



CUMBERLAND
COUNTY SCHOOLS

2026-2027

High School Athletic Handbook

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MISSION



The athletic program is an integral part of the total school experience for students. The program offers a variety of sports and activities to all students who have potential skill and the desire to participate. The policies, procedures, and regulations in the handbook follow school board policies and administrative procedures. The program is designed to provide successful experiences for students and the efficient operation of the athletic program. Cumberland County athletes must act with pride and dignity at all times.

The purpose of this handbook is to establish regulations and procedures to address violations that occur on or off school grounds throughout the entire calendar year. The handbook is designed to encourage athletes to make choices that ensure their health and safety, and provide appropriate consequences for students who violate the rules. The student athlete is accountable and responsible for all policies contained within this handbook and for any additional ones that your respective coaches might add.

Cumberland County Schools believes that good sportsmanship is an integral component of interscholastic competition. In order for good sportsmanship to prevail, coaches, student-athletes, and fans must display respect, fairness, civility, encourage fans to enthusiastically support their team, recognise outstanding performance of opponents, and always exhibit good sportsmanship in their words and actions. Love the game enough to know and follow the rules. Wishing all of you the best as you pursue your athletic dreams and goals.

Chad Barbour
Director of Student Activities
Cumberland County Schools
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SPORTS OFFERED

The following list provides prospective student-athletes with a list of sports offered during each season. Students who are interested in participating in high school athletics should contact the coach of each sport and/or the athletic director in each school for specific tryout and preseason workout dates. The North Carolina High School Athletic Association (NCHSAA) allows athletic teams to have a maximum number of athletes for participation in off-season skill development. For further information, contact your school's athletic director.

FALL SPORTS

- Cheerleading
- Cross Country (Men & Women)
- Football
- Golf - Women
- Soccer - Men
- Tennis - Women
- Volleyball - Women

WINTER SPORTS

- Basketball (Men & Women)
- Bowling (Men & Women)
- Cheerleading
- Swimming (Men & Women)
- Track - Indoor (Men & Women)
- Wrestling

SPRING SPORTS

- Baseball
- Golf - Men
- Soccer - Women
- Softball - Women
- Tennis - Men
- Track - Outdoor (Men & Women)
- Lacrosse - Men (Jack Britt, Cape Fear, Gray's Creek & Terry Sanford Only)
- Lacrosse - Women (Jack Britt, Cape Fear, Gray's Creek & Terry Sanford Only)*

Eligibility Rules - Taken from the NCHSAA Handbook

A student who wishes to participate in athletics in Cumberland County Schools...

- **Must** have been in attendance for at least 85% of the total school days of the previous semester. If a student has missed more than 15% of the total school days in the previous semester with unexcused absences, the student is not eligible for athletics.
- **Must** not have exceeded eight consecutive semesters of attendance or have participated in more than four seasons in any sport since first entering grade 9.
- **Must** not have graduated from high school.
- Cannot become 19 years of age on or before August 31 of current school year.
- **Must** live with their parents or legal custodian within the school administrative unit (exceptions must be approved by Cumberland County Schools and/or the NCHSAA). A student is eligible if he/she has attended school within that unit the previous two semesters (if eligible in all other respects).
- **Must** not falsify any official eligibility information such as residency/address. Penalty for such acts will result in loss of eligibility for 365 days. If residence changes during the school year you must notify the school immediately of this change or risk loss of eligibility for **365 days**.
- **Must** have passed a minimum academic load during the previous semester, and meet local promotion standards.
 - Students must pass 70% of their course load. Example: A normal block schedule is 4 classes. A student must pass 3 out of four classes to be eligible.
- Second Semester 9th graders - 12th graders must have a weighted 2.0 GPA or 70 average.
 - Note: Credit recovery courses do not count towards the GPA requirements. (CCS Board Policy 3620-R2)
- A student upon first entering grade 9 is academically eligible for competition on high school teams for the fall semester.
- **Must** have a current concussion form on file in the Athletic Office.(Concussion forms are good for the current school year only.)
- Cumberland County Schools does not submit waiver requests to the NCHSAA for attendance purposes.

