



## **Fennville Athletics Handbook**

*Our mission for Fennville Athletics is to provide a comprehensive athletic program that emphasizes a positive experience while developing our Athletes to succeed in school, sports, and future life endeavors.*

## **Philosophy**

*Fennville Athletics believes individual students will benefit through competitive inter-school and recreational sports activities.*

*Participation in sports has proven to build self-esteem, self-discipline, promote teamwork, develop the body as well as the mind, and is an integral part of the maturation process.*

*The purpose of athletics is both educational and recreational. The athletic program should encourage participation by as many boys and girls as possible and should be carried on with the best interest of the participants as the first consideration. While Fennville Athletics takes great pride in winning, it does not condone "winning at any cost." It discourages any and all pressures which might tend to neglect good sportsmanship and good mental health. At all times the athletic program must be conducted in such a way as to justify it as an educational activity.*

*It is recognized that a well-organized and well conducted athletic program is a valuable educational benefit and a potent factor in the morale of a school student body and an important phase of good community/school relations.*

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**School Colors:** Black/Orange

**School Mascot:** Blackhawk

**Final Forms:** <https://fennville-mi.finalforms.com/>

**Fennville Athletics:** <https://fennvilleathletics.org/>

*Southwestern Athletic Conference*  
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Allegan	Hackett Catholic Prep
Black River	Kalamazoo Christian
Bridgeman	Lawton
Coloma	Martin
Constantine	Parchment
Delton-Kellogg	Saugatuck
Fennville	Schoolcraft
Galesburg-Augusta	South Haven
Gobles	Watervliet

Fennville High School, a member of the Southwestern Athletic Conference, offers the following sports per season:

**FALL**

Football, Girls Volleyball, Boys Soccer, Coed Cross-Country, Sideline Cheer

**WINTER**

Boys/Girls Basketball, Coed Wrestling, Competitive Cheer

**SPRING**

Softball, Baseball, Girls Soccer, Coed Track & Field

**VARSITY AWARDS**

Criteria used for earning Varsity Letters:

1. Amount of participation: Must participate in at least 75% of competitions
  - a. If an athlete is ineligible for 25% of the season, he/she will not be eligible for a varsity letter or the next level of award (pins, etc.)
2. Involves citizenship, attendance, conduct, etc.
3. Finish the season (unless injured)
4. Approval by the Athletic Director

# Fennville Athletics Handbook

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## **FOREWORD**

This material is presented to you because your son or daughter has indicated a desire to participate in interscholastic athletics and you have expressed your willingness to permit him/her to compete.

When your son/daughter enlisted in one of our sports programs, he/she committed our staff to certain responsibilities and obligations which are:

1. to provide adequate equipment and facilities
2. to provide well trained coaches
3. to provide equalized contests with skilled officials

Likewise, we feel that you have committed yourselves to certain responsibilities and obligations. We would like to take this opportunity to acquaint you with specific policies that are necessary for a well-organized program of athletics.

It is the role of the department of athletics to make rules that govern the spirit of competition for the school. These rules need a broad basis of community support, which is achieved only through communication to the parent. It is our hope to accomplish this objective through this athletic publication for students and parents.

## **FINAL FORMS**

Final Forms is the database that Fennville Athletics uses to capture digital signatures, physical/medical updates, and communication. As an athletic department, Final Forms is used to generate rosters, add students to sports, send emails for communication between coaches, parents, student athletes and administrators. It is also used to track medical status and eligibility for the students. All signatures and physicals must be completed prior to the start of any sports season to be eligible to practice.

## **PARENT/SPECTATOR EXPECTATIONS**

1. Support the Team in a positive manner
2. Show proper SPORTSMANSHIP.
3. Let the players play, the coaches coach, and the officials officiate without distraction.
4. We strongly recommend comments on social media shall remain positive toward the school, team, and team members.

5. Adhere to the “24 hour rule” regarding issues. It is the expressed policy of Fennville Public Schools that coaches are not to be confronted in a negative manner by parents or players before, during, or after a contest or practice.
6. Follow the “Chain of Command” and “Policy Guidelines.”- pg 20 of the FPS handbook.
7. Negative behaviors that detract from the positive experience that athletics can provide is not acceptable.
8. Being under the influence of, use, possession, or sale of alcohol, controlled substances, inhalants, substances purported to be illegal, drugs or drug paraphernalia, is strictly prohibited while in attendance at all school and athletic events.
9. Parent’s/Spectators are not allowed on the playing surface at any time unless called down by Fennville Staff.
10. Parent’s/Spectators should not call 911 unless instructed to. There are staff employees who are designated to do this.

We sincerely hope that it will never come to this, but if these expectations aren’t adhered to, you may be asked to leave the school premises. If repeatedly breaking the rules, the penalty may be restriction from further attendance at school athletic events.

### **TEN BASIC BELIEFS OF MICHIGAN INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETICS**

1. Interscholastic athletics were begun outside the school day and curriculum and remain there as voluntary, extracurricular programs in which qualifying students earn the privilege of participation.
2. Interscholastic athletics are not courses offered by schools but are tools used by schools to reach and motivate students and to rally support within the community for the school's academic and activity programs.
3. In order to justify school sponsorship, interscholastic athletics must be compatible with the academic mission of schools, giving priority deference to the academic schedule and requiring proper decorum at athletic events.
4. Interscholastic athletics are secondary to the academic program of schools and are partners with the schools’ non-athletic activities in providing students opportunities to develop loyalty and school spirit, to practice teamwork, hard work, discipline, sacrifice, leadership and sportsmanship and to gain lifetime appreciation of the arts, sports and healthy lifestyle.
5. There is equal potential to achieve these objectives in every sport and on the sub-varsity as well as the varsity level.
6. A proper philosophy of interscholastic athletics emphasizes participation by many, not for few, and academic scholarship in school, not athletic scholarships to college.
7. To promote competitive equity and a program that is educational in both its means and its ends, the policies and procedures of interscholastic athletics must be

determined by school representatives, not by courts, legislators or commercial interests.

8. Schools, through their elected boards of education and their appointed administrators, are solely responsible, legally and practically, for governing and conducting interscholastic athletics at the local and league levels.
9. Any statewide organization, which schools join to assist their administration of interscholastic athletics, must be independent of outside interests and guided exclusively by the direct input of its member schools.
10. Interstate competition in interscholastic athletics is unnecessary in most situations; regional and national events are harmful to the purposes of interscholastic athletics in Michigan.

