCHOOL DISCIPLINE AND CITIZENSHIP OBLIGATIONS**

A student-athlete with a school disciplinary obligation is expected to fulfill the disciplinary obligation before reporting to an athletic practice and/or game. Students cannot expect, and should not request, disciplinary action to be postponed or canceled for any athletic reason. The athletic department reserves the right to remove a student from a team for excessive disciplinary problems or citizenship issues and may reinstate the student upon sufficient evidence of improvement. It is expected that our athletes be model citizens both in and out of school; they will be held to high standards and should set a positive example for all students.

## **OUT OF SCHOOL DISCIPLINE AND CITIZENSHIP OBLIGATION**

All acts of poor citizenship, whether or not school related, reflect not only upon the individual but the school and team as well. Disciplinary action will be taken against any athlete who may cause the school, athletic program, or team to be viewed unfavorably.

All students will receive due process with discipline and citizenship issues. No penalties will be applied until the student has a right to be heard.

Names that come forward to the school administration through the Memorandum of Understanding (M.O.U.) with the Norwood Police Department or other law enforcement agency for citizenship issues (that are not a chemical health violation) will receive a minimum one game suspension.

Coaches will not impose additional penalties for students involved with citizenship or chemical health violations.

Coaches will issue a "no comment" statement to the media for all students missing games for discipline or citizenship issues.

## **MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING**

The Norwood Public Schools and the Norwood Police Department contribute to and cooperate in providing a safe and secure environment for young people in the school and community.

A designated police liaison will inform the principal of any arrest or issues of safety and non-criminal activity involving students of the Norwood Public Schools.

Student athletes involved in any of these issues may face athletic and school sanctions.

The complete Memorandum of Understanding may be viewed in the principals' office.

## **CHEMICAL HEALTH**

**The Norwood High School Athletic Department administers the rule established regarding Chemical Health Violations set by the MIAA and Norwood High School.**

### **MIAA-Handbook 2009-2013**

**Rule 62. Student (and Coach) Eligibility: Chemical Health/Alcohol/Drugs/Tobacco Student (and Coach) Eligibility: Chemical Health/Alcohol/Drugs/Tobacco**

**Rule 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; marijuana; steroids; or any controlled substance. This policy includes products such as “NA or near beer”. 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 his/her 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:**

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 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. All decimal part of an event will be truncated i.e. All fractional part 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 totaling 60% of all interscholastic contests in that sport. All decimal part of an event will be truncated i.e. All fractional part of an event will be dropped when calculating the 60% of the season. If after the second or subsequent violations the student of his/her 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. The director or a counselor of a chemical dependency treatment center must issue such certification. All decimal part of an event will be truncated i.e. All fractional part of an event will be dropped when calculating the 40% of the season.

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Penalties shall be cumulative over the student’s high school career. 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.

<b>1<sup>st</sup> Offense</b>		<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Offense</b>		<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Offense w/ Dependency Program</b>	
#Events (Season)	Penalty (#Events)	#Events (Season)	Penalty (#Events)	#Events (Season)	Penalty (#Events)
1-7	1	1-3	1	1-4	1
8-11	2	4	2	5-7	2
12-15	3	5-6	3	8-9	3
16-19	4	7-8	4	10-12	4
20+	5	9	5	13-14	5
		10-11	6	15-17	6
		12-13	7	18-19	7
		14	8	20+	8
		15-16	9		

		17-18	10		
		19	11		
		20+	12		

## 62.2

During practice or competition, a coach shall not use any tobacco product.

## 62.3

### Steroid Use

Anabolic androgenic steroid use at the high school level is of grave concern. Some athletes use steroids, and the seriousness of the problem has been well documented. A recent study indicates that more than 6% of high school seniors use steroids. About two-thirds of these seniors tried steroids before the age of 16. High school coaches may not be able to prevent the use of steroids altogether, but they can clearly and forcefully discourage their use. 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 his/her 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. The Athletic Department opposes the use of steroids for both health and ethical reasons.

## THE STUDENT-ATHLETE COMMITMENT

### DAILY/WEEKLY COMMITMENT

During tryouts and after team selection, the head coach will explain expectations related to practice times and locations and game schedules. Student-athletes are expected to make at least a six-day, two- to three-hour daily commitment to the team each week. Attendance may have an impact on playing time, and membership on the team.

At the ninth grade and junior varsity levels most teams do not practice or play on weekends, but student-athletes may expect practices or games each school day. Normally, practices will consist of an average of two hours of team activity per day taking place sometime between 3 p.m. and 7 p.m. The preparation times before and after practices or games bring the usual total time to three hours per day.

At the varsity level, weekend and/or evening practices and games are more commonplace, and student-athletes should expect regular involvement during these times. Because many of our teams share facilities, and because some teams use facilities off campus, practice and game hours may vary considerably. Coaches will provide a schedule at all levels, in all sports, of practices and games. Student-athletes are expected to provide their own transportation to and from practices. The Norwood High School Athletic Department does not provide transportation at any level to and from practices.

## **PLAYING TIME**

There are many benefits to be gained by participation in athletics at the high school level. Young people learn the values associated with discipline, performing under stress, coping, teamwork, sacrifice, commitment, effort, accountability, citizenship, sportsmanship, confidence, leadership, organizational skills, participating within the rules, physical well-being and striving towards excellence.

