# South Central Unified

# Activities Program

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# Rules and Regulations

**2017 - 2018**

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# Introduction

Student participation in extracurricular activities has been linked to improved attendance, higher academic achievement and greater student self-confidence and self-esteem. SCNUSD #5 provides students with the opportunity to participate in a comprehensive activities program, which includes athletics, fine arts, and select clubs or organizations associated with academic areas.

Although the school district believes strongly in the value of student activities, **participation in the activities program is a privilege, not a right**. Students must obey the rules set out in this handbook and any additional rules created by their coach or activity sponsor. This handbook is advisory and does not create a “contract” with parents, students or staff. The administration reserves the right to make decisions and make rule revisions at any time to implement the educational program and to assure the well being of all students. The administration is responsible for interpreting the rules contained in the handbook. If a situation or circumstance arises that is not specifically covered in this handbook, the administration will make a decision based upon all applicable school district policies, and state and federal statutes and regulations.

**Please read this handbook carefully. Students and their parents are responsible for complying with all of the rules and procedures detailed in this booklet.**

**Parents must sign the acknowledgement and permission to participate form at the end of this handbook before their student will be permitted to participate in the activity programs of the district.**

The provisions in this handbook are subject to change at the sole discretion of the Board of Education. From time to time, you may receive updated information concerning changes in the handbook. These updates should be kept within the handbook so that it is up to date. If you have any questions regarding this handbook, please contact the Superintendent for assistance.

# Activity Philosophy

# We believe that the opportunity for participation in a wide variety of student-selected activities is a vital part of the student’s educational experiences. Such participation is a privilege that carries with it responsibilities to the school, to the activity program, to the student body, to the community, and to each individual student. These experiences contribute to the development of learning skills and emotional patterns that enable that student to make maximum use of his or her education. SCNUSD #5 student activities are considered an integral part of the school’s program of education, which provides experiences that will help to develop students physically, mentally, socially, and emotionally.

**Nondiscrimination in Education Programs and Activities**

# SCNUSD #5 does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, marital status, disability, or age or in admission or access to, or treatment of employment, in its programs and activities and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups. Any person having inquiries concerning this school district’s compliance with the regulations implementing Title VI, Title IX, or Section 504 is directed to contact Superintendent, Dr. Randall Gilson in writing at 30671 Highway 14, Fairfield, NE 68938, or by telephone at (402) 726-2151. For further assistance, you may also contact Office for Civil Rights (Kansas City Office), U.S. Department of Education, 8930 Ward Parkway, Suite 2037, Kansas City, MO 64114-3302, Telephone: 816-268-0550. FAX: 816-823-1404: TDD: 877-521-2172. Email: OCR.KansasCity@ed.gov.

# SECTION ONE:

GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE ACTIVITIES PROGRAM

# Academic Eligibility

Grades in all subjects, including non-core classes, will be reported each Friday beginning the second week of each semester. Any student failing two classes in any single week will be ineligible to represent SCNUSD#5. The period of ineligibility, following the reported Friday of failing two or more classes, which results in attained ineligibility status, will be from the next Monday to Sunday, inclusive.. Ineligible students will not be allowed to participate in any NSAA competitions which include but not limited to the following: football, volleyball, cross country, basketball, wrestling, track, golf, speech, one act, yearbook, journalism, and student council. Exceptions to NSAA competitions are district large group vocal and instrumental music due to the fact of students receiving a performance grade. Also, ineligible students will not be allowed to participate in Prom, Homecoming, FBLA, Clowns, FFA, Close Up, Guess, Quiz Bowl, NHS, NAHS, and any other student clubs or organizations that may be formed or exist that requires student participation outside the normal school day that would results in missed school time. Students are expected to practice with their team or group during the ineligibility period.

Students may not participate in any activity, performance or practice while serving a short-term suspension, long-term suspension or expulsion from school.

# Attendance at Practices and Contests

Participants in the activities program are expected to attend and be on time at all practices and meetings scheduled by the coach or sponsor. Participants may be excused for absences resulting from a participant’s illness, a death in the family, a doctor’s appointment, or other absences that are arranged in advance. The coach, sponsor, or director of an activity may require a participant who has an excused absence to complete an alternate assignment for missing a practice, meeting, event, performance, or contest. A participant who is unable to attend a scheduled practice, meeting, or game must contact the coach or sponsor in advance. Students who are absent from school due to illness are not required to provide the coach or sponsor with additional notification of the student’s absence from practice.

Students who are absent from school for any part of the day will not be permitted to practice or participate in an athletic contest or activity performance unless the student has the building principal’s prior permission to participate despite the absence.

If a participant misses a scheduled contest or performance, the coach or sponsor may impose discipline up to and including suspension of the participant from the activity for the remainder of the season or length of the activity.

