

# NISKAYUNA CENTRAL SCHOOLS



## ATHLETIC HANDBOOK

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FOR STUDENT-ATHLETES  
AND PARENTS

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**2017-2018 School Year and Athletic Seasons**

Dear Parents and Student-Athletes,

Your son/daughter has indicated a desire to participate in interscholastic athletics and you have expressed your willingness to permit him/her to compete. Participation in sports provides a wealth of opportunities and experiences which assist students in their education and beyond.

A properly controlled, well-organized sports program meets the students' needs for self-expression, mental alertness, and physical growth. It is our intent to maintain a program that is sound in purpose and that will further each student's educational and developmental maturity.

When your son/daughter sign up for one of our sports programs, you have committed to certain responsibilities and obligations. This handbook will acquaint you with some of the specific policies that are part of our organized program of athletics.

The Niskayuna Central School District is a member of the New York State Public High School Athletic Association, competing as per assigned classification in Section II. Our league affiliation is with the Suburban Scholastic Council.

It is the role of the Department of Athletics to make rules that govern the spirit of competition for the community. These rules rely on broad-based community support that can only be achieved through communication with parents. It is our hope to accomplish this objective, in part, by providing you and your son/daughter with this athletic handbook.

If there is anything I can do to make your participation in interscholastic athletics a better learning experience, please feel free to contact me at my office at Niskayuna High School, 382-2511, Ext. 21760.

Sincerely,

Larry Gillooley  
Director of Physical Education, Health and Athletics

## **NISKAYUNA DISTRICT MISSION STATEMENT**

EMPOWER EACH INDIVIDUAL TO MAKE RESPONSIBLE CHOICES,  
MEET CHALLENGES, ACHIEVE PERSONAL SUCCESS,  
AND CONTRIBUTE TO A GLOBAL SOCIETY.

## **PRINCIPLES OF INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETICS**

Interscholastic athletics serve as a model of life; they provide opportunities for students to demonstrate responsibility, fair play, cooperation, concern for others, leadership, respect for authority, good citizenship, loyalty and tolerance. Though winning is one measure of success, the development of the student and the ability to afford opportunities for the student to fulfill his/her potential is of equal importance. Thus, the athletic program, which is centered on the welfare of the students, is a vital part of the total Niskayuna Central School District curriculum.

To utilize fully the potential of athletics for educational enrichment, the interscholastic athletic program is:

- A. Regarded as an integral part of the total educational program and conducted so that it is worthy of such regard.
- B. Intended to supplement rather than substitute for basic physical education programs and intramural athletic programs.
- C. Subject to the same administrative supervision as the overall educational program.
- D. Conducted by persons with adequate training either in physical education or through coaching certification programs.
- E. Conducted so that the physical welfare and safety of participants is protected and fostered.
- F. Conducted in accordance with the letter and spirit of the rules and regulations of the league, section, state, and national athletic associations.

## **ATHLETIC CODE OF ETHICS**

It is the duty of all concerned with school athletics to:

- Emphasize the proper ideals of sportsmanship, ethical conduct, and fair play;
- Eliminate anything which tends to destroy the best values of the game;
- Stress the values derived from playing the game fairly;
- Exhibit courteous behavior to visiting teams and officials;
- Establish a congenial relationship between visitors and hosts;
- Respect the integrity and judgment of sports officials;
- Achieve a thorough understanding and acceptance of the rules of the game and the standards of eligibility;
- Encourage leadership, initiative, and good judgment by the players on the team;
- Recognize that the purpose of athletics is to promote the physical, mental, social, and emotional well-being of the individual players; and
- Remember that an athletic contest is only a game — not a matter of life and death for player, coach, school, official, fan, or community member.

## **SECTION II SPORTSMANSHIP POLICY**

- Learn and understand the rules of your sport. Play hard, play to win, but play fairly within the rules.
- Maintain self-control. Do not allow your temper to distract you from the fundamentals of good sportsmanship.
- Respect your opponent. Never taunt. Congratulate him or her at game's end.
- Acknowledge good play.
- Respect the integrity and judgment of officials. Never question the decision of an official.
- Be an example for your school, teammates, and opponents.
- A player who is disqualified from a contest for unsportsmanlike behavior by an official is prohibited from playing in the next regularly scheduled contest.
- A player who has a physical confrontation with an official will be subject to suspension from athletic competition to be determined by the Athletic Director, in consultation with the coach, after consideration of the circumstances. A physical confrontation with an official is any incident in which a player either strikes, bumps, or otherwise physically intimidates an official prior to, during or after a contest or game.

## **SECTION II CODE OF CONDUCT FOR SPECTATORS**

1. Spectators are an important part of the games and are encouraged to conform to accepted standards of good sportsmanship and behavior.
2. Spectators should at all times respect officials, visiting coaches, players and cheerleaders as guests in the community and extend all courtesies to them.
3. Enthusiastic cheering for one's own team is encouraged.
4. Booing, whistling, stamping of the feet and disrespectful remarks shall be avoided.
5. There will be no ringing of bells, sounding of horns or other noise makers at indoor contests during play. Anyone who does not abide by this rule will be asked to leave the premises.
6. Pep bands or school bands, under the supervision of school personnel, may play during time-outs, between periods or at halftime. Bands must coordinate their play so as not to interfere with a cheerleading squad on the floor or field.
7. The throwing of debris, confetti or other objects from the stands is prohibited. Offending individuals will be asked to leave the premises.
8. During a free throw in basketball, all courtesies should be extended.
9. Spectators should encourage each other to observe courteous behavior. Improper behavior should be reported to the school authorities.
10. Spectators will observe the rules of the local school concerning smoking, food and drinking consumption, littering, and parking procedures.
11. Spectators will respect and obey all school officials and supervisors at athletic contests.