Eligibility Rules Continued

- Must have a current **medical examination** by a duly licensed physician, nurse practitioner, or physician's assistant; physical must carry student-athlete completely through the sport season in which the student-athlete is participating (Physical cannot expire during the sport season)
 - If you miss five or more days of practice due to illness or injury, you must receive a medical release before practicing or playing.
- Voluntary transfer students cannot participate in interscholastic sports for 365 days from the first approved transfer date.
- On the day of an athletic contest students must be in attendance 51% of the school day to participate. (CCS Board Policy 3620-R2)
- Must not have been convicted of a felony or offense that would be a felony if committed by an adult.
- Must not accept **prizes, merchandise, money** or anything exceeding \$250.00 in value per season that can be exchanged for money as a result of athletic participation.
 - **This includes being on a free list or loan list for equipment, etc.**
- Must not have signed a professional contract, have played on a junior college team or be regularly enrolled in college. Dual enrollment does not apply.
- Must not participate in unsanctioned all-star or bowl games.
- May not play, practice or assemble as a team with your coach on **Sundays**.
- May **not dress for a contest or practice** if you are not eligible to participate.
- Must not play more than three contests in one sport per week
 - Exceptions: baseball, softball, tennis and volleyball
- Must not play more than one contest per day
 - Exceptions: baseball, softball and volleyball
- No practices should be held on a Teacher Workday until 4 PM

For additional eligibility information, please refer to the [NCHSAA website](#) or handbook.

When there is not a specific CCS rule declared in this handbook, NCHSAA rules apply.

Team Selection & Administrative Rules

- Teams will be determined by tryouts open to all eligible students.
- The decision on the selection of team members by the coach is final.
- Coaches reserve the right to close tryouts and/or practices to parents and the general public.
- Student Athletes must ride the team activity bus to and from all contests unless excused in writing by a school administrator only.
- Junior Varsity teams are made up of 9th & 10th graders only. (This includes school & club teams.)
- Varsity teams are made up of 9th – 12th grade students.
- Student-Athletes that quit or are removed from a sport may not participate in out of season sport skill development or practice until the current season of the sport they quit or are removed from is completely over.
- A student-athlete that quits a sport may not join another team during the same season.
- A student-athlete must tryout for a sport during the initial tryout period unless the student-athlete has a medical issue or student transfers in the school out of the tryout period.

Cumberland County Schools Transfer Policy

Pursuant to the NCHSAA Transfer Policy which states: “A student transferring from one member school to another school within the same LEA must sit out 365 days for athletic participation. The Local Education Agency (LEA) may create criteria for immediate athletic eligibility for transfer within the LEA”.

Cumberland County Schools has created the following criteria to govern transfers within the LEA:

A student must refrain from participating for 365 days for athletic participation without a bona fide move if:

- (1) A student entering an academy out of their attendance area after 9th or 10th grade entry at their attendance area school.
- (2) A student assigned to an out of attendance area school due to parent request (Voluntary Transfer).
- (3) A student transferring from one out of attendance area school to another out of attendance area school.

Students who leave Cumberland County Schools for private schools are allowed to return one time and not lose athletic eligibility. Upon a second return will be required to refrain from participating for 365 days.

Students who early exit and return to their home school will be ineligible for athletics that school year. They will be reinstated after the one year academy commitment is up.

Students on an **abbreviated schedule** must still meet all attendance requirements.

Students must complete **all athletic paperwork**, found on the approved online platform (Final Forms) **prior to participation in any capacity**, with an athletic team.

Requirements for Participation

Remember that as an athlete you are not eligible to participate in or try-out for any other sport until the following items have been completed:

1. Physical examination downloaded and concussion forms completed on the provided Parent Online Pre-Participation Athletic Registration.
2. Proof of all eligibility requirements relative to residence, age, attendance and academics.
3. Student-Athlete Eligibility and Permission form completed.

Photographic / Videotaping Permission

Cumberland County Schools Uses Photographs, Slides, Videos, Or Illustrations Of Students For Many Purposes Such Photographs, Videos, Or Other Illustrating Material Which May Be Used In Newsletters Or Publications Produced By The School System, In Slide Presentations and/Or Videos About The Schools, By The News Media In School-Related News Coverage, In Video Productions Aired On Television Produced By The School System Or In Other Similar Forms Of Communication. Parents and legal guardians have the option of granting permission for their child's picture to be used in this manner. See the Cumberland County High Schools Student-Athlete Eligibility and Permission Form for details.