# Complaint Procedure

To reduce conflicts in the school’s activities program, students and/or their parents should use district’s formal complaint procedure to manage conflicts about the program. The complaint procedure is printed in the school’s student handbook.

**Dances**

School dances are part of the district’s extracurricular activity program. Students who wish to participate in school dances must comply with the rules set forth in the student handbook Students may be prohibited from participating in school dances as a consequence for violating school rules or these activity rules.

**Middle School Dances**

Middle school (6-8) dances are restricted to students currently enrolled in the middle school and will be sponsored by middle school teachers and parents. Any organization wishing to sponsor a junior high dance must obtain permission from the principal regarding date and times. Each dance must be sponsored by at least two faculty members and two additional adults. Once admitted to the dance, students must remain until the close of the dance. Students who leave the dance will not be readmitted. Students who are academically ineligible will not be allowed to attend school dances.

**High School Dances**

All high school dances are restricted to SCNUSD #5 High School students and their guests. Any organization wishing to sponsor a dance must obtain permission from the principal regarding date and times.

**Homecoming and Prom**

The Homecoming dance is open to students and guests of the SCNUSD #5 High Schools. The Junior/Senior Prom is open to students and guests of the SCNUSD #5 High School junior and senior classes. Guests must follow all rules that the students must follow. Each student is responsible for his/her guest's conduct. Appropriate attire is required for these dances.

# Equipment

Each participant in the athletic portion of the activities program will be issued a locker to store his/her personal belongings and school equipment that has been checked out. Students should and are encouraged to secure their athletic lockers with combination locks.

School-owned clothing or equipment that is checked out to individual students remains the property of the school. The clothing or equipment is not to be used or worn by the student except for the intended use. Each piece of equipment or clothing is to be returned to the instructor or coach when the season or the use for such clothing or equipment is over. Each participant is responsible for all equipment checked out to him/her. Students will be assessed the replacement cost for school equipment that has been checked out to him/her and is lost or stolen. Electronic Communication

# Family Nights

In order to provide students sufficient time away from school for family-related activities, the school will endeavor not to schedule activities on Wednesday evenings or on Sundays. Practices will be organized so that all participants are finished by 6:00 p.m. on Wednesday nights. An exception to this guideline would be when a team, group of students, or an individual may be required to participate in an activity sponsored by the conference, district, or state on a Wednesday night.

The school does not allow Sunday practice sessions, except when a varsity team, group of students, or individual is scheduled to compete or perform on a Monday. Practices scheduled for a Sunday must have the prior approval of the activities director or building principal.

# Fund Raising

All money-raising activities shall require authorization by a member of the school district administration.

# Initiations and Hazing Policy 5131.95

Initiations and hazing by members of classes, clubs, athletic teams, or any other

organization affiliated with the district are prohibited except as otherwise permitted by this policy. Any student engaging in hazing or non-approved initiations is subject to discipline as permitted by policy and law.

Initiations are defined as any ritualistic expectations, requirements, or activities placed upon new members of a school organization for the purpose of admission into the organization, even if those activities do not rise to the level of “hazing” as defined below. Initiations are prohibited except by permission of the superintendent.

Hazing is defined as any activity by which a person intentionally or recklessly endangers the physical or mental health or safety of an individual for the purpose of initiation into, admission into, affiliation with, or continued membership in any school organization. Hazing activities include, but are not limited to, whipping, beating, branding, an act of sexual penetration, an exposure of the genitals of the body done with the intent to affront or alarm any person, a lewd fondling or caressing of the body of another person, forced and prolonged calisthenics, prolonged exposure to the elements, forced consumption of any food, liquor, beverage, drug, or harmful substance not generally intended for human consumption, prolonged sleep deprivation, or any brutal treatment or the performance of any unlawful act that endangers the physical or mental health or

# safety of any person.

# Individual Training Rules and Rules of Conduct

Head coaches or sponsors may develop additional training rules or rules of conduct for their activity. Students are responsible for knowing these rules and complying with them.

# Injuries

Participants who suffer any type of injury while involved in extracurricular activities must notify the coach or sponsor immediately. The coach or sponsor will then evaluate the injury and, if necessary, notify the participant’s parents or seek immediate medical treatment.

If at any time during participation, a doctor removes an athlete from participation because of an illness or injury, the athlete must have a written release from a doctor before participating again. The written release must be given to the coach or sponsor of the activity.

Note: The release requirement will be satisfied if the initial doctor’s order specifies the duration of the student's restriction from participation and/or competition.

# Insurance

# The school district does not provide medical or other insurance coverage for students who participate in athletic contests or other activities. It is the parents’ responsibility to provide adequate insurance to cover any medical expenses that may be incurred while the student is participating in athletics or other activities.

