INTRODUCTION 4
IMPLIED CONSENT 5
ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS 5
MEDICAL AND HEALTH CHOICES 5-6
PARENTAL PERMISSION AND MEDICAL FORMS 6
SELECTION OF TEAMS 6
CONDUCT 6
PRACTICE ATTENDANCE 7
BUS BEHAVIOR 7
HAZING, BULLYING, AND INTERNET BULLYING 8
BENCH CONDUCT 6
TOBACCO, ALCOHOL, AND OTHER DRUGS 6
IN SCHOOL SUPERVISION 7
AFTER SCHOOL DETENTION 7
TRAVEL 7
EQUIPMENT POLICY 7
ATTENDANCE 7
GRIEVANCES 7
AWARDS 7-8
MISCONDUCT POLICY 8
ACADEMICS 8

INTRODUCTION

As a student at Downsville Central, you have the opportunity to participate in several interscholastic activities. All students who meet state eligibility requirements are urged to take advantage of the opportunities afforded you. We hope that you will find in the experience a personal challenge and friendly competition that are both rewarding and enjoyable. The valuable lessons you learn from athletics will carry over into adulthood, and be with you for all your life.

If you elect to become a participant in interscholastic athletics, you must remember, along with the privileges of team membership, there are certain responsibilities and obligations that you must assume.

The purpose of this handbook is to set down the general policies and procedures of interscholastic athletics at Downsville Central School.

Philosophy

The interscholastic athletic program in the Downsville Central School District is an integral part of the regular school program and it assists in preparing students for success in their studies and lives.

While competition is important, our primary goal is to encourage good sportsmanship and responsibility among our students, coaches, and community. Participation in a well-designed and structured interscholastic athletic program can help each student reach these goals. We recognize that winning is a desirable outcome but we realize that the growth and development of healthy, mature, responsible students is our primary function.

The interscholastic athletic program provides a valuable experience that should be available to the largest possible number of our students. The access to participation should not be restricted except as described in the team level guides.

The success of any program rests primarily with the coach. Each coach recognizes that his/her responsibility extends beyond the contest to the positive development of our young men and women.

Philosophy For Athletic Programs

Teams shall be well coached and demonstrate through game play that they are able to execute the skills and techniques associated with that particular sport.

Teams shall be expected to display good sportsmanship and positive behavior during practice and game situations.

Teams shall, regardless of their talent or team make-up, be well conditioned, both physically and mentally, and play with enthusiasm while putting forth a quality effort at all times.

Teams shall be expected to demonstrate growth and improvement during the season in their play and execution of sports skills and techniques.

Modified Teams

Shall serve as developmental programs, which will emphasize basic skills, indoctrinate players to varsity program philosophy and create school pride and enthusiasm.

Participation in interscholastic events is to be based on practice attendance, work ethic in practice sessions, and a positive attitude. Winning or losing will not be a major determining factor in deciding participation by modified program student athletes.

Junior Varsity Teams

Shall begin promotion of a winning team concept, identification of more skilled athletes, emphasize winning through the varsity level philosophy of skill development, and continue to prepare junior varsity athletes for the physical, emotional and mental aspect of being a varsity participant.

Attendance, work ethic, attitude and skill development as evaluated by the coach are the basis for interscholastic participation. Cutting students/athletes at this level will be based on the following criteria:

a. demonstration of skills;

b. attendance and effort at practice;

c. attitude and compliance with rules;

d. foster a love/enjoyment of the activity.

Varsity

The major emphasis shall be the promotion of winning through the development of highly skilled, motivated, and well-conditioned athletes. These athletes should be mentally and emotionally prepared to compete and exhibit pride, sportsmanship, enthusiasm and team unity.

Attendance, work ethic, attitude and skill development as evaluated by the coach are the basis for interscholastic participation. Cutting students/athletes at this level will be based on the following criteria:

e. demonstration of skills;

f. attendance and effort at practice;

g. attitude and compliance with rules;

h. foster a love/enjoyment of the activity.

Individual improvement will be stressed through consistent practice habits and competition for participation opportunities with other team members.