Athletic Code of Conduct

Participation in any athletic activity is an important part of the educational experience in the Cumberland County Schools. A primary goal of such activities is to teach students character and self-discipline skills that will enable them to develop to their highest potential. As role models for their peers and younger students, students who participate in athletic activities ("participating students") are held accountable for their actions at a higher standard than other students. Because of the public nature of the athletic programs sponsored by the Cumberland County Schools, participating students are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that will reflect the high standards and ideals of their school and community. The participating student athlete becomes subject to this Code of Conduct upon the student's signature and date on his/her Cumberland County High Schools Student-Athlete Eligibility and Permission Form and continues until graduation from high school. Participating student athletes are subject to this code at all times during the calendar year, including summer months, whether on or off campus. For summer month violations, any discipline or punishment imposed would go into effect at the next scheduled athletic activity by the student athlete. This Code of Conduct is, in addition to, any specific team/activity rules or regulations established by the individual programs.

#1 Drugs and Alcohol

The possession, use, distribution and/or sale of illegal or counterfeit drugs/alcohol, including possession of paraphernalia for ingestion of such substances by participating students is not acceptable and prohibited. If school officials receive credible evidence, such as a police report or criminal charges related to a drug or alcohol offense, or have a reasonable suspicion that a violation under this section has occurred, the school officials will investigate. If after investigation of the charges, school officials determine that the participating student committed the violation, he/she shall be subject to disciplinary action as outlined below.

Athletic Code of Conduct (Continued)

Every effort will be made by the school and individual activity programs to make participating students aware of the detrimental effects of drugs and alcohol. Students and/or parents of students suspended under this section will receive information regarding counseling. Any participating student found in violation of this offense at any time while on any school premises, including activity buses or other school-approved transportation, will be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the CCS Student Code of Conduct & the following consequences. All offenses occurring off campus will be determined as specified below:

First Offense:

The principal will suspend the student athlete for a minimum of 20% of the next consecutive athletic/extracurricular contests, not to include scrimmages. The suspension may require being served over two seasons if the incident occurs near the end of the first season. At the discretion of the principal in consultation with the athletic director and/or coach, the student athlete may practice with the team during this suspended time frame and/or be allowed to travel with the team, as well as on the sideline or bench with the team in appropriate attire.

With the first violation, the student athlete must be evaluated by a drug/alcohol counselor as recommended by the school, must comply with all recommendations and treatment programs, and must furnish a negative drug test (at the student athlete's cost) prior to resuming participation.

Additionally, the student athlete must agree to be drug tested for a period of 365 calendar days following the violation of the drug and alcohol policy. He/she must agree to pay for any random drug tests selected by the school representatives.

Second Offense:

The student athlete will be suspended from all athletic activities for a period of 365 calendar days from the first day of the offense. To be allowed to participate again, the student athlete must have completed an approved county counseling program on substance abuse.

Third Offense:

The student athlete will be excluded from all athletic activities for the remainder of his/her high school career in the Cumberland County School system.

Athletic Code of Conduct (Continued)

#2 Tobacco/Vape Use

(Principal's Decision is Final)

Participating students found to have used tobacco while subject to this Code will be suspended from participation as outlined:

First Offense:

The student athlete will be suspended for a minimum of 10% of the next consecutive athletic contests, not including scrimmages. The suspension may require being served over two seasons if the incident occurs near the end of the first season. At the discretion of the head coach, the student athlete may practice with the team during this suspended time frame and be allowed to travel with the team. Also, at the coach's discretion, the student athlete may be on the sideline or bench with the team in appropriate attire.

Second Offense:

The student athlete will be suspended for a minimum of 20% of the next consecutive sports season games/contests, not including scrimmages. The suspension may require being served over two seasons if the incident occurs near the end of the first season. At the discretion of the head coach, the student athlete may practice with the team during this suspended time frame and be allowed to travel with the team. Also, at the coach's discretion, the student athlete may be on the sideline or bench with the team in appropriate attire.

Third Offense:

The principal will suspend the student athlete from all interscholastic activities for 45 days or the remainder of the season whichever comes first.

Note: The rules are minimum consequences. The principal, athletic director or coach has the discretion to increase the consequences as he/she feels is most beneficial to his/her athletic program or team.