# The school district makes an accident insurance plan available for purchase by participants and their families through an authorized insurance agent. Information about policies, which families may purchase, will be available prior to each sports season and at fall registration.

# Lettering Requirements

Requirements to be met for all activities:

* Participant must complete the season
* Participant must attend all practices and contests unless excused by the coach
* Participant must comply with all school and extra curricular policies and training requirements
* Participant must comply with specific playing time requirements of the Head Coach
* The coach may recommend the granting of a letter in case of injury or other extenuating circumstances

# Each head coach will develop and inform participants of any additional criteria for earning a varsity letter. These should be included in the player handbook. Letter certificates, certificates of participation, chenilles and bars will be presented at the Athletic Banquet or Honor’s Night.

# Changing Sports

No individual will be allowed to change sports during a season unless both coaches involved agree that changing sports is for the benefit of the student involved. Be sure that all NSAA sit-out times are followed and that the Athletic Director is made aware of the change so that eligibility forms can be sent in.

# School Rules

Students shall abide by all rules and regulations outlined in the Parent/Student Handbook.

# Student Manager, Helpers, or Activity Aids

Students wishing to serve as student volunteers for extracurricular activities must gain the permission of the activity coach or sponsor. Student volunteers must comply with all of the rules and procedures contained in this handbook and the student handbook.

# Transportation

All participants are expected to ride to activities by means of approved school transportation.

A participant may ride home with his or her parent/guardian only if the parent/guardian personally contacts the sponsor of the activity. Parents are discouraged from requesting to take their children home after an away contest or performance. Travel to and from an event provides time for the students to further develop a strong team concept.

# Weight Room

The weight room has been developed to help each athlete, student, or adult in the community maintain a level of physical fitness. No one may use the weight room or equipment without proper supervision. The school will develop a schedule for use of the weight room by athletes during the school year and during the summer months.

The weight room is a high demand area within the school facilities. The following guidelines will help determine the priorities in reference to use if more than one group desires to use the facility at the same time:

1. Physical education instruction

2. By the team sports, which are in season

3. Conditioning programs for athletes not currently out for a sport

4. Summer conditioning programs

5. Enrolled in a weight lifting class

6. Adult education

**6145.12 CONCUSSION AWARENESS OF THE SOUTH CENTRAL NEBRASKA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT #5**

The Nebraska Unicameral has found that concussions are one of the “most commonly reported injuries in children and adolescents who participate in sports and recreational activities and that the risk of catastrophic injury or death is significant when a concussion or brain injury is not properly evaluated and managed.”

The School District will:

1. Require all coaches and trainers to complete one of the following on-line courses on how to recognize the symptoms of a concussion or brain injury and how to seek proper medical treatment for a concussion or brain injury:

* Heads UP Concussions in Youth Sports
* Concussion in Sports—What You Need to Know
* Sports Safety International
* ConcussionWise
* ACTive™Athletic Concussion Training for Coaches; and

1. On an annual basis provide concussion and brain injury information to students and their parents or guardians prior to such students initiating practice or competition. This information will include:
   1. The signs and symptoms of a concussion;
   2. The risks posed by sustaining a concussion; and
   3. The actions a student should take in response to sustaining a concussion, including the notification of his or her coaches.

A student who participates on a school athletic team must be removed from a practice or game when he/she is reasonably suspected of having sustained a concussion or brain injury in such practice or game after observation by a coach or a licensed health care professional who is professionally affiliated with or contracted by the school. The student will not be permitted to participate in any school supervised team athletic activities involving physical exertion, including practices or games, until the student:

1. has been evaluated by a licensed health care professional;
2. has received written and signed clearance to resume participation in athletic activities from the licensed health care professional; and
3. has submitted the written and signed clearance to resume participation in athletic activities to the school accompanied by written permission to resume participation from the student’s parent or guardian.

If a student is reasonably suspected after observation of having sustained a concussion or brain injury and is removed from an athletic activity, the parent or guardian of the student will be notified by the school of:

1. the date and approximate time of the injury suffered by the student,
2. the signs and symptoms of a concussion or brain injury that were observed, and
3. any actions taken to treat the student.

The school district will not provide for the presence of a licensed health care professional at any practice or game.

School officials shall deem the signature of an individual who represents that he/she is a licensed health care professional on a written clearance to resume participation that is provided to the school to be conclusive and reliable evidence that the individual who signed the clearance is a licensed health care professional. The school will not take any additional or independent steps to verify the individual’s qualifications.

Students who have sustained a concussion and returned to school may need informal or formal accommodations, modifications of curriculum, and monitoring by medical or academic staff until the student is fully recovered. The school's "return to learn protocol" shall be the guidance provided by the Nebraska Department of Education entitled “Bridging the Gap from Concussion to the Classroom,” and accompanying materials and future supplements. Nothing in this policy or the referenced protocol shall entitle a student who has sustained a concussion to an individualized plan under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, although staff will refer students who have sustained a concussion for evaluation under Section 504 as appropriate.

