

OTHELLO SCHOOL DISTRICT ATHLETICS & ACTIVITIES HANDBOOK 2026-27



Othello High School
340 S. 7th Avenue
Othello, Washington 99344
(509) 488-3351

McFarland Middle School
775 S. 10th Avenue
Othello, Washington 99344
(509) 488-3326

www.othelloathletics.com

Table of Contents

PARTICIPATION & ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS	5
Othello Athletics Philosophy	5
7-12 Expectations for Eligibility: Student and Parent/Guardian Responsibility	6
Eligibility Requirements & Expectations	6
Things to do BEFORE the first practice/club session:	7
WIAA STANDARDS FOR INTERSCHOLASTIC ELIGIBILITY	7
Gender Identity Participation (WIAA Compliance)	8
OHS Cheer (Competitive)	8
OHS Speech & Debate	8
OHS Band	8
OHS Drama	9
OTHELLO SCHOOL DISTRICT STANDARDS FOR INTERSCHOLASTIC ELIGIBILITY	9
Career & Technical Student Organizations (CTSOs)	9
GENERAL ATHLETIC GUIDELINES	10
Attendance in Class	10
Attendance at Practice	10
Sportsmanship	10
Illness or Injury	10
Concussion Information	10
Responsibility of Equipment	10
Appearance	11
Transportation	11
Parent Meetings	11
Team Selection	11
Locker Room, Hazing, Intimidation & Bullying	11
Athletic Grievance Procedure	12
Lettering in a Sport	12
Changing Sports	12
Athletic Season	12
EVENT MANAGEMENT, SUPERVISION AND SECURITY POLICY	12
Purpose	12
Duty of Care and Standard of Practice	12
Event Security Planning Process	13
Event Risk Classification	13
Supervision and Staffing Requirements	13
Spectator Conduct and Behavior Expectations	13
Assumption of Risk Statement	13
Facility Safety and Event Setup	14
Event Communication	14
Emergency Preparedness and Response	14
Medical and Injury Response	14
Accessibility and Special Accommodations	14

Weather and Environmental Safety-----	14
Incident Reporting and Documentation-----	14
Use of Facilities by Non-School Groups-----	15
Training Requirements-----	15
Continuous Review-----	15
ACADEMIC STANDARD PROCEDURE-----	15
Eligibility Standards-----	15
Key Definitions-----	15
In-Season Probation and Suspension-----	16
Start-of-Season Suspension (Prior-Term Grades)-----	16
Incoming 9th Grade Students-----	16
Reinstatement of Eligibility-----	16
Grade Checks-----	16
Hardship-----	16
SEVERE VIOLATIONS OF THE ATHLETIC CODE-----	17
Year-Round Expectations-----	17
Reporting Violations-----	17
Attendance at Functions-----	17
Tobacco, Alcoholic Beverages, Drugs, Drug Paraphernalia, and Steroids-----	17
Criminal Acts-----	17
Legend Drugs and Controlled Substances-----	18
Other Types of Misconduct or Violations of the OSD Athletics & Activities Handbook-----	19
Consequences for “Other Types of Misconduct” Violations-----	19
School Administration & Head Coach Discretion-----	19
SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY & GUIDELINES FOR STUDENT ATHLETES-----	19
Purpose-----	20
Scope-----	20
Standards for Regulation of Student Expression-----	20
Definition of Substantial Disruption-----	20
Prohibited Conduct-----	20
Protected Student Expression-----	21
Expectations For Responsible Use-----	21
Disciplinary Response-----	21
Due Process-----	22
Reporting And Investigation-----	22
Acknowledgment-----	22
Final Statement-----	22
APPEAL PROCESS-----	22
GENERAL INFORMATION-----	23
Rules for Coaches-----	23
Rules for Parents and Fans-----	23
Rules for Officials:-----	23
Accountability-----	23

DEFINITIONS-----	24
DISCRIMINATION STATEMENT-----	25

PARTICIPATION & ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Othello Athletics Philosophy

The Othello School District believes that athletics and activities are integral to a well-rounded education. While participation is voluntary, it is a privilege—one that comes with high expectations, deep responsibility, and a significant commitment of time and effort outside the regular school day.

Students in our programs are not just athletes or performers—they are learners who consistently show up on time, meet deadlines, and use their time purposefully. They take ownership of their growth, set goals, and hold themselves to high standards without needing constant reminders. In doing so, they demonstrate responsibility, initiative, and discipline both on and off the field.

Participation in athletics and activities requires students to be communicators—clear and thoughtful in how they express ideas, listen actively to others, and adapt their message to fit the audience and situation. Whether discussing strategies with teammates, responding to coaches, or showing sportsmanship to opponents, they engage in meaningful, respectful communication that reflects the values of our school and community.

Our student-athletes are also critical thinkers, who ask big questions, seek creative solutions, and persist even when challenges arise. They analyze situations, adapt quickly, and use tools—including technology—wisely and ethically to support strong decision-making and performance. In both individual and team competition, they show that effort and thoughtfulness matter more than the scoreboard.

We expect our participants to be collaborators, working effectively within teams by sharing original ideas and valuing the input of others. They show resilience by learning from mistakes and turning setbacks into opportunities for growth. They uplift each other, foster trust, and contribute to a team culture where all voices are heard and respected.

Finally, our athletes and activity participants are advocates—students who seek ways to contribute positively to their teams, schools, and the wider community. They demonstrate empathy, understand global and local issues, and use their platform to uplift others. Through their words and actions, they model integrity, respect, and a commitment to social good.

While winning is a goal, it is not the guiding principle. Our focus is on how well students play the game—how they prepare, how they respond to pressure, how they support others, and how they grow through competition. No disgrace comes to a team or individual that gives their best and lives out our shared values.

Athletics and activities continually challenge and refine character. They provide opportunities to test and strengthen traits like perseverance, emotional control, self-awareness, and sportsmanship. When practiced and reflected upon regularly, these habits become part of who our students are—on the field, on the court, on the stage, in the classroom, and in life.

Together, let us strive toward excellence—not just in outcomes, but in who we become along the way.