## **ATHLETIC CONDUCT/TRAINING RULES**

### **ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT**

Generally speaking, athletics have a positive effect on the student-athlete's performance in the classroom and attitude toward school. Students are expected to maintain successful academic achievement.

While scholastic achievement is determined on an individual basis, the building Principal for each student-athlete in collaboration with district administration and the athletic department reserve the right to determine a student-athlete's eligibility to participate in athletic practices, games and events.

Parents are encouraged to regularly review their son's/daughters academic progress, and contact the student-athlete's guidance counselor and/or coach if they have questions about academic performance and athletic competition should academic achievement decline. Research indicates that students generally obtain higher grades during their respective athletic season when compared to when they are out-of-season.

Student-athletes must participate in physical education, as well as other classes, on the day of a practice or contest.

### **CONDUCT**

The conduct of a student-athlete is closely observed in many areas of life; on the field, in the classroom, and in the community. A student-athlete shall take pride in him/herself, his/her team and his/her school. A positive image should always be projected. Winning or losing is not as important as the reaction to winning or losing. The reaction is what matters — not the score. A student-athlete should be gracious in defeat, and modest in victory.

### **TRAINING POLICY**

Participation on a Niskayuna athletic team is a privilege that should elicit great pride in both the student-athletes and their families. Standards of behavior are high and a willingness to live up to them is part of being a member of a team. For this reason, each student-athlete and parent/guardian will be required to sign the athletic card indicating the student-athlete's personal commitment to the standards of behavior, code of ethics, policies, rules, and expectations pertaining to conduct as set forth in this Handbook/Athletic Code of Conduct. This signature is acknowledgement of each student-athlete's responsibility to the team and their willingness to set a positive example, adhere to basic concepts of good citizenship, and follow proper training practices as well as each parents/guardians' acknowledgement of their responsibility and the student-athlete's responsibilities.

## STANDARDS OF BEHAVIOR

All suspected violations of the Standards of Behavior for student-athletes shall be reported to the building Principal(s). The building Principal(s) will make the determination as to whether a violation of the Standards of Behavior has occurred. This determination will be based on the circumstances as determined by the building Principal(s). When applying this policy, coaches, the Athletic Director, and the building Principal(s) will consider all facts and circumstances involved. Likewise, in the course of any appeal, the Athletic Committee will consider all facts and circumstances involved. The applicable standards of proof for finding a violation of this policy are lower than that required in a court of law, and the dismissal or absence of any criminal charges against a student-athlete does not preclude a finding that a violation of the Standards of Behavior has occurred.

**GUIDING RULE: Student-athletes shall abide by the guiding rule to never do anything that will have an adverse effect on your ability to perform your duties and responsibilities as a student or as a student-athlete. Student-athletes should never do anything to embarrass or create an unfavorable impression of yourself, your family, your team, or your school.**

Listed below are some examples of behavior which may serve as the basis of a finding of a violation of the Athletic Code of Conduct (this list is not all-inclusive).

1. Vandalism or property destruction;
2. Poor citizenship;
3. Cutting school or classes;
4. Acting as a negative influence (in terms of team morale or effort);
5. Failure to exert a sincere academic effort or failure to comply with eligibility policies;
6. Stealing of any kind, including the stealing of any athletic equipment whether it is the property of Niskayuna or an opponent— Niskayuna's or that belonging to opponents;
7. *Possession of drugs, drug paraphernalia, alcohol, synthetic narcotics or non-prescribed medication or the consumption of drugs, alcohol, synthetic narcotics or non-prescribed medication at any time or distribution of drugs, drug paraphernalia, alcohol, synthetic narcotics or non-prescribed medication;*
- 8. Attendance and/or participation in any gathering, party, or other event without parental supervision/knowledge where drugs, alcohol, synthetic narcotics or non-prescribed medication are present;**
- 9. Possession and/or use of tobacco products or tobacco paraphernalia;**
- 10. Possession and/or use of electronic cigarettes or vapor products;**
- 11. Fighting;**
- 12. Unlawful possession or use of any type of firearm or weapon;**
- 13. Sexual harassment or sexual misconduct;**
- 14. Community-related offenses;**

- 15. Hazing of any kind;**
- 16. Bullying (physical, emotional, or electronically) (examples of electronic bullying include, but are not limited to, social networking, web posts, emails, other internet use, tweeting, or texting);**
- 17. Violation of the Cyber Image Guideline – Any identifiable image, photo, or video that implies a student-athlete has been in the possession or presence of alcohol or drugs, or that portrays actual use or out of character behavior or criminal activity, shall be considered a confirmed violation of the Code of Conduct. The student-athlete must assume responsibility for making the right choices. Accordingly, student-athletes should not place themselves in the presence of alcohol, drugs, etc. or related paraphernalia;**
- 18. Sending or receiving sexually explicit messages or images by electronic device, including but not limited to cell phone, iPad, tablet, or any other device capable of transmitting photos or data**
- 19. Sexual exploitation, such as “voyeurism” or “upskirting” (defined as the practice of obtaining sexual gratification from obtaining/viewing photos without the consent of the subject of the photos); and/or**
- 20. Any act which constitutes a misdemeanor or crime.**

This policy is in effect throughout the calendar year, whether school is in session or not, and whether the sport(s) in which the student-athlete competes is “in season” or not. As such, any of the above-referenced behavior or similar behavior, as determined by the building Principal, may serve as the basis for a finding of a violation of the Athletic Code of Conduct.

## **ATHLETIC CONDUCT/TRAINING RULES/INVESTIGATION OF ALLEGED VIOLATIONS OF STANDARDS OF BEHAVIOR/PENALTIES**

Every coach shall distribute the Athletic Code of Conduct to each student-athlete at or before the first practice of their respective sport. This shall occur annually prior to the commencement of each season. However, a student who has participated in athletics in the prior year remains subject to the Code, even before distribution of the Code for the upcoming season by the coach. In addition, parents of athletes must attend a mandatory parent meeting at the beginning of each season for all sports for their student to be eligible to participate.

