

Student-Athlete Handbook



Introduction:

We want to thank all students and parents for their participation and support of OPRFHS' Athletic Program. It is the intent of this handbook to provide information regarding athletics to all student-athletes who participate in our program. We ask that both students and parents review this handbook carefully and keep it throughout your participation as a Huskie Athlete.

When you are a member of an athletic team, you are a representative of Oak Park & River Forest High School. You are expected to demonstrate appropriate behavior both on and off the field. We need quality people and athletes to have a quality athletic program. Quality athletes display good sportsmanship at all times.

Philosophy Statement:

The mission of Oak Park & River Forest High School's Athletic Program is to enhance the total student experience by promoting the image of sportsmanship and the benefits of interscholastic athletics, developing and providing leadership opportunities for student-athletes, and fostering activities that support school spirit.

To be successful, the coaches, athletes, and parents need to respect and empower each other. We encourage student participation in the athletic program and would like to involve as many students as possible in this interscholastic experience. High School athletics is a competitive experience; therefore, not all who try out will make the team, nor do all those who make the team receive equal participation opportunities during contests.

Oak Park & River Forest High School's motto, Those Things That are Best, extends to our athletic program. The interscholastic athletic program serves as one of the extensions of the classroom, attempting to provide learning opportunities, as well as enhancing the learning which occurs within the classroom. All team members, regardless of ability, will be afforded opportunities to develop their social and athletic skills, work ethic and sense of commitment.

Mission Statement:

Oak Park & River Forest High School exists to provide all students with a superior education so that they may achieve their full human potential.

The OPRFHS Athletic Department champions the values expressed in our Mission Statement.

We feel it is our responsibility:

- to establish and maintain an environment that values cultural diversity and gender equity;
- to provide a safe environment for our student-athletes;
- to establish and maintain an environment in which a student-athlete's activities are conducted as part of the total educational experience;
- to inspire our athletes to strive for academic and athletic excellence;
- to acquire a strong sense of pride, sportsmanship and personal integrity;
- to experience the positive effects of team work and develop a strong sense of loyalty;
- to carry forth into the community the values gained from a positive competitive experience.

Co-Curricular Code of Conduct



Participating in the co-curricular program is a privilege. Oak Park & River Forest High School administrators, coaches and sponsors believe students who are involved in co-curricular activities should conduct themselves as responsible representatives of their school and community. Students who represent their school are expected to maintain high standards of conduct **24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year**. Parents and school staff members all share the responsibility for helping students adhere to these standards. Participants in the co-curricular program have a responsibility to adhere to the policies established by Oak Park & River Forest High School District 200, the West Suburban Conference and the Illinois High School Association. All violations will become part of the students' discipline record. The parent/guardian will be notified of the student's violation. A student found in violation of the Co-Curricular Code of Conduct may receive consequences up to and including dismissal from the activity. **Such violations include, but are not limited to:**

- Use or possession of alcohol, tobacco products and/or controlled/illegal substances
- Being present at a party or activity where illegal drugs or alcohol are available
- Violations of academic integrity and ethics
- Violations of the OPRFHS Code of Conduct (*Level II, III or IV Infractions*); examples include, but are not limited to; gang activity, fighting, vandalism, theft, harassment, bullying and/or hazing
- Any criminal offense or conduct or activity which is detrimental to OPRFHS or the Co-Curricular Program

A student who is suspended for an alcohol or illegal substance violation will be required to meet with the OPRFHS Substance Abuse Counselor. If a student is in violation of a criminal offense or gross misconduct the Athletic Director and/or Asst. Principal for Student Activities may, at his/her discretion, dismiss the student from the team/activity for the remainder of the season.

Consequences for I.H.S.A. Activities and Athletics:

First Offense:

- The student will be suspended from the team/activity for **up to 25%** of the competition dates. The student will be allowed to practice and participate in all other team activities, except competition, during the suspension. If the violation occurs out of season or during the summer, the suspension will apply to the student's next season of competition. If the suspension is not completed during the season, it will be continued to the student's next season.

Second Offense:

- If the student is in season, he/she will receive a consequence **up to** dismissal from the team for the remainder of the season, additional consequences **may** include suspension from the Co-Curricular Program for up to one year. The Athletic Director and/or Asst. Principal for Student Activities will make the final decision on the suspension.