## **STUDENT ATHLETE**

Being a member of a Fennville Public Schools athletic team is the fulfillment of an early ambition for many students. The attainment of this goal carries with it certain traditions and responsibilities that must be maintained. A great athletic tradition is not built overnight; it takes the hard work of many people over many years. As a member of an interscholastic team of Fennville Public Schools, you have inherited a wonderful tradition, a tradition you are challenged to uphold. Our tradition has been to win with honor. We desire to win, but only with honor to our athletes, our schools and our community. Such a tradition is worthy of the best efforts of all concerned. Over many years our teams have achieved multiple league and tournament championships. Many individuals have set records and won All-State and All-Conference honors.

It will take hard work and commitment to contribute to such a great athletic tradition. When you wear the colors of our school, we assume that you not only understand our traditions, but also are willing to assume the responsibilities that go with them. However, the contributions you make should be a satisfying accomplishment to you and your family.

1. *RESPONSIBILITIES TO YOURSELF:* The most important of these responsibilities is to broaden yourself and develop strength of character. You owe it to yourself to get the most out of your school experiences as a student athlete. Your academic studies and participation in extracurricular activities prepare you for your life as an adult.
2. *RESPONSIBILITIES TO YOUR SCHOOL/COMMUNITY:* As a student athlete you can contribute greatly to school spirit and community pride. Fennville cannot maintain its position as having an outstanding school unless you do your best in whatever activity you wish to engage in. You assume a leadership role when you are on an athletic squad. The student body, our community, and other communities judge our school by your conduct and attitudes, both on and off the field. Make Fennville



Public Schools proud of you, and your community proud of your school, by your faithful exemplification of these ideals.

3. *RESPONSIBILITIES TO OTHERS*: As a student athlete you also have a responsibility to your family. Carry yourself with pride and integrity, treat others with respect both on and off the playing surface. Exemplify what it means to be a “student athlete” for the younger students in our school that will look up to you.

## **OBJECTIVES**

The student athlete shall learn:

1. To work with others - In a democratic society a person must develop self- discipline, respect for authority, and the spirit of hard work and sacrifice. The team and its objectives must be placed higher than personal desires.
2. To be successful - Our society is very competitive. We do not always win, but we succeed when we continually strive to do so. You can learn to accept defeat only by striving to win with earnest dedication. Develop a desire to excel.
3. To develop sportsmanship - To accept any defeat like a true sportsman, knowing we have done our best, we must learn to treat others as we would have others treat us. We need to develop desirable social traits, including emotional control, honesty, leadership, integrity, cooperation and dependability.
4. To improve - Continual improvement is essential to good citizenship. As a student athlete, you must establish a goal and you must constantly try to reach that goal. Try to better yourself in skills involved and those characteristics set forth as being desirable.
5. To enjoy athletics - It is necessary for athletes to enjoy participation, to acknowledge all of the personal rewards to be derived from athletics, and to give sufficiently of themselves in order to preserve and improve the program.
6. To develop desirable personal habits - To be an active, contributing citizen, it is important to obtain a high degree of physical fitness through exercise and good health habits, and to develop the desire to maintain this level of physical fitness after formal competition has been completed.

## **MICHIGAN HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION RULES**

To be eligible for interscholastic athletics - a student must meet the following state Regulations:

1. *Enrollment*: Students must be enrolled in school not later than the fourth Friday after Labor Day or the fourth Friday of February.

2. A student must be enrolled in and receiving active credit in at least 66% of full credit load for a full-time student in the school for which he/she participates.
3. *Age:* A student who competes in any interscholastic high school athletic contest must be under nineteen (19) years of age, except that a student whose nineteenth (19th) birthday occurs on or after September 1 of the current school year is eligible for the balance of that school year. Seventh (7th) grade students must be under fourteen (14) years of age. Eighth (8th) grade students must be under fifteen (15) years of age. Those students would be limited to four years of high school eligibility. Applications for these options must be made and approved on MHSAA "Eligibility Advancement Applications."
4. *Physical Examinations:* No student shall be eligible to represent the school for which there is not on file in the office of the Superintendent, Principal, or Athletic Director of that school, a record for the current school year certifying that the student has passed a physical examination signed by a M.D., D.O., physician assistant, or nurse practitioner. The physical examination must have been completed after April 15, of the current year to be good for the entire following school year.
5. *Seasons of Competition:* A student, once enrolled in grade nine, shall be allowed to compete in only four first and four second semesters. Students enrolled in grades 7 or 8 are not limited in the number of semesters of competition.
6. *Semesters of Enrollment:* A student shall not compete in athletics who has been enrolled in grades 9 to 12, inclusive, for more than 8 semesters. The 10th, 11th and 12th semesters must be consecutive. Students in grades 7 or 8 are not limited in the number of semesters in which they may be eligible for interscholastic athletics.
7. *Previous Semester Record:* No student shall compete in any athletic contest who does not have his or her credit in the official records of the school to be represented, at least 66 percent of full credit load potential for a full-time student for the last semester/trimester during which he or she shall have been enrolled in grades 9 to 12, inclusive. An "I" or incomplete from the previous semester/trimester is considered to be a fail until made up and changed on the student's official transcript. No student shall compete in any junior high/middle school interscholastic scrimmage or contest during the current semester/trimester who does not have in the official records of the school represented for the last semester/trimester credit in at least 50 percent of the total period of work carried. This previous semester/trimester academic check does not apply to a 6th-grade student or a first-time 7th-grade

student. However, a student who repeats grade 7 or 8 is subject to previous semester/trimester academic requirements.

8. *Awards*: A student may accept, for participation in athletics, a symbolic or merchandise award which does not have a value or cost in excess of \$40. Awards for athletic participation in the form of cash, merchandise certificates, or any other type of negotiable documents are never allowed.