7-12 Expectations for Eligibility: Student and Parent/Guardian Responsibility

Student Responsibility

Student-athletes and activity participants are responsible for maintaining their own eligibility by meeting the district's standards for academics, attendance, behavior, and citizenship. Students are expected to monitor their academic progress, attend school regularly, communicate with teachers and coaches, seek assistance when needed, and promptly address concerns that may affect their eligibility.

Parent/Guardian Partnership

Parents and guardians play an important role in supporting student success. Families are encouraged to regularly monitor grades, attendance, behavior, and school communications through the district's student information systems and communication platforms. Working together with school staff helps identify concerns early and provides students with the support needed to remain eligible and successful.

Shared Responsibility

While the school provides regular eligibility notifications, maintaining eligibility is ultimately the shared responsibility of the student and parent/guardian.

We believe every student should have the opportunity to participate, and we are committed to providing the support necessary for them to do so. To ensure that those representing our schools reflect these high standards, students must meet established eligibility thresholds. These expectations are in place to reinforce the importance of accountability, effort, and pride in representing their school and community.

Eligibility Requirements & Expectations

- Be less than 15 years old at McFarland Middle School at the beginning of any sport season.
- Be less than 20 years old at Othello High School at the beginning of any sports season.
- Attendance:
 - Students must maintain an attendance rate of **90% or better over a rolling four-week period**, excluding school-related absences. Unexcused tardies and early departures will be counted when calculating the student's attendance rate in accordance with district attendance procedures.
 - No absences on the day of a practice or competition (exceptions can be made for medical appointments, family emergencies, and funerals, or other unavoidable circumstances, to be excused by the Director of Athletics & Student Engagement and/or School Administration).
- Behavior:
 - Students may not have more than one Skyward referral in a four-week period.
- Academics:
 - Students must be passing the minimum number of classes required by WIAA Rule 18.8.0, based on their school's schedule:
 - Othello High School (5-period day): passing at least 4 of 5 classes
 - McFarland Middle School (6-period day): passing at least 5 of 6 classes
 - Advisory is not included in grading for eligibility.

Your Eligibility May be Subject to Special Rules:

- If you want to participate in non-school athletic activities;
- If your family does NOT live in the school district in which you attend;
- If you have transferred from one school to another within the last academic year.

A student/family in a Home-Based Learning Program (HBLP) may participate in OSD sports or clubs when in compliance with the OSD Athletic Code and can provide evidence to the superintendent/designee that they are “on track to graduate” from their HBLP. If the student/family provides sufficient evidence, the student will enroll in the appropriate OSD entity and be coded as a Homeschool/Sports or Homeschool/Club student to verify participation, but claim 0% FTE.

To Participate in Interscholastic Athletics, You:

- Cannot be eligible for more than four consecutive years after beginning ninth grade;
- Cannot accept, from any source, awards of intrinsic value except letters awarded by your school, or medals or trophies given in high school contests;
- Cannot accept any merchandise totaling more than \$500 in retail value in one calendar year; cannot accept a cash award. Cannot play on any professional team in any sport, nor sign a professional athletic contract, nor enter a competition under an assumed name.

Note: *There may be more restrictive school and/or league requirements in addition to the above rules. Consult your athletic director and the school, league, and WIAA handbook for precise wording or regulations.*

No student may practice without completing the above and being on the athletic/activity eligibility clearance list for that particular sport/activity.

Things to do BEFORE the first practice/club session:

- Sign up and complete your sport/activities at the beginning of each season/term on FINAL FORMS at <https://othello-wa.finalforms.com/>
- For athletics, have passed a physical examination from a medical authority licensed to perform a physical examination. Physical exams are good for 24 months from the date of the exam. The medical authorities licensed and approved by law to give physicals include M.D., Doctor of Osteopathy, D.O., Certified Registered Nurse (A.R.N.P.), and Physician’s Assistant (P.A.); Naturopathic Physicians (N.D.). Submit the completed form to the ASB Athletics Secretary.
- Purchase ASB card MMS \$30/OHS \$35.
- Athletic injury insurance or health insurance approved by the Othello School District.
- All school fines must be paid prior to participation.

WIAA STANDARDS FOR INTERSCHOLASTIC ELIGIBILITY

All contestants must be eligible under the rules of the Washington Interscholastic Activities Association (WIAA) to participate in an interscholastic contest. Eligibility rules pertain to age, student being a member of the school, Running Start, scholarship, previous semester/trimester, attendance, residence, transferring students, season limitations, gender identity participation, amateur standing, physical examination, exchange students, and Washington laws and student eligibility. Some of these rules will be addressed further in other sections of this athletic code. Othello School District may have more restrictive eligibility standards than the WIAA. For further information about WIAA rules, contact the Othello School District Athletic Director.

Students in violation of WIAA rules may be restricted from game competition. The Athletic Director will notify any student found in violation of a WIAA rule in writing. This decision may be appealed through the WIAA Activity District 5 Eligibility Committee. Proper appeal forms can be obtained from the ASB or the Athletic Secretary. It is the responsibility of the person in violation to satisfactorily complete and return the forms to the OSD Director of Athletics & Student Engagement.

Gender Identity Participation (WIAA Compliance)

Participation in Othello School District athletics and activities shall be consistent with a student's gender identity, in accordance with Washington Interscholastic Activities Association (WIAA) rules, Washington State law, and federal law, including Title IX.

The District will follow all current WIAA eligibility procedures related to gender identity participation. This includes any required review processes, documentation, or appeals as established by WIAA. The District will not impose additional requirements beyond those required by WIAA.

All student-athletes shall have equal access to athletic participation opportunities, benefits, and services in a manner consistent with their gender identity.

OHS Cheer (Competitive)

Cheer at Othello High School is recognized as a WIAA-sanctioned competitive sport and will follow all OSD and WIAA standards for interscholastic athletic participation. Students participating in Cheer are student-athletes and are required to comply with the same expectations as all other athletic programs in the Othello School District.