Program Goals for Athletics

To create and maintain a safe environment

1. Stress safe and proper techniques and skills of each sport
2. with facilities
3. with equipment

To create and uphold good sportsmanship

1. Develop pre and post-game etiquette
2. Develop respect for self, teammates, coaches, opponents, officials, equipment and facilities

To develop a knowledge of the sport

1. Stress safety

2. Stress skills and techniques

3. Stress rules

4. Develop theory and strategy

To develop a competitive attitude

1. Strive for excellence

2. Set realistic goals

3. Develop a positive mental attitude

To develop life-long skills

1. At present, be a productive team, member and for the future be a productive member of society.

2. Develop the physical self with nutrition, conditioning

3. Develop the social/emotional self with leadership/fellowship, self respect, responsibility/accountability, cooperation and friendship.

4. Awareness of the negative aspects of drug/tobacco use.

These goals have been established for the success of our athletic program and have been adopted to be fostered by the student-athletes, coaches, faculty, staff, administration, parents and spectators.

Lines of Responsibility

Director of Athletics

All coaches and athletes will be under the supervision and direction of the Director of Athletics (herein referred to as the director). The director shall be directly responsible to the Principal, Board of Education and the Superintendent and shall work to fulfill his/her administrative supervisory responsibility.

Head Coach

The head coach will be completely responsible for the conduct of his/her sport at all levels. The head coach will supervise and direct all assistant coaches in the part of the program and out-line their duties. The head coach will have complete jurisdiction over all of the athletes in that sport and has the authority to actually run any of the teams at any of their practices or games, if he/she desires.

Assistant Coaches

All assistant coaches in various sports will be under the direction of the head coach and will be expected to cooperate with him/her. All assistant coaches will be responsible for carrying out the philosophies, policies, and procedures of the head coach in practices and games, etc., as they apply to the athlete and the sport. All assistant coaches, whether designated JV, varsity, or modified, will assist the head coach with varsity responsibilities when the head coach desires.

Student Athletes

The student athlete will be under the direct jurisdiction and supervision of all assistant and head coaches/ Student athletes will conduct themselves in the manner set forth by the head coach of a particular sport. The director, in

conjunction with the Board of Education and administration, will have final authority over any athlete and judgments made upon the athlete, and can overrule a head coach or assistant coach in decisions made by them, if necessary.

Furthermore, the student athlete shall under the complete jurisdiction of the Downsville Central School League, and Section IV policies, and NYSPHSAA regulations.

IMPLIED CONSENT

Participation in all sports requires an acceptance of risk of possible injury. You as a player can help make the game safe by not intentionally using techniques that are illegal and might cause serious injury to you or another. By breaking the rules in this manner, you have effectively stopped playing the game.

In giving your consent to participate in interscholastic sports, you imply that you are aware that the risk of injury may be severe, including the risk of fractures, brain injuries, paralysis, or even death. Accidents do happen, but an accident that could have been prevented is unnecessarily tragic.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Students are eligible for interscholastic competition if they meet the following requirements as set forth by the New York State Public High School Athletic Association.

1. If you are a student in regular attendance in grades 7 through 12, or participate in modified, Junior Varsity, or Varsity Athletic programs,

   A. Between your 14th or 19th birthday; a student who turns 19 on or after July 1st may participate for the remainder of the school year.

      1. A pupil shall be eligible for senior high school competition in a sport during each of four consecutive seasons of such sports commencing with the pupil's entry into the ninth grade, regardless if you participate in a sport at all. Participants under the Selective Classification Program will have extended eligibility to allow the athlete to compete for 4 seasons after his/her entry into ninth grade.
      2. SELECTIVE CLASSIFICATION—Any student who is in 7th or 8th grade and wishes to participate on a Varsity or JV athletic team must pass the Selective Classification screening process. This is a screening process to determine their readiness to compete in interscholastic athletic competition by evaluating their physical maturity, fitness, and skill. Any student who is considering this alternative must see Mr. Baier before he or she can practice on the desired team. Parents must then sign an approval letter and a special physical must be passed, administered by the schools' physician. If all these steps are passed, the student athlete will then contact Mr. Baier. He or a Physical Education teacher will administer the final fitness test for the final approval. Students will be granted an additional year (or two) of eligibility to allow them to participate 4 additional years when they reach 9th grade.

   B. Students who transfer from another school and are living within the Downsville Central School District with their parents may participate in interscholastic contests. Students who have transferred without a corresponding change of address must meet with the Athletic Director (Mr. Baier) and the Director of Guidance (Mr. Rhinehart) to complete a transfer application and apply to the Section for approval.
   C. All issued uniforms or equipment are to be returned or replacement cost must be paid before participating in any succeeding sports.