Athletic Code of Conduct (Continued)

#3 Criminal Charges

A participating student athlete charged with a criminal offense, misdemeanor or felony, other than a minor traffic offense, will be suspended from athletic participation until further review by the principal and director of student activities. A student convicted of a felony offense will be immediately suspended from all athletic participation according to the NCHSAA policy. The participating student athlete must inform his or her coach or appropriate staff of any criminal charges against them as soon as practicable, but no later than the student's next participation in any athletic event, to include practices, rehearsals, etc. Failure to do so may result in further disciplinary action.

- **Diversion Program**

- Students charged with a criminal offense and referred to the Diversion Program & do not successfully complete the program shall be suspended in accordance with the Athletic Code of Conduct.

Review Procedure

I. A participating student may request a review of the disciplinary action involving items 1, 2, & 3 by providing written notice to the Superintendent or his designee within two (2) school days of the date of the Principal's notification to the student and/or parent. The notice shall state the reason for the review.

II. The Superintendent, or their designee, will review the record of the disciplinary action and issue a decision within five (5) school days of receipt of the request for review. The Superintendent or their designee will inform the student and parent of the decision of whether to uphold, modify, or overturn the disciplinary action. The decision of the Superintendent shall be final.

III. Any disciplinary action, including suspension from participation, will remain in effect during the review process.

IV. Failure by the participating student to adhere to appeal content requirements and timelines set forth will result in immediate dismissal of the appeal.

Athletic Code of Conduct (Continued)

5. School Suspensions

- In-School or out of school short-term (10 days or less) – ineligible to participate in any athletic activity on the day(s) the student is serving suspension to include practice.
- Out of School Long-Term (11 days or greater) – ineligible to participate in any athletic activity for the remainder of semester or suspension period (whichever is greater).
- Disciplinary assignment to alternative school or character academy – ineligible to participate in any athletic activity for the remainder of the season.

6. Inappropriate Behavior

A participating student athlete who engages in any conduct or behavior, which is inconsistent with the student's position as a role model or representative of the Cumberland County Schools, is subject to disciplinary action, including suspension as determined by the Principal. Coaches or school officials may also establish additional training regulations and rules of conduct. Inappropriate social media behavior falls within this category.

7. Appeals

The decision of the school principal is final for school suspensions and inappropriate behavior as it relates to athletic participation.

Athletic Code of Conduct (Continued)

Sportsmanship

As students and spectators, you represent your school and have an obligation to encourage the practice of good sportsmanship. Remember that the primary purpose of High School Athletics is to promote physical, mental, moral, social and emotional well-being of the players through the medium of contest. Be modest in victory and gracious in defeat. Students ejected must serve their suspension in their very next contest, even if it extends into the next academic year.

Any parent(s) or spectator removed from the site of a contest due to poor sportsmanship or disruptive behavior can:

1. Receive a letter of warning & must take and complete the Positive Sports Parenting Course on the National Federation of High Schools website. The certificate received from the Positive Sports Parenting course should be submitted prior to returning to an athletic event to the Athletic Director of the school.
2. Not allowed to attend any additional school contests.
3. Banned from attending any Cumberland County Schools Athletic Events.

Ejections

Students who are ejected from a contest will have a one-game suspension imposed by the NCHSAA. Students who are ejected from a contest for flagrant contact, fighting or disruptive behavior will be subject to a two-game suspension. Leaving the bench area during a fight will result in a two-game suspension.

Recruiting/Undue Influence

A student shall not be subjected to undue influence by an individual or group of individuals to induce or cause him/her to transfer from one school to another for athletic purposes.

For the purpose of this rule, “undue influence” consists of actions taken for the purpose and intent of soliciting or encouraging the enrollment of a student-athlete in a school, including but not limited to the following:

1. Initiating or arranging communication or contact of any sort (letter, email, phone, social media, etc.) with a prospective student-athlete or member of his/her family.
2. Visiting or entertaining a prospective student-athlete or family member.
3. To use non-school athletic teams (AAU, Travel, Club, Arena, etc.) as a vehicle to solicit or encourage a prospective student-athlete or a family member to enroll the student-athlete at a different school.
4. Providing any assistance or encouragement to the student-athlete and/or family member to visit a different school for the purpose of potential enrollment.

Athletic Code of Conduct (Continued)

The above applies to any individual who coaches at a member school (Head or Assistant, paid or non-paid, faculty or non-faculty, parent volunteer, etc.), as well as any other person formally or informally associated with a school's athletic program.