To participate in Competitive Cheer, student-athletes must:

- Meet all academic, attendance, and behavior eligibility standards outlined in the OSD Athletics & Activities Handbook.
- Complete the clearance process through Final Forms, including proof of a valid physical and required forms.
- Purchase an ASB card and clear all school fines prior to participation.
- Be insured with verification of personal health insurance.
- Abide by the WIAA Cheerleading Safety Guidelines and attend all required practices and competitions.
- Follow the athletic attendance, sportsmanship, injury clearance, and conduct expectations outlined in the general athletic guidelines of this handbook.

Per WIAA Rule 23.5.10, competitive cheer requires stunt certification for all head coaches. Cheer participants are eligible for lettering and are held to the same standards for ejections, eligibility appeals, and postseason participation as all other WIAA sports. Othello Cheer may include sideline support for other sports, but the competitive team structure, coaching, and eligibility are governed as a sport. Participation in cheer enhances student leadership, teamwork, physical coordination, and school spirit through athletic competition.

OHS Speech & Debate

Whether it's in traditional sports or activities like Speech & Debate, our eligibility criteria follow winter grade checks, using the OSD Athletics & Activities Handbook, and necessitate clearance for eligibility to participate. In addition to academic performance, students must be cleared in Final Forms, ensuring all necessary forms and permissions are submitted promptly. By upholding these principles, we aim to cultivate responsible, well-rounded individuals who excel academically and positively contribute to our school community.

OHS Band

Participation in the Band program at Othello High School is an enriching opportunity that requires compliance with specific eligibility criteria. During the Winter Trimester, which includes playoffs, students must meet the academic standards set forth by the OSD Athletics & Activities Handbook. Grade checks will begin at the midterm of Trimester 2 and continue throughout the term. Trimester 2 final grades will be the determining factor of eligibility for playoffs and other band activities. In addition to academic performance, students must be cleared in Final Forms, ensuring all necessary forms and permissions are submitted promptly.

OHS Drama

Grade checks for Drama students will follow the fall sports schedule, using the OSD Athletics & Activities Handbook. Students interested in Drama must complete the clearance process in Final Forms before participating in any Drama-related activities. By adhering to this policy, we aim to foster a supportive environment where academic excellence and artistic expression empower students to excel both on stage and in their academic endeavors.

OTHELLO SCHOOL DISTRICT STANDARDS FOR INTERSCHOLASTIC ELIGIBILITY

Students participating in WIAA athletics/activities must follow these guidelines in order to become eligible to participate in practice or competition. As a student-athlete or as a student manager/statistician, a student must have these items on file with the ASB or Athletic Secretary before a clearance to participate:

- Athletic/Activity Registration Form along with Athletic/Activity Code signed by the student and parent/guardian. This registration process includes many forms requiring student and/or parent signatures.
- Physician's approval for participation (including Dance & Drill and Cheerleaders)
- ASB card
- Financial responsibility (proof of insurance required)
- Emergency and Guardian Consent Form, signed by both student and parent/guardian
- Completed Athletic Eligibility Form; only applies to the following:
 - Home-Based Education
 - Alternative Education
 - Running Start
 - Navigating Educational Offerings
 - Transfer Students
- Social Media Policy and Guidelines for Student-Athletes, signed by both student and parent/guardian
- Concussion/Cardiac Arrest policy, signed by parent/guardian
- Communicable Disease form, signed by parent/guardian
- All fines must be paid in full.

Note:

- Coaches will verify if a student-athlete is eligible to participate through FINAL FORMS.
- A school staff member who sponsors, promotes, or directs activities during the summer vacation shall clearly indicate that he/she is operating independently of the Othello School District. As such, the school district shall be free of liability associated with the activity. Authorization for use of school facilities shall not be considered as an endorsement or approval of the activity group or organization, nor the purposes it represents.
- Student-athletes requiring the attention of a physician due to illness and/or injury must have a physician's written release prior to returning to practice and/or competition.

Career & Technical Student Organizations (CTSOs)

Career and Technical Student Organizations (CTSOs) provide students with valuable leadership, teamwork, and industry-based experiences connected to Career and Technical Education (CTE) pathways. CTSOs in our Othello School District may include organizations such as, but not limited to, FBLA, FFA, FCCLA, HOSA, and TSA. Eligibility for CTSO participation follows the same standards outlined in the OSD Athletics & Activities Handbook, in addition to the policies and standards set forth in each organization's bylaws and/or handbook.

- Students must meet the academic eligibility standard outlined under Eligibility Requirements & Expectations (p. 6): passing at least 4 of 5 classes at OHS or 5 of 6 classes at McFarland Middle School, per WIAA Rule 18.8.0.
- Be cleared through Final Forms prior to participating in events, competitions, or trips.
- Maintain good standing with the school, including behavior expectations, attendance, and fulfillment of all fees and fines.

GENERAL ATHLETIC GUIDELINES

Attendance in Class

In order to participate in athletics, students taking coursework at the middle school or high school must attend ALL of his/her assigned classes during a school day before participating in the day of practice or game activity. Exceptions may be made by the Principal, Assistant Principal, or Director of Athletics & Student Engagement for medical appointments, family emergencies, and funerals as a reason for being absent from school. Verification of an appointment may be required. Students gone from campus for school-related absences would be considered to be in attendance at school.

Attendance at Practice

A student-athlete not attending practice the day before a game/contest will not be allowed to participate in that game/contest. The Principal, Assistant Principal, or Director of Athletics & Student Engagement, for circumstances such as medical appointments, family emergencies, funerals, or other unavoidable circumstances, may make exceptions to this rule. When possible, the athlete must receive this clearance before missing practice.

Sportsmanship

Each student-athlete representing our Othello School District is expected to exemplify the highest standards of good sportsmanship. Sportsmanship consists of these qualities of courteousness, fairness, and being respectful toward officials, teammates, opponents, coaches, and all others associated with the sport. Any student-athlete who is ejected from a contest shall result in a suspension of at least one contest at the same level of competition. Parents/spectators must show sportsmanship as well.

Illness or Injury

If a student-athlete visits a physician for illness or injury, he/she is required to bring a note from the doctor before being allowed to return to practice or competition.