Third Offense:

- If a student commits a third violation he/she will be suspended from participating in co-curricular activities for one year, and may be prohibited for the remainder of his/her high school career. The Athletic Director and Asst. Principal for Student Activities will make the final decision on the suspension.

Appeals Procedure:

The student has the right to appeal any co-curricular consequence. This would be an opportunity to present extenuating circumstances that he/she believes could affect the consequences that have been administered.

The Appeals Procedure is as follows:

- The parent/guardian must appeal in writing within three (3) days of receipt of the written decision. This appeal should be directed to the Principal.
- The Principal, parent/guardian, and student will meet. The Principal, in conjunction with the Athletic Director and/or Asst. Principal for Student Activities, will make the final decision on any appeal.
- If a decision is appealed, every effort will be made to hear the appeal in a timely manner. However, the student may not participate in competitions during the duration of the appeal.

Athletic Academic Requirements



Illinois High School Association Policies:

IHSA Policy 3.21: Student-Athletes shall be doing passing work in at least four (4) classes of high school work per week. If a student-athlete is not passing four (4) classes in any given week, that athlete will be ineligible for competition the following week.

IHSA Policy 3.22: Student-Athletes shall, unless they are entering high school for the first time, have credit on the school records for passing twenty credit hours (4 classes) of high school work the previous semester. Such work shall have been completed in the semester for which credit is granted or in a recognized summer school program which has been approved by the Board of Education and for which graduation credit is received. If a student-athlete is not passing twenty credit hours (4 classes) at the end of a semester, that athlete will be ineligible the following semester.

HSA Policy 3.23: Passing work shall be defined as, work of such a grade that if on any given date a student would transfer to another school, assigned grades for that course would immediately be certified on a student's transcript to the school which a student transfer.

Oak Park & River Forest H.S. – “C” Pass-to-Play Policy:

“Academic Alert” – Nine (9) Week Grade Check: Student –Athletes must maintain a minimum of a 2.0 GPA and have not received an “F” in any class. If a student-athlete falls below a 2.0 GPA or has an “F” at the end of a nine-week grading period, that student is placed on “Academic Alert” and will be required to attend the nine-week Academic Support Program (study table), which consists of three (3) 50 minute Academic Assistance Sessions per week or 150 minutes of teacher assistance. If the student-athlete fails to complete the required hours, he/she will be ineligible for competition the following week.

Weekly Grade Check: Student-Athlete grades are reported every Wednesday and distributed to coaches and student-athletes by Thursday or Friday of each week. If a student-athlete has a “D” or “F” on a weekly grade check, he/she will be placed on the Weekly Academic Support Program (study table) and be required to complete 150 minutes of academic assistance the following week. If the student-athlete fails to complete the required hours, he/she will be ineligible for competition the following week.

Athletic Ineligibility / Appeals Process: Student-Athletes who have less than a 2.0 GPA or an “F” grade for two (2) consecutive nine-week grading periods will not be allowed to participate in OPRFHS Athletics. Student-Athletes are notified in writing of their ineligibility and may appeal this decision. The Appeals Process begins with the student-athlete submitting, in writing, the reasons that may have contributed to the level of achievement attained. The Appeals Committee meets with the student-athlete and renders a decision on whether to reinstate his/her athletic eligibility. The Appeals Committee consists of the Athletic Director and the student's Dean Counselor.

- **Academic Assistance/Tutoring is available in Room 393 from 7:00-8:00AM (Mon.-Fri.)**
- **Academic Assistance/Tutoring is available each period of the school day in Rooms 393**
- **Students may also receive academic assistance from an OPRF teacher (150 min./week)**
- **All Verification Forms are due into the Athletic Dept. by 4:00 pm each Friday**

Athletic Participation Guidelines and Information



Athletic Registration:

In order to participate in the Athletic Program, students are required to do the following:

- Fill out and have parent sign the Athletic Registration/Parent Permission Form.
- Have a physical examination which is current for the entire sports season on file with the school.
- Meet the academic requirements of OPRFHS and the IHSA.

Physical Examination:

A valid physical examination form must be on file in the school nurse's office before the student will be allowed to practice/tryout for a team. The student's physical must be current for the entire sport season. Per I.H.S.A. rules, your physical examination is good for one (1) calendar year from the date of the exam.

Insurance:

OPRFHS has purchased student accident insurance coverage for all student-athletes. This policy provides coverage for any injuries incurred while participating in any school sponsored athletic activity.