## **REQUIREMENTS for PARTICIPATION**

1. *Physical examination*-A yearly physical examination is required. The physical form must be completed according to state rules and regulations and submitted to the athletic trainer to be reviewed and entered into Final Forms. The physical covers all sports for the entire school year provided the examination occurred prior to the first practice. The form will be kept on file in the Athletic Department.
2. *Emergency medical authorization*-Each athlete's parent/guardian shall complete an Emergency Medical Authorization Form giving permission for treatment by a physician or hospital when parents/guardians are not available. This formset will also be filled out by the parent on your student's Final Forms account prior to start of practices.
3. *Parental acknowledgement of athletic policies*-Upon entering high school or at the time a student tries out for an athletic team, he / she will be presented with this handbook containing all the necessary forms and information for participating in athletics. Each parent or guardian shall read all of the enclosed material and certify that they understand the athletic eligibility rules and policies of the school district. This also will be a signature that is required on Final Forms by the parent prior to students participating in school athletics.
4. *Insurance*-The school district does not carry insurance to cover student athletic injuries. Optional insurance is available for purchase by the parent. Parents will need to sign the acknowledgment form stating they have purchased school insurance or possess a family insurance plan.
5. *Scholastic eligibility*-In order to participate on a Fennville athletic team, each student athlete must have satisfied all the scholastic eligibility requirements prior to participation.

6. *Risk of participation*-All athletes and parents must realize the risk of serious injury, which may be a result of athletic participation. Fennville School District will use the following safeguards to make every effort to eliminate injury:
  - a. Conduct a mandatory parent/athlete meeting prior to the start of the season to fully explain the athletic policies and to advise, caution and warn parents/athletes of the potential for injury. In regards to concussion awareness and prevention, a parent/guardian of an athlete is required to attend the parent/athlete meeting with their son/daughter prior to the start of the season so both parent and athlete will be better able to identify signs of a possible concussion throughout the season, learn how to prevent them, and how to respond. No student is to participate in any extracurricular athletic activity until both the student and parent have reviewed the Concussion Awareness Educational Acknowledgement Form and signed it. If the student is under 18 years of age, a legal/guardian must sign the form. It is the parent's responsibility to inform the head coach or the Athletic Director at any time of observable signs of a possible concussion sustained by their son/daughter during or outside the extracurricular athletic activity.
  
7. *Concussion awareness Educational Material Acknowledgement* -Under Michigan law, all students participating in a school sponsored sport must have the Concussion Awareness Educational Acknowledgement Form signed by both the student and parent/guardian. If the student is under 18 years of age, a legal/guardian must sign the form.
  - a. Parents/guardians are encouraged to review the acknowledgement form with their child to understand the signs and symptoms of a concussion.

## **ATHLETIC TRAINING\*\***

### Job Description

Certified by the Board of Certification (BOC) and licensed through the Michigan State Board of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs (LARA), a certified athletic trainer (ATC) is a member of the allied health community whose role it is to care for and help prevent athletic and fitness related injuries. At Fennville, there is currently one certified athletic trainer on staff. The priority of the athletic trainer is to provide on-site care for all Fennville School student athletes (students participating in varsity, junior varsity, freshmen, and middle school level sports) and their respective sport related activities, including football, soccer, cross country, wrestling, basketball, outdoor track & field, baseball, softball, sideline cheer, and competitive cheer.

The ATC shall be responsible for first aid and triage, evaluation of athletic or fitness related injuries, preventative taping and/or bracing, treatment and reconditioning of injuries, and appropriate referrals to physicians.

The ATC will also have responsibilities that include:

1. Being available for all home Fennville Athletic Department sanctioned events
2. Attending away contests as deemed necessary
3. Administering first-aid to injured students in any venue or setting, or in the athletic training room.
4. Record all injuries and treatments and maintain a record of these.
5. In the absence of a physician, be responsible for the determination of when an athlete should return to athletic participation.
6. Apply protective or injury preventative devices, such as adhesive strapping, bandaging, padding or braces.
7. Supply medical kits for each team.
8. Supervise and maintain the athletic training room.
9. Prepare an annual budget for medical supplies and equipment.
10. Maintain a standing and running inventory of supplies and equipment.
11. Counsel and advise athletes and coaches on matters pertaining to: conditioning, training, playing status, safety, diet and reconditioning of injured athletes.

### Physicals

Per MHSAA policy, all students are required to have a completed physical examination and medical history prior to participation in Fennville School Athletics each year. Physicals for the following school year must be performed after April 15. This may include such tests as deemed necessary by the examining, consulting, or personal physician. This examination will be kept on file at the Fennville Athletic Training Room or in the student-athlete's permanent electronic medical record in the Final Forms program.

The athletic trainer will inform each seasonal head coach when his/her athletes have been cleared to participate in athletic practices or games.

No student-athlete will be treated in the athletic training room or be given medical clearance without a complete physical examination performed by a physician and updated medical history questionnaire on file.

### Injury Reporting and Documentation

All injuries are to be reported to the ATC's at the time of occurrence or as soon as possible afterwards. Emergencies/injuries that take place away from Fennville's athletic fields or at an away competition are the only exceptions. In these instances, tell the ATC as soon as

possible afterwards. If the injury occurs at the middle school level, the site coordinator will also be informed by coaches of injuries that occur on site.

All injuries and treatments will be documented by the ATC in FinalForms. These reports are visible to the coaches and parents of the athlete. Progress notes will be sent when the athlete's participation status changes (i.e. moving from not cleared to limited participation, or limited to cleared, etc). Since the ATC is doing the documentation, it is important that athletes and coaches report any incidents or injuries that occur.

If EMS is activated for an athletic practice or contest, the coaches on site for the incident will be required to participate in a debrief of the incident and potentially write their own summary of the incident, which will be kept with the ATC's report

All medical notes from outside physicians must be handed in to the athletic trainer or the Nurse immediately on an athlete's return to campus. They should not participate in any way until the medical note is in the hands of the ATC. This applies even more importantly when an athlete returns with a note clearing them to participate.