Every coach shall immediately report, in writing, any and all allegations of potential violations of this Athletic Code of Conduct to the building Principal and the Athletic Director, regardless of the manner in which the coach acquires the information. (Information relative to the alleged potential violations in the possession of the coach does not need to be acquired first-hand in order to trigger the required reporting to the building Principal and the Athletic Director.)

Building Principals shall use a central reporting system to document each allegation relating to a code violation brought to his/her attention. Building Principals shall commence an investigation of reported alleged violations of the Athletic Code of Conduct within 24 hours of the alleged violation being first reported to the building Principal(s) and/or the Athletic Director. Building Principals shall, as necessary, interview appropriate persons/witnesses, including the alleged offender, examine relevant records (including, but not limited to police reports, pictures, digital images, emails, texts, social media posts, etc.) and consult and utilize any appropriate staff or other relevant persons. In order to provide a fair and just investigative and decision-making process, individuals who provide information in any form relative to alleged violations of the Code of Conduct must identify themselves and identify sources of information. The Superintendent expressly reserves the discretion to utilize non-District personnel to conduct investigations of alleged violations of the Code of Conduct when circumstances warrant.

Building Principals, in consultation with the Athletic Director, shall render a finding relative to a Code of Conduct violation within five (5) days after an alleged violation is first reported.

Building Principals shall maintain written records of all investigations conducted relative to alleged violations of the code. Where the allegations are found to substantiate a code violation, Building Principals shall document same utilizing the Student Management System. Such records shall remain confidential. However, there shall be an annual publishing of a redacted summary of the number of alleged violations reported, the investigations undertaken, the investigations which resulted in a finding that the Code of Conduct had been violated (including the action(s) taken), and the investigations which resulted in a finding that the Code of Conduct had NOT been violated.

The penalties imposed by the building Principals, in consultation with the Athletic Director, with regard to a student-athlete found guilty of violating the Athletic Code of Conduct shall be as follows:

### **FIRST OFFENSE-PENALTIES**

1. Except as set forth in No. 9 and 10 below, beginning on the date of the finding of guilt, the student-athlete may be placed on probation for twelve (12) months.

2. The student-athlete will be expected to practice with the team, but will not be allowed to participate in the team's scheduled competitions according to the attached eligibility chart. Any and all athletic probations that are a direct result of violation(s) of the Athletic Code of Conduct shall be served in the very next/current athletic season in which the student-athlete is scheduled to participate, unless in the discretion of the building Principal(s), given considerations of health, safety and/or welfare, the athletic suspension should be served otherwise. A student-athlete may NOT join a sport that he/she did not originally intend to participate in during the athletic season in which he/she is placed on probation, in order to avoid serving the suspension for a particular athletic season.

3. The student-athlete shall be required to undergo in-school counseling as assigned by the building Principal(s), in consultation with the Director of Athletics. Sources of counseling may include a Substance Abuse Counselor, Guidance Counselor, Psychologist, Administrator, or other qualified personnel. The duration of the counseling will be at the discretion of the counselor. The counseling must begin prior to the student-athlete's return to interscholastic competition. Failure to attend counseling session(s) will result in the student-athlete becoming ineligible for competition until the counseling session(s) occur(s).

4. Game penalties that cannot be served and/or counseling not completed during the athletic season will be carried over for completion in the next athletic season in which the student-athlete participates.

5. The student-athlete must complete the athletic season in good standing or the game penalties will be served by the student-athlete in the next athletic season in which the student-athlete participates. Continued counseling may be required, as directed by the building Principal(s), in consultation with the Athletic Director.

6. The student-athlete who is employing "alternate option" for physical education shall have this privilege revoked immediately.

7. The parent or guardian of the student-athlete will receive written notification of the violation and the associated penalties from the building Principal.

8. The parent or guardian may request an informal conference with the building Principal(s).

9. Any student-athlete who is found to have violated Standard of Behavior #7 set forth herein may be suspended from participation in interscholastic athletics for twelve (12) months beginning on the date of a determination of guilt.

10. Any student-athlete who is found to have violated Standards of Behavior #8 - #20 set forth herein may be suspended from participation in interscholastic athletics for a period to be determined by the building Principal(s), based upon the facts and circumstances.

## **SECOND OFFENSE-POLICIES**

If a second offense of the code occurs during the first offense probationary period of twelve (12) months, all "first offense" penalties will apply. However, the "games" penalty will be increased in accordance with the eligibility chart. In addition, the student-athlete shall also be subject to additional probationary period of twelve (12) months, beginning on the date of the second offense.

In the event a second drug or alcohol-related offense as outlined under "Standards of Behavior" occurs during a probationary period, the student-athlete shall be removed from participation in the interscholastic athletic program for twelve (12) months beginning on the date of the second offense.

### **THIRD OFFENSE-PENALTIES**

If a third offense occurs during the second probationary period, the student-athlete shall be removed from participation in interscholastic athletics for eighteen (18) months, beginning with the date of the third offense.

In the event a third drug or alcohol-related offense as outlined under “Standards of Behavior” occurs during a second probationary period, the student-athlete shall be permanently prohibited from participation in the interscholastic athletic program.

A student-athlete who seeks professional help outside the school district on a consistent basis may request a reduction in a penalty imposed by directing that request, in writing, to the building Principal and the Athletic Director. Under no circumstances shall any reduction in penalty for a third offense involving drugs/alcohol be less than one year from the date of the third offense. NOTE: All of the above conditions shall be applicable while enrolled in the Niskayuna School District.