Athletic Fees:

All athletes are required to pay a **\$50 fee for each sport season** in which they participate. This "Pay-to-Play" fee is non-refundable and is to be paid once an athlete "makes" a team.

Uniforms and Equipment:

All athletes will be issued the appropriate equipment, uniforms and warm-ups for their sport. It is the athlete's responsibility to return these items at the end of the season. **Athletes will be charged for lost, stolen, or damaged equipment, and/or uniforms.**

School and Athletic Attendance:

If students are excused absent for no more than 3 periods, in a given day, they are eligible for practice or competition on that day. Unexcused absences will result in an athlete being ineligible for any participation.

Student-athletes are expected to attend all practices and competitions. **Each Head Coach will provide specific team rules and regulations regarding absences as they relate to his/her program.**

School Code of Conduct:

A student who is suspended for any in-school or out-of-school violation of the OPRFHS Code of Conduct while an active member of a team is ineligible to participate in any team activities during the school suspension period.

Steroid Education:

Per Illinois State School Code, the Athletic Program provides educational information and a video presentation regarding the dangers of anabolic steroid use.

Transportation Policy:

Oak Park & River Forest H.S. provides transportation to and from all athletic contests. All athletes are required to use school transportation. Athletes may not participate in an “away” contest if they drive themselves to the event or if they use alternate transportation without prior permission from their coach.

In extenuating circumstances, parents/guardians may need to drive their child home from a contest. Athletes must provide a written note from their parent/guardian and receive approval from their coach in advance. Athletes will only be released to their parent/guardian.

Athletic Trainers:

OPRFHS has certified athletic trainers on staff to care for all athletic injuries sustained during school sponsored athletic activities. The athletic trainers provide prevention, emergency care, treatment and rehabilitation of athletic injuries under the direction of OPRFHS’ team physicians or your family physician.

Please report any and all injuries to your coach or the athletic trainers immediately. Use only **Rest, Ice, Compression and Elevation** to treat injuries until you have consulted with a doctor or athletic trainer. If you consult with your family doctor for an injury, you will need a note from the doctor before being cleared for practice and/or competition

Sportsmanship:

Good sportsmanship is the attitude and behavior that exemplifies positive support for the interscholastic programs of all IHSA member schools. People involved in any facet of OPRFHS’ athletic program are expected to demonstrate respect for others and display good sportsmanship. Each coach, athlete and parent has a role and responsibility to model and teach good sportsmanship.

Behavior Expectations of the Student-Athletes:

Accept and understand your responsibility and the privilege of representing your school and community.

- Have respect for the rules of your sport.
- Treat your opponents the way you would like to be treated.
- Respect the integrity and judgment of officials.

Behavior Expectations of the Parents/Spectators:

Be positive with your son/daughter. Encourage them to work hard and do their best. If they have questions about issues relating to their performance, encourage them to speak with the coach. Encourage your son/daughter to follow all school, athletic and team rules. Student-athletes need to be positive role models.

High school athletics are a learning experience and part of the educational process. Adolescents learn proper behavior from watching adults. Entrance to an event is **not** license to verbally abuse others. Positive fan support is an asset for the players, coaches and other spectators.

Show respect for the opposing players, coaches other spectators and officials. Respect their roles even if you disagree with their judgment. Negative comments or the berating of players, coaches or officials will **not** be tolerated at OPRFHS athletic events.

Parent Coach Communication:

Both parenting and coaching are extremely difficult vocations. By establishing an understanding of each position, we are better able to accept the actions of the other and provide greater benefit to children. As parents, when your children become involved in our program, you have a right to understand what expectations are placed on your child. This begins with clear communication from the coach of your child's team.

Expected Communication from Coach to Parents:

1. Philosophy of the program
2. Expectations of all players on the team
3. Locations and times of all practices and contests
4. Team Rules and Requirements

Expected Communication from Parents to Coach:

1. Concerns expressed directly to the coach
2. Notification of any schedule conflicts well in advance

As your children become involved in the Athletic Program at Oak Park and River Forest High School, they will experience some of the most rewarding moments of their lives. It is important to understand that there also may be times when things do not go the way you or your child wishes. At these times, discussion with the coach is encouraged.

Appropriate Concerns to Discuss with Coaches:

1. The treatment of your child, emotionally and physically
2. Specific methods or skills that will help your child improve
3. Standards and/or criteria used to evaluate athletes
4. Concerns about your child's behavior on/off the field

It is very difficult to accept your child's not playing as much as you may hope. Coaches are professionals, and they make judgment decisions based on what they believe to be best for all students involved. As you have seen from the list above, certain issues can be and should be discussed with your child's coach. Other items must be left to the discretion of the coach.