#### Concussion Protocol and Return to Play

The MHSAA states that any athletic trainer, coach, or official may remove an athlete from competition for suspected concussion to be evaluated by the athletic trainer. The athletic trainer will then perform a full concussion evaluation to determine whether or not the athlete has a concussion. The athletic trainer is given the authority by the State of Michigan to diagnose concussions. If the athlete is found to not have a concussion, they can return to play. If an athlete is diagnosed with a concussion, the following protocol will be followed:

1. The athlete will be removed from participation in any competition or practices. Once the athlete is diagnosed with a concussion, they are not allowed to return to any competition until cleared by a licensed physician (MD, DO, PA, NP)
2. The athlete will be given a symptom tracker to keep record of all of their symptoms. This tracker will be filled out daily and the athlete must check in daily with the ATC.
3. Once the athlete is completely asymptomatic, they may start the 4 day Return to Play (RTP) protocol set out by the MHSAA that is monitored by the athletic trainer.
  - A. Day 1- Light aerobic activity and/or body weight exercises
  - B. Day 2- Moderate aerobic activity and or/body weight exercises with an emphasis on changing directions, heights, jumping, etc
  - C. Day 3- Non-contact practice. The athlete is permitted to participate in any practice drills that are non-contact or conditioning focused
  - D. Day 4- Full contact practice. The athlete is permitted to participate fully in practice

The athlete is allowed to participate in Days 1-3 of the RTP protocol under an ATC's supervision and no clearance from a doctor. According to the MHSAA, the athlete is not allowed to move to Day 4 until they are seen and cleared by a physician. This clearance must be in writing (the MHSAA has a concussion clearance form) and given to the ATC before they can participate in a full practice. Competitions do NOT count as a full contact practice.

The athletic trainer will notify the parents and inform them of the concussion and the protocol for returning to play. Recommendations for recovery will also be given to them. Parents will be informed of the signs & symptoms associated with a concussion and will be advised to monitor their child at home. If the symptoms intensify while the child is in their custody, parents are advised to immediately transport their child for medical evaluation (to the hospital or call EMS.) If the symptoms intensify while the child is being observed by the athletic trainer, they will immediately be transported for medical evaluation (to the hospital or call EMS.) Parents/Guardians will be notified of their injury and ongoing plan of care.

### Concussion Baseline Testing

Fennville Schools use the Concussion Vital Signs program for all baseline testing. This baseline testing is used in the RTP protocol to identify when the athlete is returned to their own baseline neurological function. This software is available online at [concussionvitalsigns.com](http://concussionvitalsigns.com). Baseline testing is valid for two years. All incoming freshmen and juniors will take the baseline test. If a student is diagnosed with a concussion, the athlete will take his/her first post injury CVS test within 48 hours after injury. The athlete will then take another post injury test during the RTP process to confirm they have returned to baseline.

### Athletic Training Coverage Hierarchy

There is only one athletic trainer on site, and multiple athletic teams. In the instance that there are multiple home events happening at the same time, the athletic trainer will provide coverage on the sideline of one of the games according to the below rules. Any team that is practicing or competing on site may call the ATC at any time for any injuries that occur, and the ATC will leave the contest they are set up at to evaluate the injury. They will then return to the game they are set up at.

1. High School before Middle School
2. Varsity sports over other level
3. Full contact sports over low to no contact sports
4. Post season play over in season play

*\*\*Further explanation of any of the policies above and more policies and procedures relating to athletic training may be found in the Athletic Training Policy Handbook*

## **ATHLETIC CODES OF CONDUCT**

- A. A firm and fair policy of enforcement is necessary to uphold the regulations and standards of the athletic department. The community, school administrators and coaching staff feel strongly that high standards of conduct and citizenship are essential in maintaining a sound athletic program of athletes. The welfare of the student is our major consideration and transcends any other consideration.
  
- B. All athletes shall abide by a code of ethics, which will earn them the honor and respect that participation and competition in the interscholastic program affords. Any conduct that results in dishonor to the athlete, the team or the school will not be tolerated. Acts of unacceptable conduct, such as, but not limited to theft, vandalism, disrespect, immorality or violations of law, tarnish the reputation of everyone associated with the athletic program and will not be tolerated.
  
- C. Interscholastic athletic department training rules are available in the office of the Director of Athletics. Interscholastic athletic department training rules apply to interscholastic sports for boys, interscholastic sports for girls, interscholastic cheerleaders, and all interscholastic personnel including managers, trainers, and statisticians. No boy or girl will be allowed to participate in any athletic contest, until the original copy of the athletic code form is signed and returned to the Director of Athletics. Signature of the student and one, or both, of the parents must be included.

## **ELIGIBILITY**

To be eligible to participate in interscholastic athletics at Fennville Public Schools, all students will be required to meet the school standards as set forth by the Board of Education. The athlete must not fail more than one class in a one-week period. Failure of two (2) or more classes with a grade of F or below will result in a one-week suspension for the following week. A week is considered from Monday after the eligibility report is posted on Friday through to the following Sunday.

One (1) ACATEC Consortium class is equal to three (3) scheduled classes. Therefore if



a student-athlete fails with a grade of F or below that student athlete will be suspended from athletics for the following week.

Any grade lower than a **70%**, the student athlete will be required to attend academic tutoring instead of practice, immediately after school for two days a week for 1 hour. After the hour is complete the students are to report to practice to finish for the day. Days for tutoring will be determined at the start of each school year.

Students have access to their grades 24/7 via student PowerSchool. Parents have access to student grades 24/7 via parent PowerSchool. Grades are not a surprise for our student athletes.

The teachers have until 2pm on Friday to input the grades into PowerSchool. Eligibility will be run after 2pm on Friday afternoon. Eligibility for the following week will be based on the Friday report.

A pre-eligibility report will also be run on Tuesdays after 2pm. This report will give students and coaches an opportunity to address any concerns prior to the final report being submitted on Friday.

If student athletes are communicating with their teachers regarding their grades each week, they will understand what needs to be done to keep their grades up by the specified cutoff date of Friday each week.

A student must pass 66% of their scheduled classes each term (a term is a semester) which are equal to credits (see course catalog in student handbook). The number of classes/credits each semester are 6; credits/classes are determined by the Educational Development Process Team. Failure to complete credits equal to this percentage, will result in an academic ineligibility period of 60 school days. This requirement does not apply to the first semester of the ninth grade.

(The MHSAA sets a minimum standard for academic eligibility which many schools adjust upward. The minimum is that a student must have passed at least 66% of a full-time student's course load (generally 4 or 5 or 6 classes / 5 of 7 classes) in the previous semester and be passing the same number in the current semester.)

## **ENROLLMENT**

A student in Fennville Public Schools must be enrolled as a full time student in order to participate in athletics. A full time student is defined as one who is enrolled in a minimum

of 66% of full class load (4 out of 6). Student EDPs define a student's scheduled day/semester as it pertains to full time status.

