

Definition: Co-curricular and extra-curricular activities shall include those activities that fall outside of the regular classroom instruction but which are sponsored by the school district. Examples of co-curricular activity shall be, but not limited to, such organizations as FFA, FBLA, vocal or instrumental music programs which may be extensions of classes being taken by students. Examples of extra-curricular activity shall be any sport activity authorized by the Nebraska School Activities Association, school plays, intramural activities, National Honor Society, Letter Club, Homecoming, Prom, or other activity sponsored by the school but not directly associated to a class.

- I. Code of Conduct. The board of education recognizes the opportunities for educational and social development for students participating in school activities. As students participate in these activities they must remember that they are not only representing themselves, but also their school and their community in all of their actions. Participation in these activities will frequently place the student in a position of representing his or her peers as well as representing his or her community. In many instances the majority of the students in these activities will participate at a level at which they will be proud of their actions and achievements, as will their fellow students, parents, school district patrons, their sponsors, and the opponents with whom they are competing. Unfortunately, there may be those individuals who may not possess these high standards of fair play or feeling of responsibility toward the sponsoring school or, due to the pressures involved in the competition, may react negatively toward fellow students or those with whom he or she may be competing. This policy is to serve as a guide by presenting what is considered as acceptable and unacceptable standards and what a student can expect to happen if he or she does not maintain high standards of personal conduct. With this in mind, it is hoped that all of our students' actions reflect a positive position toward each other, our opponents, and the obligations that are accepted as part of participation in co-curricular and extra-curricular activities. There shall be immediate suspension from the activity program if it is determined by the administration that a student participating in an activity has breached any of the following standards:
- A. Has broken laws of the State of Nebraska (except minor traffic violations providing three or less points against the driver's license),
  - B. Has maliciously destroyed property of this school district or other property.
  - C. Has possession of or used tobacco, alcohol, drugs, other contraband substances. Possession shall be defined as use, possession, or transmittal of tobacco, alcohol, controlled substances, drugs, drugs paraphernalia, and look-alike drugs, or being in a place where alcohol, controlled substances, drugs, and/or look alike drugs are present.
  - D. Has participated in initiations or hazings.

- E. Has defamed, showed disrespect, caused injury to another individual, team or group,
- F. Has engaged in behavior/conduct unbecoming a student or which reflects disparagingly upon the school.

All violations may be reported by any school official or student to the secondary principal or to the sponsor of the activity. Violations may be reported when the severity of the violation is deemed to merit reporting.

II. Enforcement Period of Code of Conduct. The enforcement of this policy shall begin with the official starting date of the fall sport season established by the Nebraska State Activities Association. It will end on the last official day of school in a given year as established by the board of education of Gage County School District No. 34, unless the activity extends beyond the last official day of school.

III. Suspension and Expulsion from Activities.

Any student who, during the school term is charged by a law official of a criminal charge which is punishable as a felony or is charged by a law official, convicted, or observed by any coach or certified staff member, or admits guilt of any charge involving the use or possession of tobacco, alcoholic beverage, drugs or drug paraphernalia not prescribed by a licensed physician, or any controlled substance prohibited by law, or has engaged in behavior/conduct unbecoming a student or which reflects disparagingly upon the school, shall be subject to suspension from all inter school activities and contests.

A violation of the aforementioned rules will result in a suspension from all school contests and activities for forty-two (42) calendar days. The suspension begins at such time as a student is judged by the principal or activities director to have violated the rule and continues from that date. A student may continue to practice if the coach desires. At the conclusion of the six-week suspension, the student may be reinstated provided he or she has met any and all additional agreed upon conditions during that period.

The suspension shall be reduced to twenty-one (21) calendar days (three weeks) provided the participant self-reports the conduct violation to the coach, sponsor, or activities director and agrees to attend an alcohol and drug awareness, or other self help program at his or her expense. A student is not eligible for the reduced suspension if he or she does not self-report.

A second conduct violation which occurs in the same school term will result in a suspension from all school contests and activities for the remainder of the school year. No suspension reduction option will be allowed.

Proof of violation shall be defined as follows:

- A. Admission of a violation of rules to a coach, sponsor, or school administrator.
- B. Being observed in violation of these school conduct rules by any certified school district employee.
- C. Being observed or cited by a law enforcement officer.
- D. Failure of a breathalyzer test or any similar test.

If a student is charged in court and found not guilty, the suspension will be lifted immediately.

- IV. Procedural Process. If a coach, sponsor, or any school official makes a decision to discipline a student by suspension or makes a determination that there may be cause to discipline a student by suspension or expulsion from the extra-curricular activity program, the following procedures shall be followed after reporting the matter as required in Subsection I. (Code of Conduct) of this policy.

If an alleged infraction occurs, the coach or supervisor, and the principal/athletic director shall make an investigation of the alleged conduct or violation and determine if a suspension is necessary to help any participant, to further school purposes, or to prevent interference with school purposes.

- A. Before the suspension shall take effect, the student shall be given oral or written notice of the charges against the student and an explanation of the evidence the authorities have, and an opportunity to present the student's version. The student will be notified by the coach or sponsor, secondary principal or a designee of the coach, sponsor, or secondary principal. The student will be advised of the facts upon which the complaint is based and given an opportunity to deny or explain the matter. The student shall be advised of his or her rights to appeal for purposes of presenting mitigating facts or facts in support of a denial.
  - 1. At this time the administration will determine if the procedural process shall continue under this policy or whether it should proceed under Policy 5560, Student Suspension, Expulsion, and Grievance Procedures.

If, after the above, a determination is made to suspend the participant, the suspension shall take immediate effect, and the coach, supervisor shall send a written notice to the participant, the student's parents or guardians of the action taken.

If a student, the student's parents, or guardian are not satisfied with the determination by the coach or supervisor and the principal/athletic director, an appeal hearing may be requested before the school superintendent. The appeal-hearing request must be delivered to the school superintendent within five days of receiving notice of the suspension. The hearing officer shall be the superintendent of schools.

If an appeal is requested it shall be held within ten days of the request and a notice of the time and place of the hearing will be given to the participant, and the parents or guardian within five days of receiving the request. The notice shall contain an outline of the alleged infraction.

At the hearing, as provided above, witnesses should testify. The participant will be given an opportunity to confront and cross-examine such witnesses, the participant will be allowed counsel if desired, the participant will be allowed to call witnesses and present evidence, and the participant will have the right to have a decision based solely on the evidence presented at the hearing.

Upon conclusion of the hearing, a written statement of findings of facts from the hearing will be compiled and a decision rendered. The statement of findings of fact and the decision will be mailed to the participant, parents, or guardian. A record of the hearing shall be kept by the school.

Nothing contained in this procedure shall prevent the participant, parents, guardian or representative from discussion and settling the matter with the appropriate school personnel at any stage provided herein.

- IV. Coach's or Sponsor's Discipline. Notwithstanding the foregoing, any head coach or sponsor shall retain the right to discipline students in any reasonable manner including suspension from practice and/or suspension from participation in interscholastic events for any event of "conduct unbecoming a student participating in extra-curricular activities."