Although there are many measures of success in the minds of each participant, perhaps the most emotional is "playing time" during contests. If a student has questions as to his/her "playing time" he/she is encouraged to discuss them with the coach (See also section on Conflict Resolution).

The following are coaches' guidelines for this all-important topic:

### **NINTH GRADE AND JUNIOR VARSITY TEAMS**

At the ninth-grade level the emphasis is on participation. The emphasis on the junior varsity team is balanced between participation and winning. Coaches will make a conscious effort to play all team members for as much time as is practical. There are many factors that govern an individual's playing time but perhaps the most important are practice attendance, quality of effort, attitude, commitment, and athletic ability.

### **VARSITY TEAMS**

While coaches at the varsity level will make a strong effort to play all team members, the emphasis at the varsity level shifts towards fielding competitive teams with the goal of winning as many games as possible. This emphasis may result in uneven playing time among the student-athletes, with some not playing in every game. The coach makes the often-difficult decisions of who starts, who plays and for how long.

Note: When the coach feels that the winning or losing of a particular contest is not in doubt, the coach shall make every effort to insert as many players as possible who see little playing time.

## **TEAM CAPTAINS**

Coaches decide how team captains are selected. Captains may be elected by the team or appointed by the coach. Captains may be chosen at the end of a season, or sometime prior to the first contest of the following season. Captains may also be elected or appointed on, a game-by-game basis. The coach will inform the team as to how captains will be selected.

It is expected that team captains be leaders of their team and be ready to assume duties their coaches outline. They are expected to be well aware of the team rules and student-athlete responsibilities. Captains are expected to communicate with the coach, team and the Athletic Director in the event of any problems that may affect the team or its members. Captains may be asked to meet with the Athletic Director during the school year to discuss the athletic program.

Out of season "captain's practices" are a violation of MIAA Rules and not sanctioned by Norwood High School.

**Captains of teams may be relieved of their position for violation of team, athletic department, school rules or citizenship issues.**

## SCHOOL/FAMILY VACATIONS, EXTENDED ABSENCES CONFLICT WITH SCHOOL EVENTS

Every team member is expected to be present for all team practices and contests. Due to scheduling parameters, many of our teams practice and/or play during scheduled school vacations and/or holidays. Although extended absences are discouraged, the athletic department recognizes that certain circumstances do require them.

Student-athletes who anticipate being absent from team activities for an extended period of time due to family vacation plans, religious obligations, school sanctioned activities, or college visitations are expected to contact their coaches to discuss absences before making plans. If the student-athlete contacts the coach and the coach feels such absence is excused, they can expect to return from such absences as a team member "in good standing." It is the discretion of the coach whether or the status of the student-athlete, with respect to playing time, changes as a result of the absence. If disagreement arises over this or any situation, see Conflict Resolution for guidance.

Although practices may be conducted on religious or school holidays, athletic practices are not mandatory on religious holidays. There will be no penalty for missing practice on a religious holiday. Coaches should be notified in advance if a student-athlete will not be at a practice or game.

Sometimes student-athletes are involved in many school-sanctioned activities and sometimes these activities conflict with their athletic commitment. Student-athletes who recognize that such a conflict may exist should also notify their coach well in advance of any absence. If the student-athlete, parent and coach cannot reach a satisfactory agreement concerning extended absences due to school-sanctioned activities in advance of the absence, please refer to the section on Conflict Resolution for guidance.

Protocol for student athlete conflicts with Fine Arts and the Athletics: when students are in a conflict with two or more school events. The students should speak to the teacher and coach and follow the procedure below:

<u>FINE ARTS</u>	<u>ATHLETICS</u>	<u>STUDENT'S RESPONSIBILITY</u>
Rehearsal	Practice	Split Practice
Performance	Practice	Performance
Rehearsal	Game	Game
Rehearsal	Awards Night	Awards Night
Dress Rehearsal	Practice	Dress Rehearsal
Dress Rehearsal	Game	Game First/ Rehearsal Second
Performance	Game	Student's Choice With consequences

Several of the music programs are tied into academic grades (Madrigals, Concert Chorale, Concert Band, Wind Ensemble, and Orchestra)

These classes are held during the day with some evening practices before performances.

## ATHLETIC EXPECTATIONS

### SPORSTMANSHIP

Norwood High School expects all parties present at a contest to display the highest possible level of sportsmanship. Players, coaches, parents, and spectators should treat opponents, game officials, and visiting spectators with respect. Cheer for your team, never against the opponent.

The MIAA reserves the right to "warn, censure, place on probation, or suspend up to one calendar year any player, team, coach, game or school official, or school determined to be acting in a manner contrary to the standards of good sportsmanship."

Norwood High School, in turn, reserves the right to impose the same penalties on spectators displaying poor sportsmanship at any contests, home and away.

## **CELEBRATION**

At the conclusion of a season, especially after the final contest, or immediately after a critical game, players often react in a celebratory fashion. It is the responsibility of the coach to anticipate such and to have established rules pertaining to it. The following, under no circumstances will be allowed:

- Smoking
- Drinking of any alcoholic beverages
- Spraying of foam or aerosol-type substances
- So called "champagne" celebrations with any liquid
- Any actions that could cause injury to an individual
- Any actions that could damage athletic facilities or equipment
- Any actions that could damage public or private property

Student-athletes found to have engaged in any of the aforementioned activities will be subject to the discipline of the Athletic Department and Norwood Public School System.