## **ATTENDANCE**

In order to practice or participate in a contest, the athlete must be in attendance at regularly scheduled classes of that day either on site. A student is considered absent unless they meet the criteria of an excused absence.

Absences counted as excused absences, thus not counting negatively against a student's attendance record, include:

1. School-related absences.
2. Absences due to a death in the immediate family. (Proper documentation must be presented to office personnel.)
3. Medical absences or personal illness documented with proper note or parent phone call the day of the absence.
4. Observance of Religious Holidays.
5. Others as approved by office personnel.

## **EQUIPMENT**

All athletes are responsible for the proper care and security of equipment issued to them. School-furnished equipment is to be worn only for contests, practice, and at the coach's discretion. All equipment not returned in good condition at the end of the season will be subject to a financial penalty.

## **GROOMING AND DRESS POLICY**

A member of a Fennville athletic team is expected to be well-groomed. Appearance, expression and actions always influence people's opinions of athletes, teams and the school. Once you have volunteered to be a member of a squad, you have made a choice to uphold certain standards expected of athletes in this community. The following grooming and dress rules will be adhered to by team members:

1. Student athletes should be properly groomed and practice good personal hygiene.
2. An athlete shall dress presentably at all times, on trips, or at assemblies or banquets.
3. Student athletes shall adhere to the school dress code. (See page 11-12 of student handbook)
4. Only uniforms issued by the department of athletics will be permitted to be worn for contests.
5. On days of competitions, athletes are to dress respectably. Details regarding what is worn by the athletes on a game day will be left up to the discretion of the head coach.

## **VACATIONS POLICY**

Vacations by athletic team members during a sports season are strongly discouraged. In the event of an absence due to an unavoidable event, an athlete must:

1. Be accompanied by his/her parents while on vacation. Exception to policy would be the senior trip.
2. Contact the head coach and Athletic Director at least two weeks prior to vacation.
3. Be willing to assume the consequences related to their status on that squad as a starter, 2nd string, 3rd string etc.

## **TEAM SELECTION**

In accordance with our philosophy of athletics and our desire to see as many students as possible participate in the athletic program while at Fennville, we encourage coaches to keep as many students as they can without unbalancing the integrity of their sport. Time, space, facilities, equipment, skill set, and other factors will place limitations on the most effective team size for any particular sport.

*Cutting policies*-Choosing the members of the athletic teams is the sole responsibility of the coaches. Prior to trying out, the coach shall provide the following information to all candidates for the team.

1. Extent of try-out period
2. Criteria used to select the team
3. Practice commitment if they make the team
4. Game commitments

When a team cut becomes a necessity, the process will include three important elements. Each candidate shall have:

1. Competed in the tryout sessions.
2. Performed in at least one intra-team scrimmage when applicable.
3. Been personally informed of the cut by the coach, including the reason for the action. Coaches will discuss alternative possibilities for participation in the sport.
4. Any student joining late will not be able to participate in competitions 14 days from the date they joined the team.
5. Student athletes may not join a sport after that team has competed in its first official contest or the third day of the school year, whichever is later.
  - a. Official contests are considered scrimmages or games.

## **OUT OF LEVEL PLAY**

Out of level play is when a student athlete is participating in a level that is not set for their age or grade. Students in grades 9-11, when participating in sports, can move either up or down in the level of play.

Coaches will discuss this action first with the Athletic Director. In turn, a meeting will be set with parents/guardians to discuss the out of level play. The "Out of Level Play" form must be filled out by the parents and signed before the student can participate in the level. This form will be available to the parents/guardians during the meeting.

## **DUAL SPORTS POLICY**

This policy applies to high school students only. Any High School student who wishes to participate in two (2) sports simultaneously must see the Athletic Director. Students will be required to fill out the Dual Sports Contract and will comply with the rules set forth in the contract.

No middle school student may participate in more than one sport per sport season. Middle School students may only participate for the **first week** of the beginning of the season in two sports. After that time, they must choose what sport they will participate in for the season.

## **WITHDRAWAL, DROPPING, TRANSFERRING FROM A SPORT**

Quitting is an intolerable habit to acquire. A student will be considered a participant after completing five (5) scheduled practices. On occasion, however, an athlete may find it necessary to withdraw, drop or transfer a sport for a good reason. If this is the case, the following procedure must be followed:

1. Within 5 calendar days from the initial no-show, an athlete must present a letter to the Athletic Director and meet with the AD regarding withdrawal from the sport, including the reason for withdrawing from that sport.
2. An Athletic Committee will determine if the justification of the withdrawal is a valid reason. This will be communicated to the student within 48 hours after presenting the letter.
3. Check in all equipment and uniform issued to you.

If this procedure is not followed, or if the reason of withdrawal is not considered valid, the athlete will not be eligible to participate in competition (i.e. scrimmages, games, matches, meets, jamborees, etc.) for the remainder of that season and the next sport they participate in. The seasons are Fall, Winter, and Spring.

## **CHAIN OF COMMAND**

It is important to follow the chain of command to ensure efficiency in our systems. The chain of command is as follows:

Student's Coach⇒ Varsity Coach⇒ Athletic Director⇒ School Principal⇒ Superintendent

All issues will be dealt with as quickly as possible and in accordance with the due process section of the handbook.

## **TRAVEL/TRANSPORTATION OF ATHLETES**

It is preferable that all athletes travel to and from all out-of-town practices and/or contests in transportation provided by the athletic department unless previous arrangements are made by the parents for exceptional situations.

In order to deviate from this procedure, the parent must communicate with the coach and make the decision as to how the student will get to and/or from the event. If an athlete misses the bus to the game, the parent, or a designated adult, may transport the athlete to the game providing a note/text is written by the parent and presented to the coach stating the situation and indicating the athlete will ride the bus home.

If early release from class is necessary it is the responsibility of the athlete to see his/her teacher the day before the classes he/she will miss because of an athletic contest; all work shall be made up at the convenience of the teacher. This includes ACATEC classes.

In order for student athletes who ride a bus to the game, not to ride on the bus home, parents must sign out their student with the coach.

All regular school bus rules will be followed (see student handbook - bus rules). Athletes will remain with their squad and under the supervision of the coach when attending away contests and the coach is responsible for enforcing the bus rules.

Coaches must ride all team buses or designate another school employee in the event he/she has made prior arrangements or the bus does not leave. On long trips, buses will not stop to eat after games unless it has been determined ahead of time.