### **SELF-REFERRAL**

A student-athlete who self-reports a violation of the Code of Conduct and requests assistance with a problem prior to the violation being brought to the attention of District personnel will be directed to assistance. He/she will not be removed from competition. A written record of the self-referral shall be maintained in the central reporting system by the building Principal(s). A one-year probationary period becomes effective, and a future violation will be handled as a second offense.

### **SENIORS**

The Athletic Code of Conduct shall remain in effect until completion of the interscholastic calendar.

### **GOOD CITIZENS/ANTI-RETALIATION**

Niskayuna maintains a fundamental commitment to the health, welfare and safety of its students. Students that report any potentially dangerous cases of alcohol or drug intoxication may not be subject to disciplinary action, at the discretion of the building Principal(s), in consultation with the Athletic Director, based on the facts and circumstances.

Further, any act of retaliation (as that term is broadly defined) directed at a student reporting a potentially dangerous case of alcohol or drug intoxication is prohibited and shall subject the perpetrator(s) to disciplinary action.

### ELIGIBILITY CHART

| <u># SCHEDULED CONTESTS</u> | <u>FIRST OFFENSE</u> | <u>SECOND OFFENSE</u> |
|-----------------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|
| 8                           | 2                    | 4                     |
| 9                           | 2                    | 4                     |
| 10                          | 2                    | 5                     |
| 11                          | 2                    | 5                     |
| 12                          | 3                    | 6                     |
| 13                          | 3                    | 6                     |
| 14                          | 3                    | 7                     |
| 15                          | 3                    | 7                     |
| 16                          | 4                    | 8                     |
| 17                          | 4                    | 8                     |
| 18                          | 4                    | 9                     |
| 19                          | 4                    | 9                     |
| 20                          | 5                    | 10                    |
| 21                          | 5                    | 10                    |
| 22                          | 5                    | 11                    |
| 23                          | 5                    | 12                    |
| 24                          | 6                    | 12                    |

It should be noted that the circumstances of a violation/incident may warrant immediate removal from the team if the coach and/or District Administration believe that the offense committed by the student-athlete warrants such action.

**APPEAL PROCEDURE:** The student-athlete and/or parent/guardian have the right to appeal athletic penalties to the Athletic Committee. The Athletic Committee shall consist of the Athletic Director, the Director of Student and Staff Support Services, building Principal(s), Assistant Principal(s), Coach(es) and Counselor(s), as deemed necessary. (The building Principal imposing the penalty from which the appeal is sought will not participate in the appellate review of said penalty.)

## **HAZING/INITIATION CEREMONY**

Coaches will not permit their student-athletes to stage (formally or informally) any type of initiation ceremony or hazing, or condone such behavior. Behavior which involves a student-athlete giving another student-athlete haircuts, shaving, locker/shower pranks, etc. will not be tolerated and are subject to penalties as provided herein.

## **ATTENDANCE POLICY**

Participation in an activity or sport is but one part of a student-athlete's educational program. It is understood that student-athletes will be present in school by homeroom in the high school or by 10 a.m. in the middle schools in order to participate in a practice, game, or activity the same day. Any student-athlete arriving at school after homeroom for medical reasons, religious observances, court appearances, or other legal reasons, must have the absence substantiated by a phone call to the main office from the parent/guardian on the day of the late arrival.

Student-athletes who have been suspended from school will not be permitted to participate in or practice for their sport from the time a suspension is assessed through the conclusion of the suspension period. This policy affects students who are suspended both in-school and out-of-school. Student-athletes are expected to attend any assessed detention before reporting for a practice or contest. Note: Failure to serve after school detention or excessive absence from classes may result in loss of eligibility.

## **STUDENT ELIGIBILITY**

According to NYSPHSAA Regulation, a student shall be eligible for interscholastic competition, provided he/she is a bona fide student in good standing of the school represented, taking four subjects including physical education. A student shall be eligible to participate in interscholastic sports for four consecutive years upon entry into the ninth grade. A student shall be eligible for only four years in one sport unless advanced by the athletic placement process.

New York State sets regulations concerning daily attendance at practices and the minimum number of practices before becoming eligible for competition for each sport. Coaches will inform their student-athletes of these rules.

If a student-athlete quits a team (after teams have been selected), they are precluded from trying out for another team that season, unless permission is gained from the respective coaches and the Athletic Director.

Removal from the team: Once a student-athlete is selected on a team, a coach can remove a student-athlete from the team for a day. Removal from a team for multiple days or for the remainder of the season will be determined by the Athletic Committee.

Student-athletes and their parents are expected to be aware of the eligibility rules outlined in the current New York State Public High School Athletic Association's Eligibility Handbook. (<http://www.nysphsaa.org/Resources/Eligibility>)

### **MODIFIED PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY**

This program is available to all students in the seventh, eighth, and ninth grades between the ages of 12 and 15. A student reaching age 16 during a sports season may complete that season and must play freshmen, junior varsity, or varsity the following sports season. Sport activities offered are determined by the existence of leagues, student interest, and the relationship to the high school program. At this level, the focus is on learning athletic skills and game rules, fundamentals of team play, socio-emotional growth, physiologically appropriate demands on the adolescent body, and healthy competition.

The modified program is designed to offer students the opportunity to engage in a more highly organized competitive experience than what is offered in intramural/extramural programs, but not as involved as those found in varsity and junior varsity interscholastic competition. Team members are not guaranteed equal participation in contests.

### **HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY**

This program consists of freshman, junior varsity and varsity levels of competition and is available to all students in grades 9-12 until his/her nineteenth (19) birthday. A student reaching age 19 on or after July 1 in their final/senior year may continue to participate during the school year in all sports.

Each coach shall select team members based upon their ability to contribute to the success of the team. Student-athletes will be placed at an appropriate level and must demonstrate high levels of proficiency in acquired sport-specific skills, concepts, and strategies. A coach must balance the number of student-athletes on the roster and establish an effective coach-athlete ratio that allows effective teaching and coaching.