Concussion Information

The Zachery Lystedt Law in Washington state requires that a youth student- athlete who is suspected of sustaining a concussion or head injury in a practice or game shall be removed from competition at that time, and may not return to play until the athlete is evaluated by a licensed health care provider trained in the evaluation and management of concussions and received written clearance to return to play. Students will be required to go through a gradual return-to-play concussion protocol prior to being fully cleared for competition.

Responsibility of Equipment

A student must be in good standing with the school and the particular area of participation. This means that school-owned equipment checked out by a participant in any sport is his/her responsibility. The loss or misuse of equipment will be the financial obligation of the participant. Participants will not be allowed to continue the competition or allowed to receive awards until this obligation is fulfilled.

Fundraising: To support the athletic program financially, a student-athlete may be asked to assist in team fundraisers. Any products checked out to student-athletes are his/her responsibility.

Appearance

Members of an athletic team are expected to present themselves in a positive manner. Appearance, expression, and actions always influence people's opinions of athletes, the team, and the school. Student-athletes shall dress presentably at all times.

Transportation

All students are expected to travel to and from out-of-town contests with transportation provided by the Othello School District. A Permission to Release Athlete form can be obtained at the main office or from a coach. Student-athletes may travel home with a responsible adult (18+), with prior parent approval (signature on document).

Parent Meetings

Parents are required to watch a Parent Presentation video and attend. Topics may include program philosophy, role of parents, team rules and expectations, schedules, safety guidelines, athletic code, eligibility, etc.

Team Selection

In accordance with our philosophy of athletics and our desire to see as many students participate in the athletic program as possible while at Othello High School, we encourage coaches to keep as many students as they can without unbalancing the integrity of their sport. Time, space, facilities, equipment, personal preference, and other factors will place limitations on the most effective squad size for any particular sport. Choosing the members of athletic teams is the sole responsibility of the coaches of those squads. A great deal of evaluation and consideration goes into each decision. Rarely is ability the primary factor. Grades, attitude, work ethic, enthusiasm, and specific team needs all play a part. Prior to trying out, the coach shall provide the following information to all candidates for the team:

- Extent of the try-out period.
- Criteria used to select the team.
- Practice and game commitments.
- When a squad cut becomes a necessity, the process will include the following:
 - Compete in a minimum of three practice sessions.
- Be personally informed of the cut by the coach, including the reason for the action.

Locker Room, Hazing, Intimidation & Bullying

Hazing or bullying of other players is not allowed under any circumstances and will result in disciplinary action, which may include removal from the team. Roughhousing and throwing towels or other objects are not allowed in the locker room.

Harassment, intimidation, bullying, or discrimination based on a student's gender identity or gender expression is strictly prohibited and will result in disciplinary action, up to and including removal from athletic participation.

Student-athletes shall be permitted access to locker rooms, restrooms, and team facilities consistent with their gender identity. Any student requesting additional privacy will be provided reasonable accommodations; however, no student shall be required to use separate facilities due to their gender identity.

Athletic Grievance Procedure

When a student-athlete or parent has a concern pertaining to a program, the following procedure should take place:

- The athlete should first talk with the coach about his/her concerns.
- Call to set up an appointment with the coach, parent, and athlete. Please do not approach a coach before, during, or after a contest or practice. These can be emotional times for the player, parent, and coach.
- If the meeting with the coach does not provide a satisfactory resolution, contact first the Director of Athletics & Student Engagement, then the Principal, and then the Superintendent, if needed. (Playing time and coaching strategy are up to the coach.)

Concerns related to discrimination, harassment, or participation based on gender identity shall also be addressed through the District's Title IX procedures. Students and families may file complaints in accordance with District policy and applicable federal and state laws.

Eligibility disputes related to gender identity participation may also be appealed through the Washington Interscholastic Activities Association (WIAA) eligibility appeal process.

Lettering in a Sport

Lettering standards and criteria are established by each head coach and approved by the ASB Student Council. Athletes must finish the entire season (including postseason) to be eligible for a letter. Athletes who quit a sport during the season will not be eligible for a letter or participation award.

Changing Sports

The student must obtain a new clearance slip from the Director of Athletics & Student Engagement before being allowed to begin practicing in a second sport, and the permission of the new sport's coach to participate in that sport.

Athletic Season

The athletic season shall run from the date of the first WIAA practice until the Monday after the last contest.

EVENT MANAGEMENT, SUPERVISION AND SECURITY POLICY

Purpose

The Othello School District is committed to providing a safe, secure, and positive environment for all participants, spectators, and staff at athletic and activity events. This section establishes expectations, procedures, and safeguards aligned with Washington Interscholastic Activities Association, WIAA, standards and applicable legal principles governing school event management.

Duty of Care and Standard of Practice

The District exercises reasonable care under foreseeable circumstances in the planning, supervision, and management of all events. This includes identifying potential risks, implementing appropriate preventative measures, and responding effectively to incidents.

While not all risks can be eliminated, the District is committed to minimizing hazards through proactive

planning, trained supervision, and continuous evaluation of safety practices.

Event Security Planning Process

All athletic and activity events will follow a structured planning process that includes:

- Assessment of event type, size, and risk level
- Identification of supervision and security needs
- Coordination with school administration and, when appropriate, local law enforcement or emergency services
- Assignment of staff roles and responsibilities
- Review of facility readiness and safety conditions

Event Risk Classification

Events may be classified as:

- Low Risk, routine contests with minimal supervision needs
- Moderate Risk, larger crowds or heightened competitive context
- High Risk, rivalry events, large attendance, or prior history of incidents

Security and supervision measures will be scaled accordingly.

Supervision and Staffing Requirements

All events will be staffed with adequate supervision proportional to the size and nature of the event.

- Staff will be assigned to specific supervision zones
- Administrators or designees will be present at designated events
- Security personnel or law enforcement may be utilized when appropriate
- Staff are responsible for active supervision, not passive observation

Failure to follow supervision expectations may result in disciplinary action.

Spectator Conduct and Behavior Expectations

Spectators are expected to demonstrate positive sportsmanship and contribute to a safe event environment.