## **HAZING**

There is no initiation of any kind to be a member of any team at Norwood High School. Students and/or coaches found in violation will be dismissed from participation in the athletic program. It is the responsibility of all coaches to inform all team members about the hazing law. Under Massachusetts State Law, Chapter 536, Sections 16-19, incidents of hazing must be reported to the appropriate law enforcement officials as soon as reasonably practicable.

### **CH. 269, S.17 CRIME OF HAZING; DEFINITION; PENALTY**

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.

"Hazing is defined as 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 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. Added by St.1985, c.536; amended by St.1987, c665.

### **CH. 269, S.18. DUTY 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. Added by St.1985, c536; amended by St.1987, c665.

### **CH. 269, S. 19. HAZING STATUTES TO BE PROVIDED; STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE AND DISCIPLINE POLICY REQUIRED**

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 acknowledgment stating that such group, team or organization has received a copy of this section and said sections seventeen 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 regents of higher education and in the case of secondary schools, the board of education, certifying that such institution has complied with its responsibility to inform student groups, teams or organizations and to 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 regents 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. Added by St.1985, c536; amended by

St.1987, c665.

## **SEXUAL HARASSMENT**

Coaches must be well aware of the Norwood High School policy on sexual harassment and hazing as contained in the faculty handbook. [Policy Regarding Discrimination and Harassment](#)

It is the policy of the Norwood Public Schools to comply fully with Chapter 622 of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, with regulations approved by the Massachusetts Board of Education, with Title IX and Section 504, as promulgated by the Federal Government, and with the Sexual Harassment Policy of the Norwood School Committee.

The policies of the Norwood Public Schools concerning Chapter 622, Title IX, Section 504, and sexual harassment prohibit discrimination because of race, color, gender, sexual orientation, religion or national origin and handicaps, such as impaired vision or hearing, in the following areas: admissions to the school system; admissions to courses of study; guidance opportunities; curriculum offerings, extra-curricular activities; scholarship and monetary awards; employment; and use of facilities.

Coaches who do not have this policy should see the athletic director for a copy.

Ten Recommendations for preventing sexual harassment:

1. Never use sexually explicit language or jokes
2. Never display explicit pictures
3. Avoid excessive personal conversation in person or by phone
4. Avoid personal letters, cards, and gifts
5. Avoid comments on physical attributes and appearance
6. Avoid physical contact with athletes
7. Coaches should avoid giving students rides home alone
8. Avoid off school meetings
9. Use caution on chaperoned trips overnight
10. Never date students

**This section of the handbook deals with what student-athletes and families may expect from the coaching staff, and what to do if conflicts or problems present themselves.**

## **COACH'S RESPONSIBILITIES**

Norwood High School offers a number of interscholastic athletic programs that meet the needs and interests of students who attend the school. Each individual program is the direct responsibility of each of the respective coaches under the administration of the Athletic Director. The coaches are responsible individuals possessing a high degree of knowledge of their coaching area. All coaches are to base their decisions on what is in the best interest of all students involved in their programs.

Athletics activities implemented under the direction of qualified and capable coaches will greatly enhance a strong balance of each student athlete's mental, social, and physical development. Every Varsity, Junior Varsity, and Freshman program should be competitive with success being of primary emphasis. Success is defined as the positive development of the mental, physical, and social skills of each individual who elects to participate.

Athletics at Norwood High School are an integral component of the comprehensive educational program and emphasis is placed on each student-athlete participant's personal growth and self-development.

### **THE COACH'S SPECIFIC RESPONSIBILITIES**

All coaches should be aware of their influence on the team members, and thereby acknowledge responsibilities to the team. These responsibilities include:

1. Following all procedures and policies set forth by the school district, enforce all rules and regulations of the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association (M.I.A.A.)
2. The physical well being of the players. The coach provides the players with the best protective equipment and will not play a student-athlete when his or her health and safety are endangered.
3. The moral well being of the players.
4. The educational progress of the players. The coach strives to have student-athletes do a good job on the field or in the gym and encourages the players to pursue their studies in the class with diligence.
5. Interest in the school and its overall program.
6. Interest in the welfare of the community.
7. Insist on the enforcement of all rules of interscholastic athletics and seek no favors for student-athletes.
8. Support the decisions of game officials.
9. Teach student-athletes to use only legitimate and ethical means in attempting to win the game.
10. Set good examples for young men and women to follow.
11. Being available from the first day of practice to the last day of a tournament.
12. Working in conjunction with other coaches beyond regular season (i.e. sub-varsity coaches).
13. Securing locker room facilities during athletic contests for student-athletes and coaches only.
14. Acting on all inappropriate behavior by all students.
15. Loyalty to the school's athletic program and supporting the program and actively participate to improve it. After decisions and policies have been established, support and conform to them both in fact and spirit.
16. Dressing in athletic attire for team practices.
17. Recommend dismissal of a student-athlete from the team by notifying the Athletic Director of the reason for dismissal and determine if the action being taken is appropriate.
18. Establishing team rules and having them approved by Athletic Department.
19. Proper utilization of all equipment and facilities, including periodic safety checks.
20. Keep abreast of the latest trends and developments in your respective sport.
21. Using extreme caution when weather conditions exist (lightning, snow, ice, etc).