## **WEATHER CANCELLATION POLICY**

On inclement weather days, the athletic director along with school administration, will have the discretion to suspend, cancel, or decide to play any home or away athletic event or practice. This includes days where school is canceled due to inclement weather or unpredictable/unforeseen events. On days of school cancellation, the decision to play or

practice for HS athletics must be made and announced by no later than 2PM. All MS athletics contests/practices are automatically canceled.

Fennville parents/guardians reserve the right to not have their child attend a home or away athletic event or practice without the student-athlete being punished by the coach for missing due to weather but they must contact and have a conversation with the coach. (For Inclement Weather during contest see Athletic Training Section)

## **RULES AND REGULATIONS**

An athlete is considered an athlete from the beginning of their 6th grade year through their High School graduation. Rules and regulations are enforced year-round.

Rules and regulations are the same for middle school student athletes as those for high school.

Violations will be recorded and kept on file as long as that athlete is in school. When students make the change from middle school to high school, their record starts fresh without previous violations.

## **INDIVIDUAL COACH RULES**

Coaches may establish additional rules and regulations with the approval of the Athletic Director and principal for their respective sports. These rules, as pertaining to a particular sport, must be given by the coach in writing to all team members and explained fully at the start of the season.

Penalties for violations of team rules will also be in writing and shall be administered by the coach. Copies of all additional team rules by coaches are on file in the athletic office.

## **GENERAL RULES/REGULATIONS**

All interscholastic athletic teams are required to have parents meetings for the following purposes:

1. Introduction of coaching staff.
2. Observation of a practice session.
3. Explanation of training rules by the Athletic Director or coach
4. Copies of the Fennville student athletic handbook will be available on Final Forms and the Fennville Athletic Website.
5. The athletic department at Fennville Public Schools would like to have the parents of our athletes not only know the regulations governing their son or daughter's participation, but also support the regulations. To make this phase of education more meaningful, each parent will be asked to sign the athletic code form, along with that of the son or daughter, to indicate an understanding and willingness of the student athlete to abide by the rules and regulations of the school athletic code.

*Misconduct* - disciplinary action can result in probation, suspension from the next contest or more than one contest, and / or other disciplinary action reasonably fitting the seriousness of the violation. Consequences for athletic misconduct can also result in school consequences.

1. The student athlete's conduct, in and out of school, shall be such as to bring no discredit to the athlete, his/her parents/guardians, and the school or the team.
2. All athletes are expected to travel to and from out-of-town contests with the team whenever possible or if the coach requires it.

### **LOCKER ROOM**

1. Rough-housing and throwing towels or other objects are not allowed in the locker room.
2. Hazing of other players is not allowed.
3. All showers must be turned off. The last person to leave the shower room is expected to check all showers.
4. No one except coaches and assigned players are allowed in the locker room.
5. No glass containers are permitted in locker rooms.

### **DISCIPLINARY REPORTING PROCEDURE FOR VIOLATION OF TRAINING RULES**

#### **Disciplinary Procedure**

In the event that a member of an athletic team of this school system is in violation of any of the policies and rules governing athletics or school, he/she will be subject to action described. Major offense violations will be reported as directed in the Reporting Procedure below. Any minor violations will be enforced by each head coach with the approval of the Athletic Director.

### **REPORTING PROCEDURE**

1. An adult employee of Fennville Public Schools will notify the Principal and/or Athletic Director if they observe a violation. The person observing the violation in question must describe in writing the date, time, and location of the incident. This information will be given to the Principal and/or Athletic Director who will then notify the student involved and said student's parent or guardian either in person, email, or by telephone.
  - a. If reasonable effort was used to contact said student's parent or guardian and was unsuccessful through aforementioned methods, communication by letter will then occur.
2. If the Principal or Athletic Director receives verification by a law enforcement document, or a violation of a major offense is verified by self-admittance, the student will be notified of the disciplinary procedure by the Principal or Athletic

Director and said student's parents or guardian will be notified in person or by telephone.

- a. If reasonable effort was used to contact the parent or guardian in person or by telephone and was unsuccessful, communication by letter will then occur.

### **DISCIPLINE RELATED TO SPECIFIC MISBEHAVIORS/INFRACTIONS**

The items listed below are the most common major violations of school discipline. This list is not intended, nor is it possible for any list to be all inclusive. Additional violations may result in disciplinary action and violations of a more serious nature will result in more severe action. Consequences will be administered as deemed appropriate to the specific offense. Repeated violations will also result in more severe disciplinary actions. Due process ensures that disciplinary action is imposed only after review of the facts and/or special circumstances of the situation.

In an attempt to provide unity between school and athletics, we have tried to match up minor and major violations, although in some instances, this is not applicable. Not every consequence in school applies to athletics, just as not every athletic violation requires a consequence from an academic standpoint. This does not negate the fact that athletes are students first. It just means consequences can occur for one or the other (athletics/academics) versus both.

### **MAJOR OFFENSES: CLASS 3**

Class three offenses include disruption to the proper functioning of school activities.

These infractions include but are not limited to:

- Aiding and abetting a violation of school rules
- Being in an unauthorized or restricted area
- Bullying-Refer to Board Policy 5517.01 for further information
- Cell Phone/Technology Misuse
- Cheating/Plagiarism
- Chronic tardiness (6 or more tardies)
- Classroom/hallway disruption or in possession of a disruptive article
- Driving in restricted areas
- Failure to serve assigned detention or intervention
- Forgery

1st offense: Up to two (2) days of in-school suspension

2nd offense: Up to three (3) days of in-school suspension

3rd offense: Up to three (3) days of out-of-school suspension

4th offense: Suspended up to ten (10) days, possible recommendation to the school board for expulsion.



In addition, While representing Fennville Public Schools, if an athlete acts in a manner that is disrespectful to themselves, opposing schools, other students, parents, coaches and/or officials (as witnessed by school officials), consequences will apply.

Some examples, but are not limited to:

- blatant disrespect toward authority figures
- Disrespect towards other student athletes
- profanity
- Taunting
- posting pictures on social media of inappropriate poses or anything that would violate training rules
- everything as described in the MHSAA under sportsmanship
  - Personal fouls for blatant misconduct during competition will be considered athlete misconduct and will be reviewed by the AD and administrative team.