MEDICAL AND HEALTH CHOICES

School Sports Physicals

All students wishing to participate in an interscholastic sport must have a physical examination by the school physician (Dr. Preiser) within one calendar year of the start of that sport's season.

The school physician must make the final approval. A student rejected by the school physician absolutely *cannot* compete.

Injuries

Report all injuries to your coach at the time they occur, no matter how small they may seem. Today's scratch or blister left unattended may be tomorrow's infection.

All students competing in athletics are covered by school insurance. If you delay reporting injuries until they appear serious, the school will not have a record of it, and the insurance may not cover your expenses. Downsville Central School has paid a fee to Bassett Health Care, to allow all students to have examinations done by Sports Medicine Trainers, free of charge. If you have an injury that you would like the trainers to examine, please see Mr. Baier or Mrs. Becker to have them schedule an appointment for you and to fill out the paperwork needed.

Any student returning to competition after an injury requiring a physician's care must submit to Mrs. Becker, in the Health Office, the physician's approval and recommendation for the student's return in writing.

We all experience minor injuries: bumps, bruises, strains, sprains, etc. Only you can be the judge of the severity of these injuries. We don't want any martyrs playing with severe injuries- that's what the team's for. If your injury really bothers you don't continue; see your coach and get the proper attention. Remember: any injury that does not improve with in a reasonable length of time needs special attention.

PARENTAL PERMISSION AND MEDICAL FORMS

Students wishing to compete in interscholastic competition must return to their coach, prior to the second week of practice, a parental permission slip and medical form, signed by them and a parent or guardian, acknowledging the parent's understanding of the student's responsibilities and obligations as a team member, and affirming approval for participation.

SELECTION OF TEAMS

Any student wishing to participate on an interscholastic team, who meets the school and the N.Y.S.P.H.S.A.A. eligibility requirements, may upon passing their school physical examination, report for tryouts and practice. In all situations where practical, coaches will make an effort to keep all candidates on the squad who demonstrate a desire to learn and contribute to the team.

In sports where facilities and equipment make it necessary to limit the number of participants, cuts may be unavoidable. No student may try out for a team once the final cut has been made, unless due to unusual circumstance, such as an injury or medical reason, creating a shortage of players.

Once you accept membership on a team, you assume the obligations that go with the membership, and are expected to remain a member of the team for the remainder of the season. Any student who quits a team after the first game of the season may forfeit all rights to athletic awards that school year.

CONDUCT

As an athlete you enjoy several rights and privileges not afforded all members of the student body. However, athletes must also abide by the student code of conduct, as it is outlined in the Student Handbook. Any misconduct by an athlete can be processed in the same fashion as negative student infractions, including the same consequences. Along with these privileges comes responsibility. You will continue to enjoy the status and

privileges of an athlete only as long as your conduct is that of a responsible person. Responsible conduct includes following coaches rules as well as all school rules as set aside by the Student handbook.

PRACTICE ATTENDANCE

When a Student/Athlete joins an athletic team, he or she is making a commitment. It is expected that he or she will attend all practices. If a student is absent from school, or has a legal excuse (one that is legal for an absence from school), he or she will not be penalized for missing that practice. However a coach may not start/play a student/athlete who misses a practice the day before a contest. If a student has 3 illegal absences he or she will be removed from the team.

BUS BEHAVIOR

It is assumed that a student athlete will behave and act mature on bus trips to away contests. If a student does not behave accordingly on a bus trip, the coach can suspend him from a further away contest or contests.

HAZING, BULLYING, AND INTERNET BULLYING

Hazing, bullying, and internet bullying are behaviors that will not be tolerated at DCS.

"Hazing" by definition means committing an act against a student, or coercing a student into committing an act, that creates a risk of emotional, physical or psychological harm to a person, in order for the student to be initiated into or affiliated with a student organization or for any other purpose. This might include humiliation, any hurtful, aggressive or destructive behavior, or substance abuse.

Bullying and internet bullying by definition is a variety of negative acts which are carried out repeatedly over time. It is characterized by an imbalance of power which can include physical, verbal and/or psychological. This can be done in a direct fashion where a more powerful child or group attacks a less powerful student or by cyber bullying which might include instant messaging, emails, chat rooms, cell phones, where a child is verbally harassed to the point that it interferes in the function of the school.