The high school level provides an intense competitive experience with emphasis on developing student-athletes to reach their potential personally, academically, and athletically. Student-athletes will learn to manage their time to meet their academic commitment while dealing with the demands of competition. In addition, student-athletes will learn and demonstrate through personal and team performance the ideals of sportsmanship, leadership, commitment, teamwork, academic responsibility, citizenship, self-discipline, pride, physical fitness, and confidence.

At this level of competition, the emphasis is on putting forth the best team with the goal of achieving a level of success. Not all team members will play in contests. More game-playing time will be experienced at the freshmen and junior varsity levels, which serve as intermediate competitive levels between modified and varsity.

### **ATHLETIC PLACEMENT PROCESS**

WHEREAS, Section 135.4(c) (7) (ii) (a) (4) of the Regulations of the Commissioner of Education provides for a board of education to permit pupils in grades no lower than seventh grade to compete on interscholastic athletic teams organized for senior high school pupils, or senior high school pupils to compete on interscholastic athletic teams organized for pupils in the seventh and eighth grades; and

WHEREAS, these pupils are to be allowed to compete at levels that are appropriate to their physical maturity, physical fitness, and sport skills in relationship to other pupils in accordance with the standards established by the Commissioner of Education; and

WHEREAS, the State Education Department issues the competition standards for these pupils to compete under a program called the Athletic Placement Process;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Niskayuna Central School District Board of Education shall permit pupils to compete after successfully completing the Athletic Placement Process for the requested sport and level.

Niskayuna participates in the New York State Education Department-approved program that provides the opportunity for seventh and eighth grade students to participate on varsity, junior varsity, and freshmen teams. This program has been designed for the exceptional few in each school who would be served by playing on a higher-level team than age and/or grade might indicate. It is expected there will be very few participating under this program. Information must be collected and evaluated by the Director of Athletics before a student may try out for a team under the parameters of the athletic placement process. Considerations that must be met include:

1. Parent permission
2. Medical examination and approval by the school physician with the developmental or maturity level determined by the school physician in accordance with established guidelines for the level of a particular sport.
3. The President's Physical Fitness Test has been selected as the test for this process, and the student must meet the 85<sup>th</sup> percentile level for their age in 4 out of 5 test components. If the student does not meet 4 of the 5, the student cannot apply for a waiver.
4. The individual's prior experience and skill level is judged on the demands of the sport at the level of play at which the student is endeavoring to qualify.

## **DURATION OF COMPETITION**

A student shall be eligible for senior high school interscholastic competition in a sport during each of four consecutive seasons of such sport commencing with the student's entry into the ninth grade and prior to graduation. A student reaching the age of 19 before July 1 may not participate in high school interscholastic sports in the academic year that proceeds their 19<sup>th</sup> birthday.

## **TRANSFER STUDENTS**

Transfer rule: A student transferring into or out of the Niskayuna Central School District without a corresponding change of address could be in violation of the transfer rule. Violations may result in the forfeiture of athletic contests and risk a student's eligibility.

*To access transfer forms, visit the New York State Public High School Athletic Association website.*

## **EXEMPTIONS TO TRANSFER STUDENTS**

- The student reaches the age of majority and establishes residency in a district.
- If a private or parochial school ceases to operate a student may transfer to another private or parochial school of his/her choice. Otherwise, a student must enroll in the public school district of his/her parent's residency.
- A student who is a ward of the court or state and is placed in a district by court order. Guardianship does not fulfill this requirement.
- A student from divorced or separated parents who moves into a new school district with one of the aforementioned parents. Such a transfer is allowed once every six month.
- A student who is declared homeless by a the superintendent pursuant to Commissioner's Regulation 100.2

Note: It is provided, however, that each student shall have the opportunity to petition the Section involved to transfer without penalty based on an undue hardship for the student.

## **TRANSPORTATION**

Student-athletes will be transported to and from athletic practices and contests in vehicles provided by the school district during their respective season. There may be times when it may be necessary for a parent/guardian to pick up a student-athlete after a game. A written note by the parent/guardian to the coach shall be required. Parents may transport their own son/daughter only. All student-athletes are expected to conduct themselves in a fashion that will ensure the safety of all passengers. All safety rules must be followed. All regulations are in effect during charter trips. *Note:* Student-athletes who attend practice/contests where the school district transports student-athletes one-way will need to make arrangements to get a ride home after the practice or contest. In this instance, a student-athlete with a valid driver's license is permitted to drive him/herself.

## PHYSICAL EXAMINATIONS

All students, grades 7-12, who desire to participate in interscholastic athletics must receive an adequate physical examination or medical history update approved by the school physician. No student-athlete will be allowed to try out, practice, or participate with any team without the required physical examination. There are NO EXCEPTIONS. Physical examinations are provided by the school district prior to each sports season free of charge. Student-athletes may be examined by their family physician. The district medical form must be completed and returned directly to the school nurse. Failure to provide proof of a physical examination and turn in the proper health forms will preclude a student-athlete from participation at any level. Physical examinations are valid for the school calendar year. Student-athletes trying out for a fall sport are encouraged to get a physical examination during May or June instead of waiting for the make-up exams administered in August.

### *Notes:*

- ✓ Parents must completely fill out a medical sports update form and return it to the school nurse prior to the first practice each season.
- ✓ Parents must completely fill out the Athletic Card and Emergency Medical Authorization information specifically indicating emergency phone numbers. Parents are responsible for updating changes during the season.
- ✓ All injured student-athletes who have been seen by a physician must be released (by signed statement) by a physician in order to resume participation with their team. This release must be filed with our school nurse prior to resuming practice or competition.
- ✓ In cases of a long term or severe injury, clearance by the school physician may also be necessary prior to the return of a student-athlete.
- ✓ In instances where a student-athlete is injured in connection with interscholastic sports, the parents'/guardians' insurance coverage shall provide primary coverage; however, the remaining uncovered balance can be submitted to the school's accident insurance carrier. Inquiries should be directed to the school nurse in the building where the student is enrolled.
- ✓ In case of an injury requiring medical treatment by emergency personnel, student-athletes will be transported to the most appropriate location. Coaches will make the wishes of parents or guardians for the transportation of student-athletes to specific locations known to emergency personnel. The decision of where to transport injured student-athletes will be left to emergency personnel. The decision will be based on obtaining the most appropriate care for the student-athlete.