First Offense: Sit out the rest of the game/match in which the offense took place plus up to the next full game/match scheduled, and take the MHSAA class on good sportsmanship.

Second Offense: Sit out the rest of the game in which the offense took place plus up to the next two games/matches, and complete 5 hours of community service.

Third Offense: Sit out the rest of the game/match in which the offense took place plus up to the next three games/matches, and complete 10 hours of community service.

Fourth Offense-- After a review by the administrative team and the athletic director, the student will be suspended from athletics for the remainder of the season and the next two seasons.

\*Community service must be completed to go back into competition.

## **MAJOR OFFENSES: CLASS TWO**

Class two offenses are serious infractions.

These include but are not limited to:

- Severe Bullying-Refer to Board Policy 5517.01 for further information
- Insubordination
- Theft or possession of stolen goods (Disciplinary action taken will also include restitution or replacement as the situation warrants.)
- Possession or use of tobacco products (including chewing tobacco)
- Possession or use of Electronic Nicotine Delivery Systems (ENDS) such as electronic cigarettes, vaping products such as vaping liquids
- Violation of closed campus policy (Skipping off campus)

1st offense: Up to three (3) days out-of-school suspension

2nd offense: Up to five (5) days out-of-school suspension  
Additional offense: To be treated as a Major Offense-Class 1

In addition to school suspension, student athletes will also have the following:

1st offense: The student will not be allowed to participate in up to 25 percent of the season's contests. If there is less than 25 percent of the current season left, the penalty will carry to the next season of student's eligibility. Example: Football to basketball, or baseball. Example 25 percent of a 20 game baseball season would be 5 games. If not already taken, an MHSAA class will be required in instances where it is applicable (ie: anything involving poor sportsmanship).

2nd offense: The student will not participate in up to 50 percent of the current sport season's contests. If there is not 50 percent of the season remaining at the time of the violation, the remainder will be assessed at the beginning of the following sport. Example: 50 percent of a 20 game season would be 10 games.

3rd offense: To be treated as a Major Offense: Class One.

### **MAJOR OFFENSES: CLASS ONE**

Class one offenses are the most serious. These offenses will result in an out-of-school suspension for up to ten (10) days and/or a recommendation for expulsion.

Disciplinary action regarding class one offenses includes the notification of the law enforcement as required by law and/or as appropriate. In addition, certain behaviors could lead to the district conducting a threat assessment to determine risk level before the student is allowed to return to campus. Action may also include placement on probation for a minimum of sixty days and loss of the privilege to be involved in or attend extracurricular activities during the probationary period.

### **State law requires expulsion for the use or possession of weapons.**

These infractions include but are not limited to:

- Assaults or threats made to students or staff including comments of a violent or threatening nature directed towards individuals or the school community
- Creation of depictions of violence or threats
- Being under the influence of, use, possession, or sale of alcohol, controlled substances, inhalants, substances purported to be illegal drugs or purported to have the effects of illegal drugs, or drug paraphernalia
- Extortion

- Fighting

Students will not be allowed to participate in sports at Fennville Public Schools for up to 180 days or one full school year. To be reinstated for sports after sitting out for a year or following an expulsion, the student and parents/guardians must go before the Fennville Board of Education and request to be reinstated. The Board will confer with the Superintendent and the Athletic Director and will have the final determination. Ultimately, Fennville Public Schools is an educational organization. We acknowledge that young people make mistakes. We also value honesty. It is our belief that if a student is honest and has done something that violates the athlete code of conduct and self reports, that student can restore justice and earn lost time to get back on the court/field. See note below for details.

\*Note: Students may reduce the consequences of a 1st & 2nd offense violation of these training rules by one of two means for self reporting:

1. A substance abuse violation may be reduced by attending a voluntary referral assessment program approved by the administration
2. or through voluntary self-disclosure to a coach, advisor, teacher, counselor, the Athletic Director, or an administrator.

Student disclosures made to any staff member listed above who is not an administrator shall be immediately communicated to an administrator by that staff member. Any intervening independent report, charge, or complaint with regard to the particular violation prior to the formal notification to the administrator, will cause the disclosure to be deemed non-voluntary, and the athlete or officer will not be permitted the reduced consequence.

1. 1 st Offense – Reduced by up to 15%, 10% w/ 10 approved community service hours.
2. 2 nd Offense- Reduced by up to 30%, 20% w/ 20 approved community service hours

### **DUE PROCESS STUDENTS-RIGHT TO AN APPEAL**

Violations of training, competition, and transportation rules should be reported to the Athletic Director or another administrator if the Athletic Director is not available. A written summary of the infraction shall be prepared.

The Athletic Director will research reported violations, determine guilt if any, and invoke appropriate discipline, all with dispatch. These aspects will be discussed with the student and reported to a parent or guardian in the most appropriate fashion according to circumstances that day.

A student will be given a hearing with the Athletic Director/Administrator, if requested by the student or parent/guardian, within 48 hours of the request to:

1. Contest the facts which may lead to disciplinary action, or
2. Contest the sanction imposed by the Athletic Director/Administrator due to alleged prejudice or unfairness. The administrator handling the appeal will render a decision within 24 hours of the hearing and notify all parties in writing.

Further appeals must be conducted in the following order using the same timelines as stated above:

1. Administrative team
2. Superintendent of Schools
3. Board of Education (at its next regular meeting unless the Superintendent calls a special meeting)

## **DEFINITION AND EXPLANATION OF TERMS**

**Assault** A physical attack on another person.

**Bullying** Any gesture or written, verbal, graphic, or physical act (including electronically transmitted acts- e.g., internet, telephone or cell phone, personal digital assistant, or wireless handheld device) that, without regard to its subject matter or motivating animus, is intended or that a reasonable person would know is likely to harm one (1) or more students either directly or indirectly.

**Closed Campus Policy** Because of our commitment to student safety, Fennville High School operates a "closed campus". This means that students are to remain in the school building or in designated outside areas after their arrival on school grounds until the end of the normal school day.

**Controlled Substance** Alcohol, intoxicants, drugs, look-alike drugs, nonalcoholic beer, steroids, inhalants, and the distribution/sale or misuse of drugs prescribed by a physician.