Hazing, bullying, and internet bullying will not be tolerated and will be dealt with by the principal. Any person observing this kind of behavior will need to report these acts to the principal who will handle all situations.

Specific consequences are outlines in the Code of Conduct.

BENCH CONDUCT

As a team member on the bench during the game, you must be more than just a spectator must. Concentrate on the game. Know the situation: our offense and defense, and our opponents' offense and defense. Spot our opponents' weaknesses. Maybe you can pick out a flaw that can be used to lead our team to victory. If you feel you have discovered something important, let your coach know. Be ready to enter the game at any time. To *be* ready, you must know more about the game in progress than any of the players on the court or field.

Be positive. Encourage your teammates in the game and don't criticize them.

Show good sportsmanship – Don't argue with officials, respect the opposing team, school, and spectators.

As a player, you must take the attitude that the official is always right. No player on the bench will address an official or criticize him or her in any way.

TOBACCO, ALCOHOL, AND OTHER DRUGS

The use of tobacco, alcohol, and illegitimate drugs has a harmful effect on the human body and decreases the efficiency of performance in the athlete. The possession of or use of any tobacco products, alcohol, or illegal drugs will not be tolerated. Any team members discovered violating this regulation will **immediately** be suspended from the team for two weeks, not to exceed three (3) contests and their parents will be notified, in writing, of the infraction and the action taken. If the suspension occurs during the pre-season, the athlete will not be permitted to participate in the first contest of the season, regardless of the number of individual practices. However, a suspended athlete **may** be allowed to practice with the team during the period of suspension, but will not dress for games. An athlete suspended for a **second violation of this regulation will become ineligible for athlete competition for the rest of that sports season.**

A third violation of this regulation within the school year will cause ineligibility for one (1) calendar year from the date of the infraction and forfeiture of all rights to athletic awards for that year. It is recommended that a student/athlete get counseling on the effects of alcohol and drugs before he or she returns to the team.

Athletic training rule violations are cumulative. All staff members are to report a known training rule violation to the coach involved, to the Athletic Director, and to a school administrator.

A student who has been suspended from interscholastic athletic participation for a third violation of these regulations may, following a full six-month suspension, appeal the remainder of the suspension. Those wishing to appeal shall notify the Athletic Director in writing of his/her intention. Within one school week of receipt of such a letter of notification, a board of appeals shall convene. The board of appeals shall consist of the following: the Athletic Director; the coach involved, and a school administrator. The appealing student will be notified within one school week of the date of the meeting regarding the decision of the board of appeals.

IN SCHOOL SUPERVISION

Students who are serving In-School-Supervision as a punishment for their actions or behavior will be allowed to practice and participate in athletic contests on the first occasion. However, students will not be dismissed early to catch the team bus for an away contest. On the second occasion students will be allowed to practice, but not participate in the next scheduled athletic contest. On the third and subsequent violations, students will not be allowed to practice or participate in athletic contests as assigned by the principal and in consultation with the athletic director and superintendent.

For the purposes of this Athletic Handbook, all In-School-Supervision sentences will be for the individual sport season.

AFTER SCHOOL DETENTION

After school detention is assigned on Tuesdays and Wednesdays and when assigned to an athlete, no consideration will be made to practice or contests that may be scheduled. When staffing for detention is not available on a Tuesday or Wednesday, the detention may be assigned on an alternate date (Monday, Tuesday, or Friday), or the next Tuesday or Wednesday.

Depending on the severity of the infraction, Administration, Athletic Director, or coach may impose a stiffer penalty than those listed above.

TRAVEL

Early Dismissal

When it is necessary to dismiss teams from classes to leave for away games, each student athlete is responsible to get his or her assignments from their respective teachers and see to it that the missed work is made up. It is the student athlete's responsibility to make these arrangements, and not the teacher's job to chase them down.

Transportation

When it is necessary to compete away from home, all team members will travel to and from the contest in school furnished transportation. If you travel to the game by school transport, you will return the same way. The only exception to this rule is a student may leave the game with an **adult** if he or she has written permission from his/her parent and approval by the principal or superintendent prior to the event.