### **COACH'S RESPONSIBILITIES IN DEALING WITH THE ATHLETIC DIRECTOR/ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT**

1. The Athletic Director is responsible for the total administration of the interscholastic athletic program.
2. Principals are responsible for all programs within their respective schools. However, all requests by coaches are to be made to the Athletic Director. Areas within which coaches are to contact the Athletic Director are:
  - a. Bus transportation
  - b. Scheduling (pre-season and regular season)
  - c. Officials
  - d. Facilities & Equipment
  - e. Tournament or meet information (i.e. entry forms, fees)
  - f. Salary (other than negotiation of salary)
  - g. Personnel (coaches, staff)
  - h. Personnel (team members)
  - i. Conflicts (with players, parents, etc)
  - j. Fundraising
  - k. Unusual situations
3. At the conclusion of an athletic season, the head coach of each sport is to arrange a meeting with the Athletic Director in order to discuss the past season and/or ideas which may benefit their programs for the upcoming year. This will be done through the use of an end of season report.
4. All award winners should be listed and any other administrative correspondences are to be submitted to the Athletic Director prior to the end of season meeting.

## **THE ATHLETE-COACH RELATIONSHIP**

Participation in athletics should be an enjoyable, rewarding and enriching experience for all parties involved: student-athlete 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. In most cases, athletic competition is extremely positive and complements the educational experience enjoyed by students at Norwood High School. Occasionally conflicts between coaches and student-athletes arise. These conflicts must be addressed and resolved immediately so that the many benefits of athletic involvement may continue to contribute to the emotional and physical growth of Norwood High School student-athletes.

Coaches are first and foremost teachers; student-athletes are first and foremost students. Each should exhibit on the playing field the same high standards of behavior and commitment one would find in the academic classroom.

## **CONFLICT RESOLUTION**

Athletic involvement is highly emotional and very time consuming. Sometimes conflicts arise between students-athletes, coaches, and occasionally parents. However, the student-athlete's interest is best served when each participant understands the position of the other. This understanding can only be accomplished by open and honest communication. When conflicts or issues arise it is important that they be addressed immediately, and as directly as possible, so that they can be promptly resolved.

Student-athletes and their parents should use the following process as a guideline when seeking resolution to conflicts or issues between a student-athlete and a coach:

### **FIRST STEP: CONTACTING THE COACH**

The student-athlete should present the conflict/issue to the coach as soon as possible. If personal contact is not practical, a student-athlete may ask his/her team captain to approach the coach. If the personal or captain route is not possible,

contact may be made by the student-athlete's parent at an appropriate time. In order for the contact to be as productive as possible, situations that athletes, captains or parents should avoid are:

- \* Prior to, during or immediately following a contest.
- \* During an active practice session.
- \* When other student-athletes are present or when it would be readily visible to others that the discussion is taking place.
- \* When it is apparent that there is not sufficient time to allow for a complete discussion.

Perhaps the best solution is to ask the coach, either over the phone or in person, if an appointment could be made to discuss the issue. A parent or student may also leave a note for the coach with the Athletic Director.

## **SECOND STEP: CONTACTING THE ATHLETIC DIRECTOR**

If a satisfactory solution is not reached through direct contact with the coach, the student-athlete and/or parent should contact the Athletic Director. The coach should be informed that this contact is going to be made. If this discussion does not result in a satisfactory conclusion, then a meeting will be scheduled involving all concerned parties in an attempt to reach a satisfactory resolution.

There should be no delay in airing any and all concerns since this process could take time and athletic seasons are relatively short. It is very important for all student-athletes and their parents to know that any comments, concerns or issues raised to the Athletic Director will be addressed. Parents and student-athletes may also expect to hear from the Athletic Director as to the disposition of their concerns.

While there can be no guarantee that all parties will agree with all resolutions or findings, a thorough, respectful airing of different perceptions and experiences can lead to more productive relationships and clearer understandings in the future.

## **THIRD STEP: CONTACTING THE PRINCIPAL**

If there is still not a satisfactory resolution, the student-athlete or parent may contact the Principal. The Athletic Director should be informed that this contact is going to be made.

## **"RETRIBUTION"**

Student-athletes and parents must be confident that the voicing of an opinion or concern, using the proper forum and method, is not only free from penalty or retribution, but also is strongly encouraged. The Athletic Director and coaches are committed to insuring that after a student-athlete or parent raises an issue or concern, there shall be no "retribution" in any form within the Athletic Department at Norwood High School. If at any time, a student-athlete or his/her parent suspects that some form of retribution is surfacing as a result of the voicing of a concern, opinion, or issue, using the proper forum and method, he or she should contact the Athletic Director immediately.

## **EXPECTATIONS OF COACHES**

The assumption is that every man and woman who coaches high school student-athletes views himself or herself as a teacher first. It is within the relationship between the teacher-coach and the student-athlete that life lessons and values are taught and learned. The school's initiatives in wellness, citizenship, sportsmanship, integrity, and ethics affect most student-athletes when coaches emphasize these values.