Prohibited Conduct Includes:

- Physical or verbal aggression
- Throwing objects or entering restricted areas
- Interference with gameplay or officials
- Disorderly conduct or intoxication
- Harassment, intimidation, or discriminatory behavior

Enforcement:

- Individuals engaging in unsafe or disruptive behavior may be removed from the event
- Removal decisions may be made by administration, event supervisors, or security personnel
- Re entry after removal is prohibited
- Law enforcement may be involved when necessary

Assumption of Risk Statement

Attendance at athletic events involves inherent risks, including but not limited to contact with participants, equipment, or other spectators. By attending, spectators acknowledge and voluntarily assume these risks. The District will take reasonable precautions to provide a safe environment but is not liable for injuries resulting from inherent risks that cannot be eliminated without fundamentally altering the nature of the activity.

Facility Safety and Event Setup

All facilities must be maintained in a safe condition prior to and during events.

- Pre event safety inspections will be conducted
- Hazards must be corrected, mitigated, or clearly identified
- Appropriate barriers, signage, and restricted areas will be established as needed
- Spectator seating and access points will be monitored

Event Communication

Clear and consistent communication is essential for safe event management. The District will provide information regarding:

- Event expectations and rules
- Restricted areas and safety guidelines
- Emergency procedures
- Weather related decisions

Communication methods may include announcements, signage, digital platforms, and staff direction.

Emergency Preparedness and Response

Each venue will operate under an Emergency Action Plan, EAP, that includes:

- Emergency communication protocols
- Roles and responsibilities of event staff
- Evacuation and shelter procedures
- Access for emergency responders
- Medical emergency response procedures

All staff involved in event supervision will receive annual training on emergency procedures.

Medical and Injury Response

- Qualified personnel or trained staff will be available to respond to injuries
- Emergency services will be contacted when necessary
- Incident reports will be completed following any injury requiring attention

Accessibility and Special Accommodations

The District will provide reasonable accommodations for individuals with disabilities in accordance with federal and state law. This includes:

- Accessible seating and facility access
- Consideration in emergency procedures
- Assistance as needed for safe participation or attendance

Weather and Environmental Safety

Events may be delayed, modified, or canceled due to weather or environmental conditions that pose a safety risk. Decisions will prioritize the safety of participants, spectators, and staff.

Incident Reporting and Documentation

All safety incidents, injuries, removals, or security concerns must be documented.

- Reports will be submitted in a timely manner
- Documentation will be reviewed to improve safety practices

- Records may be used for compliance and legal purposes

Use of Facilities by Non-School Groups

Use of District facilities by outside organizations does not constitute District sponsorship. External groups are responsible for:

- Supervision and security
- Insurance coverage
- Compliance with applicable safety regulations

Training Requirements

All personnel involved in event supervision must receive training in:

- Crowd management and supervision
- Emergency response procedures
- Incident documentation and reporting
- Student and spectator safety expectations

Continuous Review

The District will regularly review event management and security practices to ensure alignment with:

- WIAA standards
- Legal requirements
- Best practices in school safety

Adjustments will be made as necessary to maintain a safe and secure environment.

ACADEMIC STANDARD PROCEDURE

Eligibility Standards

In the Othello School District, we hold our student-athletes and activity participants to high standards of academic performance, behavior, and attendance. These standards reflect our commitment to student success both on and off the field. The following eligibility rules are in place to ensure that students maintain satisfactory progress while participating in athletics or activities.

Key Definitions

- **Probation:** A one-week period where a student who is not meeting standards is given the opportunity to improve while remaining eligible to compete in contests. A student placed on probation must be fully eligible at the next weekly eligibility check. If the student remains below standard in any eligibility category, including attendance, behavior, or academics, the student will be placed on suspension. Students on probation will be monitored weekly. If they meet standard(s) by the end of the next week, they remain eligible to compete.

Example: A student placed on probation for behavior who later meets the behavior standard but falls below the attendance requirement or is failing two or more classes at the next eligibility review will be placed on suspension.

- **Suspension:** A period where a student is not eligible to compete in contests but may continue to attend practices and receive support. Suspension occurs in one of two ways:
 - Following an unsuccessful probation period during the season.

- At the start of a season due to not meeting grade requirements in the previous grading term, including Running Start.

In-Season Probation and Suspension

- A student may be placed on probation at any point after the fourth Saturday in September if they are not meeting standards in grades, attendance, or behavior.
- Probation lasts one week.
- If the student does not meet standards by the end of that week, they will be placed on suspension for three (3) weeks.
- During suspension, students may practice but not compete in games or events.
- If standards are met by the end of the 3-week suspension, the student becomes fully eligible and exits probation.
- If standards are not met after the 3-week suspension, the student becomes ineligible for the remainder of the season (for athletics) or for the remainder of the term (for activities).

Start-of-Season Suspension (Prior-Term Grades)

- A student who does not meet grade requirements from the previous semester or trimester will begin the new sports season on suspension, including Running Start.
- This suspension period lasts from the end of the previous grading term through the fourth Saturday of the new term.
- During this time, the student may practice but may not compete in any contests.
- Students' progress will be reviewed during the school's first designated monitoring period.
- If they meet the grade requirements, they become eligible on the Monday following the suspension period.

Incoming 9th Grade Students

- Incoming ninth-grade students must meet the previous semester's grade requirements to be eligible for fall sports and activities.
- Grades will be reviewed during the first academic monitoring period of the fall.

Reinstatement of Eligibility

- A student who regains eligibility following a suspension (either in-season or at the start of the term) becomes eligible to compete on the Monday following the final day of the suspension period, provided they are meeting standards.

Grade Checks

A grade check will be made every Friday, beginning with the third week of each trimester. Beginning with the third week of any grade check, if they are not meeting academic guidelines, they will be placed on probation for 1 week until the following Monday.

Hardship

Students and/or parents may appeal academic probation or ineligibility in writing or orally to the school Principal on the basis of hardship/extraordinary circumstances. Exceptions to the required academic standards may be made by the Principal and/or a committee consisting of the building administrator(s) and the Director of Athletics & Student Engagement. The decision of the Principal or the committee is final. *IEP or 504 student eligibility will be determined on an individual basis and according to the IEP and/or 504 Plan.*

SEVERE VIOLATIONS OF THE ATHLETIC CODE

Year-Round Expectations

Participation in Othello School District athletics and activities is a privilege. Student-athletes and activity participants are expected to represent their school, teammates, and community with integrity, good judgment, and sportsmanship at all times. Accordingly, the expectations and standards outlined in this Athletic Code apply **year-round**, beginning with a student's first participation in an Othello School District athletic or activity program and continuing through the student's final participation.