## **RISK FACTOR IN SPORTS**

Participation in sports involves a certain degree of risk of injury. Physical injury can occur in any type of sports activity and vary in nature and severity. Athletic injuries can run from minor injuries such as bruises and scrapes, to more serious injuries such as fractures, dislocations, concussions, paralysis and even death. Preseason conditioning, learning proper skills and techniques, and knowledge of rules and safety factors will help reduce the risk of injury.

## **INJURIES AND INSURANCE**

A student-athlete must be medically cleared to participate in physical education before returning to athletic participation. Injuries should be reported to your coach immediately. Coaches shall submit an accident report. Medical expenses resulting from an injury must first be submitted to the student-athlete's own insurance carrier.

## **SPORTS MEDICINE AND FITNESS TRAINING**

Niskayuna Central Schools will provide athletic training care to student-athletes through our affiliation with New York Ortho. The certified athletic trainer is available Tuesday through Friday 3 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. and at a variety of athletic contests. The athletic training office is located in the high school across from the new gym. Changes in the schedule will be posted.

A fitness trainer is available in the Silver Warrior Fitness Center. The fitness trainer is available to develop individual and group fitness programs. A schedule of availability will be published prior to the school year.

## **OUTSIDE TEAM RULE**

The NYSPHSAA allows outside competition. Niskayuna student-athletes must understand that commitment to the school team for practice and games comes first, and outside participation should not be detrimental to an individual or to a Niskayuna interscholastic team. There will be many circumstances where a student should not participate in an outside activity due to the possible effect on the Niskayuna interscholastic team. Student-athletes are advised not to participate in the outside activity until the individual coach of the school team sanctions participation.

## **NCAA INFORMATION**

Any senior student-athlete planning to enroll in college as a freshman and who wants to participate in Division I or Division II athletics must be certified by the NCAA Initial-Eligibility Clearinghouse. Applications may be obtained from: [www.ncaaclearinghouse.net](http://www.ncaaclearinghouse.net).

## **BOOSTERS CLUB**

The Boosters Club is organized to promote and encourage interest in all athletic activities at the Niskayuna School District. Members strive to promote understanding and support for the athletic activities at Niskayuna among the membership, students, faculty, community, and especially among the student-athletes, parents and coaches. They seek to assist the program by working in conjunction with the Director of Athletics and the coaching staff. The club meets on the first Wednesday of every month during the school year at 7 p.m. in the athletic conference room.

## **ISSUING OF SCHOOL CLOTHING AND EQUIPMENT**

It is the responsibility of the student-athlete to return to the coach all clothing and equipment issued. Failure to do this will result in a student-athlete being held financially responsible for the missing articles. Student-athletes not paying for the missing articles will forfeit their right to try out for another sport, receive any additional athletic equipment or clothing, and be ineligible for any awards until payment is received. A list of all violators will be sent to the Director of Athletics.

Lockers are the property of the school, and the administration reserves the right to examine lockers and their contents at any time, upon reasonable cause. Each student-athlete is encouraged to make sure that their locker is kept securely locked at all times and to share their combination with no other student. The Niskayuna School District is not responsible for lost or stolen items. Lockers will be cleaned out at the end of each season.

## **ATHLETIC AWARDS**

A. Letter Award Qualifications - A letter is not a "right" of each individual on a team; rather it is an honor that must be earned by the individual student-athlete.

1. The coach will set forth specific criteria outlining performance as a means of achieving a letter. The criteria will give meaning to the letter awards.

-A starter who is injured before he or she can complete the requirements shall be given consideration for receiving a letter.

-A student-athlete who does not complete the season in good standing shall not receive a letter or certificate, (i.e. a student-athlete who quits the team, is removed for disciplinary reasons, or for a training rule infraction).

-A senior, who has participated in the same sport for 4 years, shall receive a varsity letter in that sport regardless of the requirements, as long as he or she completes each season as a team member in good standing.

2. It is at the coach(es) sole discretion to determine who will receive a letter.

## B. General Requirements for All Awards:

**CERTIFICATES:** Varsity and Junior Varsity certificates shall be awarded to all student-athletes who complete the season in good standing. The student-athlete must exhibit attributes befitting a hard-working, loyal team member throughout the entire season.

**LETTERS:** The same standards are applied to each level—Freshman, Junior Varsity and Varsity. One Letter only shall be awarded at each level. Sport pins will be issued for varsity awards earned in the first year and a service bar will be issued in subsequent years in the same sport. Any student-athlete who has earned 3 or more letters in the same sport shall receive a plaque in his or her senior year (must participate in their senior year). Any student-athlete who has earned 4 varsity letters or more during his or her junior and senior years shall also receive a plaque. The plaques are presented at the Boosters Club-sponsored award night for senior student-athletes.

Note: Situations needing special considerations shall be left to the discretion of the coach(es) after consultation with the Athletic Director.

## C. Awards Banquets

Alcohol and alcoholic consumption by all persons at Niskayuna Central Athletic events and awards banquets is against school district policy. Whenever possible, banquets should be held in a facility where alcohol cannot be sold during the function and at no time can alcohol be available in the banquet room. Smoking or use of tobacco products is similarly prohibited.