In most instances, during the season of play a student-athlete spends more time daily under the direct supervision and guidance of his/her coach than any other adult. This time spent should be enjoyable, educational, positive and worthwhile. Norwood coaches are well aware that the influence that a coach may have with each individual team member is enormous.

At Norwood High School, student-athletes should expect to be treated with respect and to be treated fairly by their coaches. The coaches are professionals who are aware of and committed to upholding the responsibilities they have to follow including the policies and regulations of the MIAA, the Bay State Conference and Norwood High School. Each student-athlete must be treated as an individual, yet as part of the team. Rules and regulations must be uniformly and fairly enforced at all times.

The percentage of student-athletes whose participation in organized sports ends with high school is overwhelming (well in excess of 90%). Therefore, attention is focused upon developing goals that will develop contributing members of society after high school; goal setting, effort, commitment, teamwork, dedication and a competitive spirit are examples of the characteristics and qualities of student-athletes. Winning and championships is a by-product of this quality of these efforts. Student-athletes and their families can expect the following from members of the Norwood High School coaching staff.

**Communication:** Practice, game schedules and other time commitments, consistent with the guidelines mentioned previously in this booklet, will be explained to all team members. All head coaches will conduct a preseason informational meeting for all team members to disseminate team expectations, rules, regulations and schedules.

Team rules and regulations, in addition to the ones stated in this booklet, will be well defined, distributed, discussed and enforced with all team members. Self-discipline of all student-athletes will be encouraged. Penalties for rule violations will also be well defined, and applied fairly and consistently.

**Individual Success:** The coach will make every attempt to provide an opportunity in practice and contests for each student-athlete to succeed to the best of his/her abilities. The least skilled student-athlete deserves the same energy of teaching as the most skilled.

**Social and Emotional Growth:** The coach will attempt to assist each student-athlete to grow socially and emotionally. This aim is most easily accomplished with positive feedback and timely and sensitive communication with each individual team member.

**Team Spirit - School Spirit:** The coach will attempt to instill and promote school and team spirit and cohesiveness. It is expected that Norwood teams will support each other, not compete against each other for recognition.

**Athletic Performance:** Individual performance by a student-athlete will be critiqued by a coach and shared with each student-athlete at the appropriate time. Each student-athlete will be encouraged to work towards his/her full potential and each coach shall be involved in developing a positive self-image in all team members. Coaches will not negatively critique a student-athlete's performance via the media.

**Skill Development:** Each student-athlete will be taught the rules and skills of the game with the goal of developing maximum proficiency in the specific sport area. Each student-athlete should leave our program technically and tactically improved.

**Approachability:** The coach will be available to all of his/her student-athletes. Team members are encouraged to approach the coach about any topic that they wish. Student-athletes should make every attempt, if a matter is of a personal nature, to approach the coach privately and when there is sufficient time for worthwhile discussion. Coaches should be open and receptive and encourage these individual opportunities to educate and communicate.

**Competitiveness:** According to the MIAA philosophy, "winning contests," rather than losing them, is a laudable goal, but it should not supersede the primary priorities of high school sport programs as listed in this document. Norwood High School coaches and student-athletes do and should play to win. All involved enjoy winning rather than losing, but they also know that preparing students to succeed rather than merely to win games is more important. Win or lose, student-athletes should learn lessons of a lasting and positive nature.

## EVALUATION OF COACHES

Each coach employed by Norwood High School is evaluated on his/her performance at the conclusion of each athletic season. The evaluations are performed informally by the head coach for each of his/her assistant coaches and formally by the Athletic Director for each head coach.

The formal coaching evaluation consists of adherence to the policies stated herein and the following:

### **Professional and Personal Relations**

- a. Cooperation with administration
- b. Organization of staff
- c. Relationship with parents and community, officials, students, opponents, and media
- d. Conduct during games, tryouts and practices
- e. Ability to motivate staff and players
- f. Professional development: attendance at meetings, clinics, etc.

### **Coaching and Related Areas**

- a. Quality of instruction: fundamental skills and tactical awareness
- b. Handling of athletic injuries
- c. Purchasing and care of equipment: issue and return of equipment
- d. Supervision of team: discipline, structure, and organization of practices, game organization
- e. Preseason planning
- f. Adherence to Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association, Bay State Conference and Norwood High School policies and regulations.
- g. Willingness to devote time to coaching duties.

## **PROGRAM/STAFF EVALUATION**

At the conclusion of each season, the Athletic Director will meet with the head coach of each sport to review the season and to assess the coach's performance. Head coaches will be asked to briefly review the performances of each of the coaches on their staff. The major purpose of these meetings and evaluations should be the on-going improvement of programs and staff.

Each coach will also give the Athletic Director a completed End-of-Year Report package, as provided by the Athletic Director. All teams of that sport will be included in the package.

## **PRESS RELATIONS**

In the course of an athletic season, especially during a successful season, sports writers will approach coaches, either directly or by telephone. The Athletic Director in no way wishes to interfere with media relations except to pass on recommendations that come from past experiences. Good press is certainly of value to the Norwood High Athletic Program, but caution must be used at times as many young writers may be seeking to author sensational or controversial items.