For purposes of this Athletic Code, **year-round** includes **in-season, out of season, summer, weekends, holidays, school breaks, and any other time during the calendar year**, regardless of whether the student is actively participating with a team at that time.

Violations of this Athletic Code may result in athletic or activity discipline regardless of when or where the conduct occurs, when there is a reasonable connection to the student's role as an Othello School District student-athlete or activity participant.

Reporting Violations

Adults from the community may report violations of the code to a coach and/or school administrator by submitting and signing a written statement as evidence. Photos that are submitted must contain a written statement and be signed in order for credibility to be determined. Photos will be reviewed to determine authenticity and possible discipline. The photos and statements shall be submitted in a reasonable and timely fashion from the date of the infraction. Statements and photos that are not submitted in a timely manner will be reviewed and considered regarding credibility and discipline.

Attendance at Functions

Attendance at functions where alcohol or drugs are being used unlawfully shall be a violation of this code. Athletes are prohibited from supporting, by their attendance, functions where alcohol or drugs are being unlawfully used, or placing themselves in circumstances where they should reasonably know that such conditions could exist. Participants under this code are to safely leave the function IMMEDIATELY.

- **First Offense:** Removal from the next contest in which the athlete is to participate.
- **Subsequent Offense:** The athlete will be judged using consequence steps outlined below.

Tobacco, Alcoholic Beverages, Drugs, Drug Paraphernalia, and Steroids

The use of tobacco products, alcohol, legend drugs (including anabolic steroids), vaping or vape devices, including electronic devices, controlled substances (including marijuana/cannabis), and controlled substance analogs is prohibited. The intent to portray or imitate any substance as drugs, alcohol, tobacco, or other banned substances is prohibited, and will result in the same consequence as though imitation is what it has been portrayed to be. Any athlete possessing, selling, and/or using tobacco products, alcoholic beverages, legend drugs (including anabolic steroids), controlled substances (including marijuana/cannabis) or controlled substance analogs, or drug paraphernalia during the athletic school year (see definitions below) shall be subject to disciplinary action below.

Criminal Acts

Acts contrary to the laws of the State of Washington, such as acts that include misdemeanors, gross misdemeanors, or felonies. Acceptance of community service or deferred disposition, etc., in lieu of prosecution shall be considered a violation of this code. Criminal acts are subject to the following discipline: The offenses in sections 1 and 2 above will result in consequences that are cumulative for a student's entire

middle school and high school participation, but will not be cumulative from middle school participation to high school participation. However, students under athletic sanction at the end of middle school must complete the required disciplinary action imposed.

1. **First Violation:** This is defined as a first violation and shall result in the following:
 - a. Suspension for 40% of the regular season contests, which will carry over into the next sport the student participates in, if necessary, to meet the requirement (suspension will carry over into the next school year, if applicable). Suspension will be reduced to 30% if the athlete admits to the violation when first asked by the administration or 20% if the athlete self-reports (defined as a first report of the violation made voluntarily to the administration by the athlete involved prior to the start of the next school day following the incident).
 - b. The athlete must finish the season in good standing to fulfill the suspension requirement. Suspension from athletics will not eliminate suspension from clubs or activities the student may also be involved in. Also, suspension for student-athletes may not be served in a support-personnel role, such as a manager or stats keeper.
 - c. Continued turnout for all practices, but the athlete will not travel with the group or participate in any contest during the period of suspension.
 - d. The athlete must be academically eligible for suspended contests to count.
2. **Second Violation:** This is defined as a second violation and shall result in the following:
 - a. Suspension for the remainder of the sports season and/or 60%, whichever is longer, (50% if the student first admits, 40% if the student self-reports) of the regular season contests, which will carry over into the next sport in which the student participates.
 - b. Unless suspended for the remainder of the season, the athlete will continue to participate in all practices, but the athlete will not travel with the group or participate in any contest during the period of suspension.
3. **Third Violation:** This is defined as a third and subsequent violation and shall result in the following:
 - a. Suspension for one calendar year from the date of the violation.
 - b. The athlete must request reinstatement in the athletic program through a school eligibility board.

Legend Drugs and Controlled Substances

In addition to the above penalties for severe violations, the penalties for the possession, use, or sale of legend drugs (drugs obtained through prescription, RCW 69.41.020-050) and controlled substances (RCW 69.50, including marijuana as per federal law) shall be as follows:

1. **First Violation:** A participant shall be immediately ineligible for interscholastic competition in the current interscholastic sports program for the remainder of the season. Ineligibility shall continue until the next sports season in which the participant wishes to participate unless the student accesses the assistance program outlined in 2 (below).
 - a. The athlete will be ineligible for participation in contests for the remainder of that interscholastic sports season and must meet the school's requirements in order to be eligible to compete in the next interscholastic sports season. The school Principal will have the final authority regarding the student's participation in further interscholastic sports programs.
 - b. The athlete may choose to seek and receive help for a problem with the use of legend drugs or controlled substances. Successful utilization of school and/or community assistance programs may allow him/her to have eligibility reinstated in that athletic season, pending recommendation by the school.
2. **Second Violation:** A participant who again violates any provision of RCW 69.41.020 - 69.41.050 or of RCW 69.50 shall be ineligible for interscholastic competition for a period of one (1) calendar year from

the date of the second violation.

3. **Third Violation:** A participant who violates for a third time RCW 69.41.020 - 69.41.050 or RCW 69.50 shall be permanently ineligible for interscholastic competition.

Other Types of Misconduct or Violations of the OSD Athletics & Activities Handbook

Types of misconduct for which discipline may be imposed, but not limited to:

- Student conduct or expression that could be considered lewd, indecent, or obscene
- Bullying, intimidation, or harassment of another student(s)
- Hazing another student(s)
- Ejections from a school contest
- Conduct that demonstrably interferes with team functioning, student safety, or the rights of others.