Issues Not Appropriate to Discuss with Coaches:

1. Playing time
2. Team strategy/play calling
3. Other student-athletes

Please do not attempt to contact or confront a coach before, during or directly after a practice or contest. These are emotional times for both parent and coach. Meetings of this nature do not promote resolutions. There are situations which may require a conference between the coach and the parent. When these conferences are necessary, the following procedure should be followed:

1. Call the coach to set up an appointment.
2. If the coach can not be reached, call the Athletic Director to set up the meeting for you.

If the meeting with the coach did not provide a satisfactory resolution, please call the Athletic Director to discuss the next appropriate steps to be taken.

Co-curricular Conflicts:

If a student has two (2) or more school events in which he/she is a participant that are scheduled for the same time, the student will select without penalty the activity in which he or she will participate. The student **must** notify all coaches and sponsors prior to the events.

Huskie Athletic Council

The mission of the Huskie Athletic Council is to enhance the total student experience at OPRF by promoting the image of sportsmanship and the benefits of interscholastic athletics, developing and providing leadership opportunities for student-athletes, and fostering activities that support school spirit. The Council also serves as an advisory group to the Athletic Department on all issues relating to sports programs. In addition, the Council will nominate and select two (2) student-athletes (1 male and 1 female) to receive the Huskie Athletic Council Athlete of the Year Awards.

General membership to the Council is open to all OPRF student-athletes. Each Head Coach nominates two (2) representatives to serve as his/her sport's liaisons. There is also an Executive Committee comprised of six (6) officers: Co-Presidents; Vice-President; Secretary; Spirit Coordinator; and Coaches Representative. These positions will be elected annually from the nominated sport representatives. The Council meets on a regular basis throughout the school year.

Huskie Booster Club:

The Huskie Booster Club of Oak Park and River Forest High School is a not-for-profit organization composed of parents and interested residents, organized to support the educational, social, athletic and extra-curricular activities of the high school. The club is managed by a Board of Directors. Each sport program has a Satellite Booster group, which promotes and advocates on behalf of their sport to the Board of Directors. The main fundraising activity of the club is the Booster Dinner/Dance and Auction, which is held annually in the spring.

The Booster Club meets the first Wednesday of every month during the school year at 7:30pm in the Faculty Dining Room at the high school. Meetings are open to all interested parties.



Summary of Illinois High School Association Rules and Regulations:

1. Athletes cannot participate in competition unless they have passed four (4) courses during the previous semester.
2. Athletes must pass four (4) academic courses each week. If they do not have a passing grade, they will be ineligible for competition, but not practice, until they are earning four passing grades.
3. Athletes must have a physical exam each 365 days, and the physical must be current through the season.
4. Amateur athlete status: athletes may not accept anything that has a cash value over \$75.00.
5. Athletes may not participate on any non-school team, or as an “unattached individual” in non-school competition in the given sport, or in any competition that involves the “skill of the sport”.
6. Athletes may participate in and tryout for a non-school athletic team while being a member of a high school team in that same sport, provided that the tryout is exclusively a demonstration of skills and no practice or instruction is involved. Once an individual begins practice on a given club team, there must be competition within two weeks for that club team.
7. Athletes shall not be permitted to participate on or practice with any college, junior college or university athletic team.
8. During the school year, students shall not participate in any coaching school camp or clinic. For private lessons, two or fewer students are allowed. Private lessons can be attended any time throughout the year.
9. Students may attend a coaching school, camp, or clinic during the summer months.
10. Students may participate in non-sport specific physical conditioning programs throughout the year.
11. During IHSA State Series competition, student-athletes may be subject to random steroid testing.
12. Participation by high school students in summer programs must be voluntary and in no way be an actual or implied prerequisite for membership on a team.
13. Any coach or athlete ejected from a contest for unsportsmanlike conduct shall be ineligible for the next interscholastic contest at that level.