Young student-athletes are apt to believe everything printed about them, as such, are likely to exaggerate either their value or lack of value to a team. This can create a moral dilemma within a team and can cause conflict. Be fair to all players on the team, whether a starter, a role player, or bench player.

If your team has won an important game or championship, be humble in victory. If your team has lost, give your opponent credit and never single out individuals as contributing to your loss. It is better, and much wiser, to reserve any comment rather than “pop off” and say something to a reporter you may later regret. Keep your comments concerning individuals for that individual alone.

No members of the press are to be allowed in locker and/or dressing rooms prior to, during, or between periods of a contest. Whether the press is allowed to enter the locker room after a contest is the coach’s decision.

## **REPORTING RESULTS**

It is the responsibility of the Varsity Coach of every sport to have the score of each contest telephoned to each of the local papers immediately after the contest. Contact information will be disseminated at the preseason coaches meeting.

The coach in charge of each sport will prepare a statement to be read on the following days’ morning announcements. The announcement should give praise to the effort of the student-athletes and team regardless of the outcome of the contest.

## **Athletic Awards**

Prior to the beginning of each season, coaches will clearly define and communicate criteria for earning Varsity credit. The criteria are sport specific. Student managers are eligible for varsity letters. Students who participate in athletics at Norwood High School may qualify for a variety of awards such as certificates, plaques, trophies, and NHS Boosters Award jackets.

## **ATHLETIC AWARD REQUIREMENTS**

General Criteria:

- Regular practice and game attendance throughout the season
- Successful completion of the season
  - o Student-athletes must be academically eligible
  - o Successful completion of the season includes competing in all regular season games and post season tournaments in which the individual has qualified
  - o Injured athletes will have their cases reviewed by the coaching staff and Athletic Director to determine eligibility
  - o Student-athletes dismissed from the team will not receive credit towards their athletic points total
  - o Athletes dismissed from the team may have the right to appeal with the Principal
- The Varsity Coach’s recommendation is required for all athletic awards

After satisfying the general requirements for a varsity certificate, coaches will use their own discretion based upon percentage of varsity games participated in. Placing/performance in Bay State Conference competition and/or the Bay State Conference Meet will also be included as a factor in award eligibility.

## **Types of Awards**

Trophies/Plaques: Every Varsity team has three major awards that may be given to individuals at the conclusion of each season. Honored are student-athletes selected as the teams’ Most Improved Player, Unsung Hero, and Most Valuable Player. Awards are given out at that season’s awards ceremony.

Norwood High School Boosters will award “letters” to all varsity student-athletes.

Norwood High School Boosters will award jackets to student-athletes meeting the following criteria:

1. Earning 36 athletic participation points
2. Successfully completing four years in one sport

Points are earned through the following:

1. Any and all freshman participating earn 6 points per season
2. An individual earns 6 points for Junior Varsity participation
3. An individual earns 10 points for Varsity participation

A student-athlete unable to participate during his/her senior year for medical reasons but has otherwise satisfied the preceding requirements, will also be considered for the Norwood High School Boosters Award Jacket. Student-athletes participating for a team for both their Junior and Senior seasons are also eligible for a Jacket.

## **Support Services**

### **TRANSPORTATION TO AND FROM CONTESTS**

The school provides bus transportation, or a suitable substitute, to most away contests. All team members are expected to travel to these contests using the school-provided transportation for student safety reasons. Student -athletes may leave a contest with a parent or guardian with the coach's approval. Reasonable requests will be honored.

Student-athletes wishing to travel home with another parent must have written parental permission 24 hours in advance.

Non-team members may occasionally be allowed to ride team transportation if room exists, the coach in charge has given approval, and prior written parent permission has been given to the coach or Athletic Director. (The athletic department does not provide transportation at any level to or from practices or contests within the Town of Norwood).

### **DIRECTIONS TO AWAY CONTESTS**

The athletic department makes every attempt to publish directions to all away contest locations on the Norwood High School Athletics Web Site: [www.norwoodmustangs.com](http://www.norwoodmustangs.com)

### **POSTPONED CONTESTS**

Some contests throughout the school year are postponed due to factors such as inclement weather. In most instances it is the "home" school that calls for a postponement. By Bay State Conference rule, games are to be made up on the next available open date. School schedules may require play on weekends or holidays.

Decisions on postponements are made as late in the day as is practical for proper notification of all interested parties. On school days, the most common time is about 1:30 p.m. for afternoon contests. Postponed contests will be immediately updated on [www.norwoodmustangs.com](http://www.norwoodmustangs.com). Instant email notification can also be set up through the site.

If there are any questions as to the status of a contest, calls are welcomed to the Athletic Department, but please wait until after 2 p.m. On non-school days and for evening contests, postponements are made approximately two to three hours prior to the contest. Please delay calls in these instances until two hours before the scheduled contest. Normally, people may call for game status information until the scheduled time of the contest.

Because of scheduling conflicts it is sometimes necessary to cancel rather than postpone sub-varsity contests. Because of league standings and/or tournament qualification regulations, cancellations of varsity contests are extremely rare.

## **ADMISSION TO GAMES**

It is the practice at Norwood High School to charge admission to home contests in varsity football, girls and boys varsity basketball, varsity wrestling and varsity hockey. The admissions collected at our contests help offset the costs of the athletic program. All sports benefit from admissions revenues. The admissions collected at Canton Ice Rink during the varsity hockey games helps offset the fees charged for ice rental. Athletic passes are only usable at contests held at Norwood High School facilities.