### **DIRECTIONS TO SUBURBAN COUNCIL SCHOOLS**

The majority of our Interscholastic Athletic programs are played within the Suburban Scholastic Council, although some sports play against schools from other leagues. Games are not necessarily played at our opponent's high schools.

Directions to Suburban Council Schools are available on the district web site. Visit [www.niskayunaschools.org](http://www.niskayunaschools.org) and follow the "Athletics" link. Driving directions are listed on the right side of the "Athletics" home page.

### **SPORTS SCHEDULES AND CHANGES**

All sports schedules are available online, including last-minute cancellations and updates. Visit [www.niskayunaschools.org](http://www.niskayunaschools.org) and follow the "Athletics" link for access to current calendars.

Anyone can also automatically receive an e-mail or cellphone text message when sports schedules are changed, through "SportsPakAD". To sign up for this free service, visit the "Athletics" link of the district web site and look for this graphic: "SPORTSPAK.Online"

## COMMUNICATION GUIDELINES

Parents/guardians and student-athletes may have questions or concerns that need to be addressed. The coach of the team is the best source of information.

### Communication Parents Should Expect from a Coach

- Philosophy of the coach and program.
- Expectations the coach has for your student-athlete, as well as the entire team.
- Locations and times of all practices and games.
- Team requirements, such as special equipment, offseason expectations, etc.
- Procedures that will be employed should your student-athlete be injured during participation.

### Communication Coaches Should Expect from a Parent

- Concerns expressed directly to the coach only after the student-athlete has talked with the coach.
- Notification of any schedule conflicts, well in advance.
- Specific concerns in regards to a coach's philosophy and/or expectations.

### Appropriate Concerns to Discuss with Coaches

- The treatment of your child, either mentally or physically.
- Ways to help your student-athlete improve.
- Concerns about your student-athlete's behavior.

### Inappropriate Concerns to Discuss with Coaches

- Playing time.
- Team strategy and/or play calling.
- Other student-athletes.

Coaches are trained professionals who make judgments based on what they believe is in the best interest of the entire team. As noted above, certain things should be discussed with the coach, while others should not be and need to be left to the discretion of the coach. Please do not attempt to meet with a coach before or after a contest or practice. These can be emotional times for both the parent/guardian and coach. Meetings of this nature do not promote resolution.

If the coach cannot be reached, contact the Director of Athletics to assist in arranging a meeting.

**NISKAYUNA CENTRAL INTERSCHOLASTIC**

**ATHLETICS**

**SPORTS AND LEVEL OF COMPETITION**

| <b>SPORT</b>      | <b>M/F</b> | <b>VAR</b> | <b>JV</b> | <b>FRESH</b> | <b>MOD</b> |
|-------------------|------------|------------|-----------|--------------|------------|
| <i>FALL</i>       |            |            |           |              |            |
| CHEERLEADING      |            | X          | X         |              |            |
| CREW*             | M          | SF         |           |              |            |
| CREW*             | F          | SF         |           |              |            |
| CROSS COUNTRY     | M          | X          | X         |              | X          |
| CROSS COUNTRY     | F          | X          | X         |              | X          |
| FIELD HOCKEY      | F          | X          | X         |              | X          |
| FOOTBALL          | M          | X          | X         | X            | X          |
| GOLF              | M          | X          | X         |              |            |
| SOCCER            | M          | X          | X         | X**          | X          |
| SOCCER            | F          | X          | X         | X**          | X          |
| SWIMMING/DIVING F |            | X          |           |              |            |
| TENNIS            | F          | X          | X         |              |            |
| VOLLEYBALL        | M          | X          | X         |              |            |
| VOLLEYBALL        | F          | X          | X         | X            | X          |

**KEY**

\* - Not NYSPHSAA Sanctioned

\*\* Modified 9 level

SF - A BOOSTER-FUNDED PROGRAM

MOD - OPEN TO 7TH, 8TH, 9TH GRADERS

| <b>SPORT</b>      | <b>M/F</b> | <b>VAR</b> | <b>JV</b> | <b>FRESH</b> | <b>MOD</b> |
|-------------------|------------|------------|-----------|--------------|------------|
| <i>WINTER</i>     |            |            |           |              |            |
| BASKETBALL        | M          | X          | X         | X            | X          |
| BASKETBALL        | F          | X          | X         | <u>X**</u>   | X          |
| BOWLING           | M          | X          | X         |              |            |
| BOWLING           | F          | X          | X         |              |            |
| CHEERLEADING      | F          | X          | X         |              |            |
| ICE HOCKEY        | M          | SF         |           |              |            |
| SKI-ALPINE        | M          | X          | X         |              |            |
| SKI-ALPINE        | F          | X          | X         |              |            |
| SWIMMING/DIVING M |            | X          |           |              | X          |
| TRACK-INDOOR      | M          | X          |           |              |            |
| TRACK-INDOOR      | F          | X          |           |              |            |
| WRESTLING         | M          | X          | X         |              | X          |
| <br><i>SPRING</i> |            |            |           |              |            |
| BASEBALL          | M          | X          | X         | X            | X          |
| CREW*             | M          | X          |           |              |            |
| CREW*             | F          | X          |           |              |            |
| LACROSSE          | M          | X          | X         |              | X          |
| LACROSSE          | F          | X          | X         |              | X          |
| SOFTBALL          | F          | X          | X         | X**          | X          |
| TENNIS            | M          | X          | X         |              |            |
| TRACK             | M          | X          | X         |              | X          |
| TRACK             | F          | X          | X         |              | X          |

**KEY**

\* - Not NYSPHSAA Sanctioned

\*\* Modified 9 level

SF - A BOOSTER-FUNDED PROGRAM

MOD - OPEN TO 7TH, 8TH, 9TH GRADERS

**DIRECTORY**  
**HIGH SCHOOL**  
 1626 Balltown Road  
 Niskayuna, New York 12309  
 Main Office: 518-382-2511  
 P-E & Athletic Office: 518-382-2511 Ext. 21760 (Fax: 382-1964)  
 E-mail: lgillooley@niskyschools.org or cprimeau@niskyschools.org