College Recruitment Policy

In the event an athlete should be contacted personally by a college recruiter, he or she has an obligation to work through his or her high school coach and athletic department. Inform your coach of such contact as soon as possible. In addition, it would be beneficial to the athlete to notify his/her school's **guidance counselor to ensure proper academic eligibility requirements have been met.**

- Academic Standards for Initial-Eligibility
- Academic Standards

The NCAA Eligibility Center verifies the academic and amateur status of all student-athletes who wish to compete in Division I or II athletics. College-bound student-athletes who want to practice, compete and receive athletically related financial aid during their first year at a Division I or II school need to meet the following requirements:

- Graduate from high school.
- Complete a minimum of 16 core courses for Division I or II.
- Earn a minimum required grade-point average in core courses.
- Earn a qualifying test score on either the ACT or SAT.
- Request final amateurism certification from the NCAA Eligibility Center.

Athletic Code of Conduct (Continued)

College Recruitment Policy Continued

For Division I student-athletes who will enroll in August 1, 2016 and later, the requirements to compete in the first year will change. In addition to the above standards, students must:

- Earn at least a 2.3 grade-point average in core courses.
- Meet an increased sliding-scale standard (for example, an SAT score of 820 requires a 2.5 high school core course GPA)
- Successfully complete 10 of the 16 total required core courses before the start of their seventh semester in high school. Seven of the 10 courses must be successfully completed in English, math and science.
- Students that earn at least a 2.0 GPA but not a 2.3 GPA and meet the current sliding scale standard (for example, an SAT score of 1,010 requires a 2.025 high school core course GPA) will be eligible for practice in the first term and athletically related financial aid the entire year, but not competition. Freshmen who are academically successful in the first term will earn the ability to continue to practice for the remainder of the year.

Division III colleges and universities set their own admission standards. The NCAA does not set initial eligibility requirements in Division III.

For more detail about academic requirements visit the [NCAA Eligibility Center](#).

References

Cumberland County High Schools Athletics

www.ncprepsports.net

- Game Scores
- Team Statistics
- Individual Statistics
- Conference Standings

Cumberland County Schools

www.ccs.k12.nc.us

- General School Information
- Links to all Cumberland County Schools websites
- Parent Module (check student grades)

North Carolina High School Athletic Association

www.nchsaa.org

- NCHSAA general information
- Rules and regulations for eligibility
- Rules and regulations for individual sports

National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA)

Eligibility Center: http://web1.ncaa.org/ECWR2/NCAA_EMS/NCAA.jsp

- College athletic eligibility information

Cumberland County School Athletic Sites

Jack Britt High 7403 Rockfish Road Fayetteville, NC 28306 www.jbhs.ccs.k12.nc.us 910-429-2800 910-429-2810 (Fax)	Terry Sanford High 2301 Fort Bragg Road Fayetteville, NC 28303 www.tshs.ccs.k12.nc.us 910-484-1151 910-484-7203 (Fax)
Douglas Byrd High 1624 Ireland Drive Fayetteville, NC 28304 www.dbhs.ccs.k12.nc.us 910-484-8121 910-323-4127 (Fax)	Seventy-First High 6764 Raeford Road Fayetteville, NC 28304 www.sfhs.ccs.k12.nc.us 910-867-3116 910-867-6381 (Fax)
Cape Fear High 4762 Clinton Road Fayetteville, NC 28312 www.cfhs.ccs.k12.nc.us 910-483-0191 910-483-1679 (Fax)	E. E. Smith High 1800 Seabrook Road Fayetteville, NC 28301 www.eeshs.ccs.k12.nc.us 910-483-0153 910-483-7696 (Fax) 910-323-4072 (Athletics)
Gray's Creek High 5301 Celebration Drive Hope Mills, NC 28348 www.gchs.ccs.k12.nc.us 910-424-8589 910-424-7411 (Fax) 910-424-8665 (Athletics)	South View High 4184 Elk Road Hope Mills, NC 28348 www.svhs.ccs.k12.nc.us 910-425-8181 910-425-2962 (Fax)
Pine Forest High 525 Andrews Road Fayetteville, NC 28311 www.pfhs.ccs.k12.nc.us 910-488-2384 910-488-0790 (Fax)	Westover High 277 Bonanza Drive 28303 www.wohs.ccs.k12.nc.us 910-864-0190 910-864-5924 (Fax)