MIAA tournament fees are in effect for certain tournament games; prices are determined by the MIAA. Norwood High School and Bay State Conference Passes cannot be used at MIAA tournament games.

## **COLLEGE/CAREER GUIDANCE**

One of the most important decisions facing high school student-athletes is what to do with their lives after they graduate. The members of the Norwood High School athletic staff are eager to assist all student-athletes with this extremely important decision. They may be able to answer questions, contact schools and/or coaches, send videotapes, if available, and write letters of recommendation. The least they will be able to do is guide students to more knowledgeable resources who can help with decisions.

If a student-athlete's goal is to compete athletically at the collegiate level it is very important to be aware of the ever-changing National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) regulations. Copies of the latest NCAA regulations are available online at [www.ncaa.org](http://www.ncaa.org). The guidance department also has a wealth of information and experience on this topic. Please be familiar with these regulations and seek assistance if needed.

## **NCAA CLEARINGHOUSE**

The NCAA Clearinghouse is a central repository for information on high school curricula. The NCAA maintains this information to conduct evaluations of incoming college freshmen. The NCAA evaluates high school graduates' academic records in light of current NCAA initial-eligibility requirements.

A prospective collegiate athlete needs to apply and receive a final certification by the Clearinghouse in order to participate in college athletics at the Division I or II levels. A student athlete does not need to apply if he or she will attend a junior college, NAIA or NCAA Division III institution.

Students may pick up Clearinghouse forms in the Guidance office.

# **ATHLETIC EQUIPMENT**

## **ISSUANCE**

The coach of the sport is responsible for the proper issuance and return of equipment to the team members.

## **CARE OF EQUIPMENT**

Coaches will instruct their team members on the proper storage and care of all issued equipment with great emphasis on cleanliness. Equipment that is washable is to be taken home by the student to be laundered at least once a week. Coaches are to strongly enforce the rule that issued equipment is to be worn by student only at practices and games, not

as an article of clothing for personal use. Norwood Public Schools has invested a great deal of money in athletic equipment and care.

The stealing of items of equipment, especially jerseys, for “souvenirs” is to be discouraged. Any coach seeing an individual wearing any unauthorized equipment is to obtain the equipment immediately. In addition, the coach is to report the incident to the Athletic Director. This is an obligation of the coach, which he/she is to assume as a member of the coaching staff.

### **PLAYERS LEAVING TEAM**

If a player leaves the team during the season (injury, dropped from the team, quits the team, etc.) it is the coach’s responsibility to obtain the players equipment. This should be done within 24 hours of the players leaving the team.

### **LOST/MISSING EQUIPMENT**

Student-athletes have an obligation and responsibility to properly care for and return all equipment issued to them. Student-athletes failing to turn in all issued equipment, or returning equipment damaged through misuse, are responsible to meet the current replacement cost for such equipment.

Payment is required at the time of the loss. Payment must be received prior to the next season of athletic involvement or graduation; whichever comes first. Student-athletes may not be allowed to try out for a team if they have an equipment obligation. The cost of lost items will be the sum of money to replace them (face value). A check is the preferred payment of lost equipment. Checks are to be made out to Norwood Public Schools.

### **END OF SEASON**

The coach is responsible for seeing that all items of equipment issued are turned in when appropriate. The Athletic Director is the individual who will direct and assist the coach in the administrative procedures necessary to insure proper issuance and collection of the equipment, cleaning of equipment, inventory and budgeting.

## **Athletic Facilities**

### **LOCKER ROOMS**

Once team rosters are set, if not before, each team member may be issued an athletic locker. Students are expected to lock all personal items and team equipment in their own athletic lockers at all times. Students should never give their locker combination to anyone else. Experience has shown that most losses are due to lockers left open or unlocked. On road trips, when lockers are not available, it is highly recommended that students leave valuables at home or give them to parents or a member of the coaching staff for safekeeping at the game site. Students should neither bring large amounts of cash or other valuable personal items to school, nor should they leave them at school.

### **CARE OF FACILITIES**

Students are expected to treat all facilities, both home and away, with proper care. Norwood High School has some very good facilities and 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.

### **BUILDING AND FACILITY ACCESS**

At the conclusion of each school day, student athletes should bring all items that they need until the next school day to the locker room area. For safety reasons students are not allowed access to other areas of the building after practice, games, or on non-school days. No student will be allowed access to any of our inside facilities without proper supervision by a school staff member.

**Athletic Shoes:** At no time should shoes with cleated soles be worn inside the building. Serious injury can occur from slipping on cement or tiled surfaces.

**Weight Room:** The Athletic Department and the department of health and physical education run the Norwood High School weight room. When opened and supervised, it is available for all students unless it has been reserved as an in-season site for a practice session. Students-athletes are not allowed in the weight room without proper supervision by a member of the staff.

## Athletic Trainer and Training Room

Norwood High School employs a part time Athletic Trainer. The hours are usually from 2:00pm until the end of the last practice session or home contest. During weekends, or on days when school is not in session, the Athletic Trainer is required to be on site only for contests and for some scheduled scrimmages. Occasionally, the Athletic Trainer will be on site for non-school day practice sessions. The training facility is very well equipped.