**Extortion** The use of threats in an attempt to take or borrow money from another student.

**Fighting** An act of physical violence between two or more students.

**Forgery** The fraudulent use of the name of another person, or falsifying times, dates, grades, addresses, signatures, or school data and information.

**Gross Disruption** The act of deliberate or willful conduct detrimental to the function and normal operation of school activities or programs.

**Harassment** Harassing behavior is disruptive to the educational process and infringes on the rights of students to a safe and orderly learning environment. Harassing behavior may be racial, cultural, verbal or physical.

**Hazing** Any act coercing another, including the victim, to perform any act of initiation into any class, group, or organization that causes or creates a risk of causing mental, emotional, or physical harm.

**Inappropriate Attire** Student dress or clothing determined to be indecent, disruptive, obscene, or not in accordance with the school dress code.

**Inappropriate Display of Affection** Students demonstrating affection between each other is personal and not meant for public display. This includes touching, petting, and any other contact that may be considered sexual in nature. Such behavior may result in disciplinary action.

**Inappropriate Language or Gestures** The use of offensive language or gestures in verbal, written, picture, or caricature form (including student attire).

**Insubordination** The failure to respond to, or carry out, a reasonable request from a staff member, or the act of verbal or physical opposition to a staff member. This also is intended to include students who are willfully dishonest with a staff member.

**Physical Altercation** – An act of minor physical contact toward another student, not rising to the level of a fight or assault.

**Sexual Harassment** Sexual harassment includes unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, making improper sexual comments, or verbal or physical contact of a sexual nature where:

- a. Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of a person's employment or educational development.
- b. Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment or educational decisions affecting such individuals.
- c. Such conduct has the express purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work or educational performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working or educational environment.

Any student who believes that he/she has been subjected to discriminatory and/or sexual harassment, insults or intimidation shall report the incident to the building principal or school counselor. Any student who makes discriminatory and/or sexual insults, intimidation or harassment shall be disciplined and counseled to refrain from such conduct.

**Skipping** – Student is not in their designated area during the school day

- a. **Off Campus** – Students are required to be in their designated area during the school day. Leaving the school building and/or school grounds without permission is considered skipping and a student will be marked unexcused, and the code of conduct policy will be followed.
- b. **In Building** - Students are required to be at their designated area during the school day. Leaving the designated area without permission is considered skipping and a student will be marked unexcused for the hour and code of conduct policy will be followed.

**Tardy** Arriving, less than 10 minutes, late to class without a signed pass from a teacher, office, or staff member.

**Theft** The act of acquiring the property of another by stealing, fraud, coercion, or knowingly possessing stolen goods.

**Threat** The expression of the intention to hurt another or damage property.

**Unauthorized Areas** The following areas are off limits to High School students during the school day without staff permission: elementary and middle school hallways and classrooms, outside entrances and exits, and all parking lots and other outdoor areas.

**Weapon** Firearm, dagger, stiletto, knife (including pocket knives), or any other object used for the purpose of inflicting injury.

**State law requires expulsion for the use or possession of weapons.** This includes any knife with a blade of over three inches in length and a pocket knife opened by a mechanical device.

The following definitions are provided for guidance only. If a student or other individual believes there has been bullying, hazing, harassment or other aggressive behavior, regardless of whether it fits a particular definition, s/he should report it immediately and allow the administration to determine the appropriate course of action.

**"Aggressive behavior"** is defined as inappropriate conduct that is repeated enough, or serious enough, to negatively impact a student's educational, physical, or emotional well-being. Such behavior includes, for example, bullying, hazing, stalking, intimidation, menacing, coercion, name-calling, taunting, making threats, and hitting/pushing/shoving.

**"At School"** is defined as in a classroom, elsewhere on school premises, on a school bus or other school-related vehicle, or at a school-sponsored activity or event whether or not it is held on school premises. It also includes conduct using a telecommunications access device or telecommunications service provider that occurs off school premises if either owned by or under the control of the District.

**"Bullying"** is defined as any gesture or written, verbal, graphic, or physical act (including electronically transmitted acts – i.e., internet, telephone or cell phone, personal digital assistant (PDA), or wireless handheld device) that, without regard to its subject matter or motivating animus, is intended or that a reasonable person would know is likely to harm one (1) or more students either directly or indirectly by doing any of the following:

1. Substantially interfering with educational opportunities, benefits, or programs of one (1) or more students.
2. Adversely affecting the ability of a student to participate in or benefit from the school district's educational programs or activities by placing the student in reasonable fear of physical harm or by causing substantial emotional stress.
3. Having an actual and substantial detrimental effect on a student's physical or mental health; and/or
4. Causing substantial disruption in, or substantial interference with, the orderly operation of the school.

Bullying can be physical, verbal, psychological, or a combination of all three. Some examples of bullying are:

- Physical-hitting, kicking, spitting, pushing, pulling; taking and/or damaging personal belongings or extorting money; Blocking or impeding student movement or unwelcome physical contact
- Verbal- Taunting, malicious teasing, insulting, name calling, making threats
- Psychological-spreading rumors, manipulating social relationships, coercion, or engaging in exclusion/shunning, extortion, or intimidation. This may occur in a number of different ways, including but not limited to notes, emails, social media postings, and graffiti.

**"Harassment"** includes, but is not limited to, any act which subjects an individual or group to unwanted, abusive behavior of a nonverbal, verbal, written or physical nature, often on the basis of age, race, religion, color, national origin, marital status or disability, but may also include sexual orientation, physical characteristics (e.g., height, weight, complexion), cultural background, socioeconomic status, or geographic location (e.g., from rival school, different state, rural area, city, etc.).

**"Hazing"** shall be defined for purposes of this policy as performing any act or coercing another, including the victim, to perform any act of initiation into any class, group, or organization that causes or creates a risk of causing mental, emotional, or physical harm. Permission, consent, or assumption of risk by an individual subjected to hazing shall not lessen the prohibitions contained in this policy.

**"Intimidation/Menacing"** includes, but is not limited to, any threat or act intended to: place a person in fear of physical injury or offensive physical contact; to substantially damage or interfere with a person's property; or to intentionally interfere with or block a person's movement without good reason.

**"Staff"** includes all school employees and Board members.

**"Third parties"** include, but are not limited to, coaches, school volunteers, parents, school visitors, service contractors, vendors, or others engaged in District business, and others not directly subject to school control at inter- district or intra-district athletic competitions or other school events.