**IROQUOIS MIDDLE SCHOOL**  
 2495 Rosendale Road  
 Niskayuna, New York 12309  
 518-377-2233

**VAN ANTWERP MIDDLE SCHOOL**  
 2253 Story Avenue  
 Niskayuna, New York 12309  
 518-370-1243

|  |                     |                            |
|--|---------------------|----------------------------|
| Superintendent                               | Dr. Cosimo Tangorra | (518) 377-4666             |
| Assistant Superintendent                     | Lauren Gemmill      | (518) 377-4666             |
| Director of Business                         | Carrie Nyc-Chevrier | (518) 377-4666             |
| Director of Student & Staff Support Services | Deborah Marriott    | (518) 377-4666             |
| Director of P-E & Athletics                  | Larry Gillooley     | (518) 382-2511, Ext. 21760 |
| Athletic Secretary                           | Cindi Primeau       | (518) 382-2511, Ext. 21760 |
| High School Principal                        | John Rickert        | (518) 382-2511             |
| Iroquois M.S. Principal                      | Victoria Wyld       | 377-2233                   |
| Van Antwerp M.S. Principal                   | Luke Rakoczy        | (518)370-1243              |
| Director of Transportation                   | Bill Garrison       | (518) 370-0160             |
| High School Nurse                            | Nancy Hammond       | (518) 382-2511, Ext. 21768 |
| Iroquois M.S. Nurse                          | Chris Gravelle      | (518) 377-2019             |
| Van Antwerp M.S. Nurse                       | Carole Werblin      | (518) 370-4588             |

### **MEMBERSHIP**

New York State Public High School Athletic Association  
 Section II, Class AA  
 Suburban Scholastic Council  
 SCHOOL NICKNAME: SILVER WARRIORS  
 SCHOOL COLORS: CARDINAL & SILVER

**NISKAYUNA CENTRAL SCHOOLS ATHLETIC CARD**

\_\_\_\_\_ M \_\_\_\_\_ F \_\_\_\_\_

**Athlete: Last Name** \_\_\_\_\_ **First Name** \_\_\_\_\_ **Gender** \_\_\_\_\_

**E-Mail Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Mailing Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Sport** \_\_\_\_\_ **Level** \_\_\_\_\_ **Year of Grad.** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date of birth** \_\_\_\_\_

**Parent/Guardian Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone: Home** \_\_\_\_\_ **Cell** \_\_\_\_\_ **Work** \_\_\_\_\_

**Other Parent/Guardian Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone: Home** \_\_\_\_\_ **Cell** \_\_\_\_\_ **Work** \_\_\_\_\_

**If in Middle School**     **Iroquois**                       **Van Antwerp**

**Please check**     **7<sup>th</sup> grade**                       **8<sup>th</sup> grade**

The student & parent have read the Parent/Athlete handbook and understand the guidelines, procedures, conduct, training rules and consequences. (Athletic Handbook available on District Web Page)

I, the parent/ guardian understand that participating in athletic activities implies risk of injury. I give my son/daughter \_\_\_\_\_ permission to participate. I have read and reviewed the rules and regulations set forth in the Athletic Handbook, including the Athletic Code of Conduct, with my son/daughter.

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Parent/Guardian Signature** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_

I, the student agree to comply with the terms and conditions set forth in order that I may participate.

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Athlete Signature** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_

The student has met the physical examination requirements and is eligible to participate.

**SCHOOL NURSE AUTHORIZATION:** \_\_\_\_\_

**INTERIM HEALTH INFORMATION**

Since your last physical for sports participation, have you had any serious illness or injury including a concussions? If yes, diagnosis of illness or injury: YES NO

Was hospitalization (including Emergency Room Evaluation) required? YES NO  
If surgery was required, please specify

If yes to any of the above, do you have written clearance to resume ALL Physical Education? YES NO

Since your last physical for sports participation, have you been diagnosed with ANY Cardiac Problem including High Blood Pressure? YES NO  
If yes, what treatment has been prescribed?

Do you have a history of Stinging Insect or Food Allergies? YES NO

Do you carry an Epi-Pen? YES NO

Do you have Asthma? YES NO

Do you carry an Inhaler? YES NO

Are you presently taking ANY Medications? YES NO

If yes, name of medication and dosage?

If you have had any serious illness or injury since your last physical for sports participation, WRITTEN clearance from the attending physician is required before the school nurse will authorize your participation in any sport.

#### EMERGENCY MEDICAL AUTHORIZATION

Purpose: To enable parents and guardians to authorize emergency treatment for children who become ill or injured while under school supervision, when parents or guardians cannot be reached.

Family Physician: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Family Dentist: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

CONSENT OF PARENT OR GUARDIAN FOR EMERGENCY TREATMENT: in the event that reasonable attempts to contact me have been unsuccessful, I hereby give my consent for the administration of any treatment deemed necessary by the above listed doctors or, in the event the designated preferred doctor is not available, by another licensed physician or dentist and be transferred to: \_\_\_\_\_ or any hospital reasonably accessible.

Initials: \_\_\_\_\_

THIS AUTHORIZATION DOES NOT COVER MAJOR SURGERY UNLESS THE MEDICAL OPIONIONS OF TWO LICENSED PHYSICIANS OR DENTISTS, CONCURRING IN THE NECESSITY FOR SUCH SURGERY ARE OBRAINED PRIOR TO THE PERFORMANCE OF SUCH SURGERY. THIS AUTHORIZATION ALLOWS RELEASE OF PERTINENT MEDICAL INFORMATION TO COACHES AND ATHLETIC TRAINERS. Initials:

\_\_\_\_\_

PARENT SIGNATURE \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_