At certain times, the Athletic Trainer, and facility are extremely busy. Access to the athletic training room and its services is limited to athletes who are there for care only. Athletic training services will be granted on a first come, first served basis on practice days. On game days, students will be treated in an order that will allow bus and/or game commitments to be met. The athletic training program exists to help; please feel free to take advantage of it.

In the event of an athletic injury, the Athletic Trainer is in immediate control. At away contests, if the Athletic Trainer is not present, the host school medical personnel are in control. If no medical personnel are present, members of the coaching staff are instructed to "take charge" of the situation and, if warranted, call for emergency care. After an injury, the student and coach must fill out an "injury report", and a student may not return to competition without clearance by the Athletic Trainer. If a student-athlete is under the care of a physician, written medical clearance is required prior to receiving clearance from the Athletic Trainer. The Athletic Trainer has the last word on when a student can return to participation.

### ACCIDENTS AND INJURIES

#### PREVENTION OF INJURIES

An experienced and concerned athletic staff will attempt to prevent injuries by requiring that equipment be worn properly, and by conducting activities always with the safety and welfare of the student-athletes in mind. The athletic staff, insuring the maximum safety and the minimum chance of injury for student-athletes, must formulate definite rules and regulations; such rules must be rigidly enforced.

First Aid Kit: The coach is responsible for obtaining a properly stocked kit from the Athletic Trainer to have available at all games and practices. The kit should be inspected frequently by the coach, and expended items re-supplied through the same source, at the request of the coach.

Universal Precautions: The concept of universal precautions is that all human blood and body fluids are treated as if known to contain disease-causing germs (pathogens). Coaches should use disposable waterproof glove when you expect to come in contact with blood, or other body fluids, or contaminated items and surfaces. This applies to incidents including, but not limited to, caring for nosebleeds or cuts, cleaning up spills or handling clothing soiled by blood or body fluids containing blood. Do not reuse gloves. After each use, remove gloves without touching them outside and dispose of them in a lined waste container. After removing the gloves, wash hands thoroughly with soap and water.

#### PROCEDURES FOR TREATMENT

If the Athletic Trainer is present, he or she will immediately assume responsibility.

1. If no medically trained personnel are available, and an injury occurs at Norwood High School:
  - a. Apply immediate First Aid (stem blood flow, apply ice, etc) **See emergency plan in medical kit.**
  - b. Contact parent to come to the location and assume responsibility, if possible
  - c. If it is evident that an emergency exists, contact 911 and request ambulance transportation to the hospital
  - d. If a parent is not available, arrange for a member of the staff to remain with the student-athlete until parent is present

- e. Do not transport the student-athlete by private car without the expressed consent of a parent or superior in the school department
  
2. If the accident occurs away from Norwood High School and no immediate assistance is available:
  - a. Apply First Aid
  - b. If injury is not of an immediate emergency nature upon returning to Norwood High School, follow instructions per above
  - c. If injury requires immediate treatment, have home team representative contact local ambulance and transport student-athlete to nearest hospital for treatment
  - d. If no Norwood High School representative or member of the school department can accompany the athlete to the hospital, request the home team to send a responsible adult with the athlete
  - e. Contact a parent and inform them of the action taken
  - f. If any additional assistance is required to supervise the team's return to Norwood High School or to cover at hospital, and if parent cannot be immediately reached, contact the Athletic Director at 617-966-0382.
  
3. Procedure for reporting an accident:
  - a. If the accident requires hospital treatment, contact the Athletic Director at the first opportunity
  - b. Submit a properly completed Accident Report Form by the first school day following the accident to the Athletic Director and School Nurse
  
4. Under no circumstances will an injured student-athlete be left alone or transported without a competent adult accompanying the injured athlete for medical treatment. If absolutely necessary, the coach and team will accompany the injured student-athlete for medical treatment, and the contest will be forfeited
  
5. All coaches should keep in mind that, no matter what prior experience they have had, they are not qualified medical personnel. Acting as such and failing to obtain capable medical assistance quickly could later be construed as negligence
  
6. Many bumps and bruises are just such, but any coach should insist on prompt and proper injury evaluation by the Athletic Trainer if any question of doubt exists
  
7. If you are ever in doubt of the severity of an injury, never attempt to move an injured student-athlete, regardless of whether or not this delays or cancels the contest. Call for an ambulance, notify the parent, and let trained personnel supervise moving the injured student-athlete
  
8. Be especially concerned about injuries, which cause unconsciousness. Get an expert medical opinion quickly. Administer mouth-to-mouth resuscitation if not breathing. Be very wary of allowing the student-athlete to move about once they have regained consciousness. Have someone responsible stay with the injured student-athlete to watch for any after affects.

9. Instruct your players that if a doctor treats them they must inform you, and written clearance must be obtained from that doctor before they are allowed to resume participation. Any notes received from doctors for athletic injuries are to be forwarded to the Athletic Trainer and School Nurse. Once clearance obtained from the physician, the student-athlete must then obtain clearance from the Athletic Trainer.
  
10. All football injuries must involve the athletic trainer. This person is primarily responsible for the care and treatment of all injuries to the team members.