For additional information on I.H.S.A. Rules and By-laws, please refer to the pages at the back of this handbook or visit www.ihsa.org

Summary of West Suburban Conference Guidelines:

1. Athletes cannot participate in two sports at one time.
2. Athletes are not eligible for freshman competition if they have attended two semesters of school or if they will attain their 17th birthday during a sports season in which they wish to participate.
3. Athletes are not eligible for sophomore competition if they have attended four semesters of school or if they will attain their 18th birthday during a sport season in which they wish to participate.
4. Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year’s Day are not to be used for any kind of practice, competition event or team meeting.
5. Sunday practice, competition and/or team meetings are prohibited with the following exception: Sunday practice and team meetings may be allowed for Varsity teams when they are participating in a State Tournament series where games have been scheduled for either Monday or Tuesday.
6. Practice over winter vacation must be scheduled so that each team has at least five (5) days off from practice and contest obligations.
7. There will be conference champions only at the varsity level.
8. **Athletes must receive written permission from the Athletic Director in order to participate in intramural activities or attend “Open Gym” for another sport during an interscholastic season.**

For additional information on West Suburban Conference Rules and Guidelines please visit www.athletics2000.com/wsc/

Prospective College Athletes



Some student-athletes have a goal to participate in athletics at the collegiate level. The Oak Park and River Forest H.S. Athletic Department, Dean Counselors and coaching staffs are very willing to help student-athletes pursue this goal. To this end, we offer the following advice for our student-athletes:

- Communication with the coach is essential. Student-athletes who have a strong desire to compete at the collegiate level should consult with their coach prior to their senior sport season.
- The driving force behind college selection should be the academic fit. Student-athletes should work in conjunction with their Dean Counselor to develop their list of potential college choices.
- Create a resume and cover letter that represents your overall high school experience and highlights your athletic accomplishments. The resume should be reviewed by a coach and/or Dean Counselor.
- Be proactive in marketing yourself to college coaches by creating a highlight video, forwarding game schedules, etc...
- Meet with your Dean Counselor to discuss the process of registering with the **NCAA Clearinghouse**.
- Review **all** NCAA Academic Eligibility Requirements with your Dean Counselor or by visiting the NCAA website at www.ncaa.org

Summary of NCAA Academic Eligibility Requirements:

- Student-athletes entering an **NCAA Division I** college or university from the **fall of 2008 - 2016** will need to have completed the following:
 1. Graduate from high school
 2. Complete **16 core courses** as listed below
 3. Meet the NCAA Core G.P.A. / Test Score Index Standards

NCAA Core Courses:

2008-2016 – 16 Core Courses	
	English – 4 years
	Mathematics (Algebra I or higher) – 3 years
	Natural/Physical Science (including 1 lab) – 2 years
	Social Science – 2 years
	Additional English, Math or Science – 1 year
	Additional Academic Courses – 4 years

NCAA Division II and III institutions have separate academic requirements. For further information on these rules please visit the NCAA website at www.ncaa.org

ATHLETIC AWARDS



Award Guidelines:

Freshman:

- The award for freshman will be **Numerals**.
- If a freshman earns the Varsity Monogram, he/she would also receive Numerals. This is the only instance of a double award.

Sophomore:

- The award for sophomore competition will be the **J.V. Monogram**.
- A sophomore who competes on a varsity team will receive the Varsity Monogram.

Junior:

- The award for juniors will be the **Varsity Monogram**.
- Insufficient participation at the varsity level may result in a J.V. Monogram being awarded.

Senior:

- The award for seniors will be the **Varsity Monogram**.
- Athletes earning a Varsity letter in the same sport more than once shall be awarded a **Bar**.

Proper Placement of Awards on Letterman Jacket:

- Numerals are to be placed below the left hand pocket.
- JV Monogram is to be placed below the right hand pocket.
- Varsity Monogram is to be placed on the right chest area.
- State Championship and State Qualifier awards are to be worn on the sleeves.

Athletic Medal Award:

The Athletic Medal Award is given to a senior male and female student-athlete who have demonstrated, during his/her four years at Oak Park and River Forest HS, the highest achievements in athletics, academics and leadership. The award is based on an athletic and scholastic point system. The student-athlete must have earned a Varsity letter in a minimum of two (2) sports to be eligible. The awards are presented annually at the Spring Awards Night.

Huskie Athletic Council Athlete of the Year Award:

The H.A.C. Athlete of the Year Award is given to a senior male and female student-athlete. These awards are also presented at the Spring Awards Night. The criteria for this award are:

- Is a Varsity letterwinner
- Has a minimum of a 2.5 G.P.A.
- Demonstrates leadership abilities in sports/activities
- Demonstrates character and sportsmanship both on and off the field
- Exemplifies the true spirit of OPRFHS Athletics