Consequences for “Other Types of Misconduct” Violations

Note exception for Social Media Policy & Guidelines for Student-Athletes, below.

1. **First Strike:** Proper notification will be made, and the student will be prohibited from competing in the next contest.
2. **Second Strike:** Proper notification will be made, and participants will be on suspension for four competitions. If a student quits the sport before serving the consequences, the punishment will carry over to the next sports season in which the athlete participated.
3. **Third Strike:** Proper notification will be made, and participants will be prohibited from competing for one calendar year (365 days from the violation).

School Administration & Head Coach Discretion

All student-athletes are regarded as ambassadors and leaders, entrusted with the responsibility of upholding the values of self-respect, self-esteem, and preparation for the global setting and workplace. However, in the event of egregious offenses such as, but not limited to, stealing or failure to comply with hotel rules during team travel, disciplinary measures will be applied at the discretion of the school administration, which may include dismissal from the athletic team. It is essential that student-athletes understand the gravity of their actions and the potential consequences they may face for misrepresenting the Othello School District. In cases where an egregious offense occurs during travel, parents may be required to pick up the student-athlete, emphasizing the significance of responsible behavior and accountability while representing the school.

- **Self-Reporting:** Prior to questioning, student self-reporting may reduce the discipline imposed.
- **Disqualification of Awards:** Participants will not be allowed to receive awards such as “Player of the Week” during any period of suspension. A participant will not be awarded a letter if he/she has reached the third strike or has been ejected from competition twice in one season.
- **Strikes:** Strikes are cumulative for the current school year. However, discipline due to strikes must be completed, which may include the following school year or a different sports season. Students under athletic sanction at the end of their middle school competition must complete the required disciplinary action. Seasons are defined in the WIAA Handbook.
- **Coach Rules:** Each coach is responsible for the conduct of athletes within his or her program. Therefore, students turning out for a sport may receive an additional set of rules and consequences, specific to the sport they are participating in, from the coach, explaining expected conduct and penalties for infractions.

SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY & GUIDELINES FOR STUDENT ATHLETES

Purpose

Participation in athletics and activities in the Othello School District is a privilege. Student athletes serve as representatives of their teams, schools, and community and are expected to demonstrate responsible, respectful, and safe conduct at all times, including in digital and online environments.

This policy establishes expectations for social media use while ensuring alignment with legal standards governing student expression.

Scope

This policy applies to student athlete conduct on all digital platforms, including but not limited to texting, Instagram, Snapchat, TikTok, X, Facebook, and other forms of electronic communication. Student expression, including off campus social media activity, may only be subject to school discipline when it meets the criteria outlined in this policy.

Standards for Regulation of Student Expression

Student social media activity may be subject to disciplinary action only when it:

- Causes, or is reasonably forecasted to cause, a material and substantial disruption to school operations, team activities, or the educational environment
- Infringes on the rights of other students or staff, including through bullying, harassment, or intimidation
- Involves credible threats of violence or safety concerns
- Promotes or depicts illegal activity in a manner that violates school, district, or WIAA rules
- Violates established team, school, district, or WIAA policies

Off campus conduct will not be subject to discipline unless a clear and articulable connection exists between the conduct and its impact on the school environment, team functioning, or student safety.

Definition of Substantial Disruption

A material and substantial disruption includes, but is not limited to:

- Interference with team practices, competitions, or school activities
- Significant conflict among students affecting participation or learning
- Interference with the rights of other students to feel safe and participate
- Staff time and resources being significantly diverted to address the issue
- Credible threats to student or staff safety

Prohibited Conduct

Content online that is unsportsmanlike, derogatory, demeaning, threatening, or discriminatory toward any individual or group, including but not limited to discrimination based on race, sex, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, or other protected characteristics (examples: derogatory comments regarding another school, taunting comments aimed at a student-athlete, coach, or team at another institution, and derogatory comments against race, gender, or gender identity).

A. Harassment, Bullying, And Threats

Prohibited conduct includes online harassment, bullying, intimidation, or targeting of students, staff, or community members that interferes with an individual's ability to participate in school or team activities or that creates a hostile or unsafe environment. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Repeated or severe derogatory, demeaning, or threatening communication directed at a specific individual or group
- Conduct that constitutes discrimination based on race, gender, sexual orientation, disability, religion, or other protected characteristics
- Communication that includes threats of violence or creates a reasonable fear for personal safety

- Online conduct that promotes or depicts illegal or unsafe activities when such conduct creates a substantial disruption or safety concern within the school environment

Discipline under this section will only be imposed when the conduct meets the standards for regulation of student expression outlined in this policy.

B. Drugs, Alcohol, And Inappropriate Content

Prohibited conduct includes the posting, sharing, or endorsement of content involving illegal or prohibited substances or activities when such conduct creates a material and substantial disruption to the school environment, team functioning, or student safety, or when it violates established school, district, or WIAA rules. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Depictions or endorsements of illegal drug use, underage alcohol consumption, or misuse of controlled substances
- Content that promotes or encourages participation in illegal or unsafe activities
- Sharing or distributing sexually explicit or exploitative material involving students

Content that is merely suggestive, expressive, or personal in nature, and does not create a material and substantial disruption or violate specific team or school rules, shall not be subject to discipline under this policy. Nothing in this section shall be interpreted to regulate lawful off campus behavior unless there is a clear and documented impact on the school environment, team operations, or student safety.

C. Confidential And Team Related Information

Student athletes may not share confidential, sensitive, or non public information related to the school or team when such disclosure interferes with team operations, student privacy, or school safety.

This includes, but is not limited to:

- Team strategies or internal communications
- Student athlete injuries or eligibility status
- Travel plans or schedules not publicly released

Protected Student Expression

This policy does not restrict student expression that is protected under the First Amendment. Protected expression includes:

- General opinions or criticism of school programs, teams, coaches, or personnel
- Off campus speech that does not create a material and substantial disruption
- Personal expression that does not infringe on the rights of others or violate this policy

Disciplinary action will not be based solely on disagreement with a student's viewpoint.