EQUIPMENT POLICY

Issue and Return

You will be issued all necessary equipment to compete in the sport of which you are a team member. This is your equipment for the duration of the sports season, so take care of it! At the close of the sports season, you are expected to return all issued equipment on time, and in reasonable condition, or pay the cost of new equipment to replace what is missing.

Dress and Appearance

Because you are an athlete and a representative of your school and community to the general public, you must present yourself to them as a person of dignity, pride, and dedication. This image should be reflected in your appearance and bearing.

ATTENDANCE

When students accept positions on an athletic team, they do so with the understanding that their obligation to the team takes first priority, before all other non-academic obligations or priorities.

If you must be absent from a practice, you must submit a note signed by your parent/guardian to your coach (inexcusable absences include but are not excluded to the following: school shopping, getting a haircut, or vacationing). This note is to be turned in no later that noon of the day you will be out. In case of an emergency, your parent may call Downsville Central School's main office, at (607) 363-2100, or the Athletic Director (Mr. Baier) at 363-2122. After School detention may be treated as an unexcused absence by the coach. Three unexcused absences from practice may lead to dismissal from the team.

If you must be late to practice, you are expected to inform your coach personally, before scheduled practice time.

Also, team members are not to leave school grounds after school prior to the practice session, unless the practice is scheduled at a later hour, such as the case during the basketball season.

Students not in attendance for the afternoon session on the day of an athletic contest will not be eligible to compete on that day, unless excused for a legitimate reason—medical, dental, etc. If you have an excused absence during the morning session on any day, and return before **11:20**, let your coach know you are in attendance so he or she may plan on your presence at practice or for the game.

When injured, you are still a member of the team, and you should attend practices and games unless excused by the coach.

(Students are expected to be in school on time the day after a game).

Practice Attendance

When a student athlete joins an athletic team, he or she is making a commitment. It is expected that he or she will attend all practices. If a student is absent from school, or has a legal excuse (one that is legal for an absence from school), he or she will not be penalized for missing that practice. However, a coach may not start/play a student athlete who misses a practice the day before a contest. If a student has three (3) illegal absences, he or she will be removed from the team after a meeting with the Athletic Director.

GRIEVANCES

If at any time a student has questions or problems relating to his or her position in the line-up, team procedures, or problems of a personal nature, the student should feel free to discuss them with the coach at a mutually convenient time.

AWARDS

At the conclusion of the school year, team members will be eligible for athletic awards, requirements for which will be based on participation, sportsmanship, loyalty, and effort.

A student athlete will receive one JV or one varsity letter. He or she will receive a certificate and an emblem suitable for wearing on the first letter, for every season meeting letter requirements. Any senior athlete who has been a team member in good standing for three consecutive seasons may, upon recommendation of the coach, receive a varsity letter if he or she has not previously earned a letter in that sport. A letter may be earned on the basis of merit, if in the opinion of the coach the athlete has made a distinct or unique contribution to the team, although not fulfilling the participation requirements.

A player fulfilling the requirements for an award relinquishes his or her entitlement if he or she displays poor sportsmanship, attitude, or loyalty at any time during the school year, or is convicted of a felony, or if the student quits school.

MISCONDUCT POLICY

Because DCS and Section IV believes that the purpose of interscholastic athletics is to help promote sportsmanship and also that athletes and coaches should be setting an example by their behavior, the Misconduct Policy has been implemented at the Section level.

When a player displays abusive, profane, or malicious behavior before or during a contest which results in his or her ejection from the contest, he or she will be ineligible to participate in the next regularly scheduled game of his or her team. He or she may also be subject to additional penalties for such misconduct by the Section IV Ethics Committee. Those additional penalties may include suspension for multiple games and/or the season where the seriousness of such act or repetition of acts justifies more stringent sanctions.

Any player cited by an official for misconduct that occurs after the contest is completed shall be subjected to the same penalties imposed on a player who is ejected, either prior to or during a game.

The athletic program is part of the school program, therefore, subjects athletes to rules in the DCS student handbook.

ACADEMICS

Academics come first. Student athletes on the failure list may be required by a coach to sit out practice in order to complete schoolwork or work with a teacher. Athletes who are on the failure list will be required to attend structured study hall prior to the start of their afternoon practice.

The coach may also limit playing time at their own discretion for any athlete at any time it is necessary based on behavior or academic standing.

Other than that, be sure to have fun...