Expectations For Responsible Use

Student athletes are expected to:

- Represent themselves, their team, and their school in a respectful and responsible manner
- Demonstrate good sportsmanship and integrity in all communications
- Use appropriate privacy settings and exercise caution when sharing personal information
- Consider the long term impact of online behavior on personal reputation and future opportunities

Disciplinary Response

Disciplinary actions will be determined based on:

- The severity and nature of the conduct

- The impact on students, staff, or team operations
- Whether the conduct involves threats, harassment, or safety concerns
- Consistency with district policies and past practice

Possible consequences may include:

- Warning or corrective action
- Suspension from contests or activities
- Removal from a team for serious violations

Removal from a team for a first offense will be limited to serious violations involving threats, harassment, or significant disruption.

Due Process

Prior to disciplinary action, students will:

- Be informed of the alleged violation
- Be given an opportunity to respond
- Have access to the appeal process outlined in this handbook

Reporting And Investigation

Reports of violations may be submitted to coaches, administrators, or the Director of Athletics & Student Engagement. Reports will be reviewed for credibility, relevance, and impact. Disciplinary decisions will be based on verified information and documented findings.

Acknowledgment

Student athletes and parents or guardians must review and acknowledge this policy prior to participation. Compliance with this policy is a condition of participation in Othello School District athletics and activities.

Final Statement

Student athletes are ambassadors of the Othello School District. Responsible use of social media reflects not only on the individual but also on their team and school community. Students are expected to uphold standards of respect, safety, and integrity in all environments, including online spaces.

APPEAL PROCESS

Any and all violations and penalties can be appealed through the Athletic Board. This board will consist of an administrator or athletic director, one out-of-season coach, one in-season coach (excluding the coach taking the action), and one faculty member chosen by the accused athlete. The appeal must be requested in writing to the athletic director within 7 calendar days of the violation assessment. The student and/or parents or guardian may further appeal the Athletic Board ruling to the Othello Schools Superintendent and Othello School Board within (3) three calendar days of the Board ruling by written notice. The decision of the Othello School Board is deemed final. I have read and understand the above training policy, realizing once signed it applies in season and out-of-season, during my entire high school career, 365 days a year, and agree to abide by it.

Notification: Any time there is an infraction, the following people shall be notified:

- Participant
- Parent/Guardian of participant

- Coach
- Athletic Director
- Assistant Principal
- Principal
- Superintendent
- School Board

A report card will be prepared for the participant that will follow him/her from season to season.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Rules for Coaches

- A coach shall refrain from using obscene or vulgar language and from fighting on or off the field of play.
- A coach shall not steal or use another's property without permission of the owner.
- A coach shall not engage in conduct detrimental to the team or school, which includes violations of the Penal Code of the State of Washington.
- A coach shall show respect for the participants and officials, and all comments and actions shall be in a positive tone.
- Coaches are responsible for setting a good example, enforcing the players' rules, and disciplining the players, if necessary.

The Director of Athletics & Student Engagement is responsible for initiating disciplinary actions concerning coaches.

Each school will promote goodwill to the visiting teams.

Rules for Parents and Fans

- A parent or fan shall not use obscene or vulgar language.
- A parent or fan shall not steal or use another's property without permission from the owner.
- A parent or fan shall not be physically or verbally abusive toward any participant, coach, other parent or fan, or official of the contest.
- Parents and fans should police other parents and fans, keeping their cheering and comments positive.

If the behavior of parents and fans is not conducive to sportsmanship as outlined in these rules, they will be removed from the contest site. If a parent or fan is removed more than once during a sports season, they will not be allowed to attend a contest for the balance of that sports season, whether home or away.

Rules for Officials:

- An official shall not use obscene or vulgar language.
- An official shall not steal or use another's property without permission from the owner.
- An official shall not be physically or verbally abusive toward any participant, coach, parent, fan, or other official of the contest.
- The coach to the Director of Athletics & Student Engagement shall initiate the complaint process. The Director may process the claim to the appropriate association.

Accountability

All rules and/or appeals will be compiled by the Director of Athletics & Student Engagement and filed with all

levels:

- Coach
- Director of Athletics & Student Engagement
- Principal
- Assistant Principal
- Superintendent
- Participant and Parent/Guardian
- The school board will report statistics to the public:
 - Number of complaints of each category
 - Number of first, second, and third strikes
 - Number of expulsions, etc.

This information will allow the public to monitor progress and improvement. The statistics will be anonymous and provide numbers only. This procedure gives the school board support with the WIAA and will guarantee the ability to hold everyone accountable.

DEFINITIONS

Probation: A trial period during which the student-athlete remains part of the team. The athlete attempts to correct his/her deficiencies within the prescribed time. Students on probation are required to attend all practices and fulfill the responsibilities of the team, unless released by the coach.

Suspension: An action that denies student-athlete participation in athletics/activities for a period of time. In case where the suspension carries over into part of his/her next sports season, it reverts to a probationary period provided the athlete completes that entire sports season.

Athletic School Year: Begins with the first fall practice and ends with the last day of school.

In-Season: Begins with the first WIAA-allowed practice day and ends with the awards ceremony for that sport.

Out-of-Season: Any time not “in-season.”

Calendar Year: Twelve (12) months from the time a participant is again eligible to compete after a rule infraction.

Gender Identity: An individual’s internal sense of their gender, which may be different from the sex assigned at birth.

Gender Expression: The external appearance of one’s gender identity, including behavior, clothing, hairstyle, voice, or body characteristics.

Transgender: A term describing individuals whose gender identity differs from the sex they were assigned at birth.

DISCRIMINATION STATEMENT

Othello School District does not discriminate in any programs or activities on the basis of sex, race, creed, religion, color, national origin, age, veteran or military status, sexual orientation, gender expression or identity, disability, or the use of a trained dog guide or service animal and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups. The following employees have been designated to handle questions and complaints of alleged discrimination: Civil Rights Coordinator and Title IX Coordinator: Sandra Villarreal, (509) 488-2659, svillarreal@othelloschools.org; and Section 504 Coordinator: Heidi Wagner, (509) 488-2659, hwagner@othelloschools.org. Address: 1025 South 1st Avenue, Othello, WA 99344.