POLICY ADOPTED: June 2012

POLICY REVISED: June 2014

SECTION TWO:

NEBRASKA STATE ACTIVITY ASSOCIATION RULES

**Eligibility**

In order to represent a high school in interscholastic athletic competition, a student must abide by eligibility rules of the Nebraska School Activities Association. Eligibility requirements are established by the NSAA in its Constitution and its Bylaws and Approved Rulings. These documents can be found online at <http://www.nsaahome.org/textfile/yb/yearbook.pdf.> A summary of the major rules is given below. Contact the principal, activities director or the activity sponsor or coach for an explanation of the complete rule.

1. Student must be an undergraduate.
2. Student must be enrolled in at least 20 hours of credit per week and in regular attendance, in accordance with the school’s attendance policy at the school he/she wishes to represent in interscholastic competition.
3. Student must be enrolled in some high school on or before the 11th school day of the current year.
4. Student is ineligible if 19 years of age before September 1 of current school year. (Student may participate on a high school team if he/she was 15 years of age prior to August 1 of current school year.
5. After a student’s initial enrollment in ninth grade, he/she shall be ineligible after eight semesters of school attendance.
6. Student must have been enrolled in school the immediate preceding semester.
7. Student must have twenty semester hours of credit the immediate preceding semester.
8. Once the season of sport begins, a student shall compete only in athletic contests / meets in that sport which are scheduled by his/her school. Any other competition will render the student ineligible for a portion of, or all of, the season in that sport. The season of a sport begins with the first date of practice as permitted by NSAA rules.
9. A student shall not participate in sports camps or clinics during the season of a sport in which he/she is involved, either as an individual or as a member of a team.
10. A student shall not participate on an all-star team while a high school under-graduate.
11. A student entering ninth grade for the first time after being promoted from eighth grade of a two-year junior high, or a three-year middle school, or entering a high school for the first time after being promoted to grade ten from a three-year junior high school is eligible. After a student makes an initial choice of high schools, any subsequent transfer, unless there has been a change of domicile by his/her parents, shall render the student ineligible for ninety school days.

If a student has participated on a high school team at any level as a seventh, eighth, or ninth grade student, he/she has established his/her eligibility at the high school where he/she participated. If the student elects to attend another high school upon entering ninth or tenth grade, he/she shall be ineligible for ninety school days.

1. A student shall be ineligible to represent a school in interscholastic competition at the varsity level if the school is located in a school district other than the district in which his/her parents maintain their residence. Check with school administrator for an interpretation of rule if the school district where parents reside has no high school or if there are two or more high schools in the district.
2. Student eligibility related to domicile could be attained in the following manners:
   1. If the parents of a student change their domicile from one school district that has a high school to another school district that has a high school, the student shall be eligible immediately in the school district where the parents established their domicile.
   2. If the change in domicile by the parents occurs during a school year, the student may remain at the school he/she is attending and be eligible until the end of the school year or transfer to a high school located in the school district where the parents established their domicile and be eligible.
   3. If a student has been attending the same high school since initial enrollment in ninth grade, he/she may remain at that high school and retain eligibility, or he/she is eligible at a high school located in the school district where his/her parents established their domicile.
   4. If the parents moved during the summer months and the student is in twelfth grade, the student may remain at the high school he/she has been attending and retain eligibility.
3. A student shall not participate in a contest under an assumed name.
4. A student must maintain his/her amateur status.
5. Band, chorus, physical education, teacher aide, or other “activity” type credits do not apply toward the twenty semester hours referred to in Item 7 above.

**NSAA Sportsmanship Rules**

Students must abide by the Nebraska School Activities Association Sportsmanship Rules. A complete copy of these rules can be found at http://www.nsaahome.org/nsaaforms/pdf/manualsp.pdf. Unsportsmanlike conduct shall include physical or verbal assault upon any participant, game official, or spectator, or any acts, which may endanger the personal safety of individuals involved, or acts, which hinder the normal progress of a contest or lead to the restriction of discontinuance of a contest.

If a student, participant, patron, and/or staff member representing a member school acts in a manner constituting unsportsmanlike behavior during such competition the member school and/ or individuals shall be subject to penalties. A student, participant, patron, and/or staff member may not be permitted to attend activities if involved in unsportsmanlike conduct.

SECTION THREE:

CODE OF CONDUCT

## Extracurricular Activity - Grounds for Suspension

**5115.12 GROUNDS FOR SUSPENSION FOR STUDENTS INVOLVED IN EXTRA CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES OF THE SOUTH CENTRAL NEBRASKA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT #5**

Extracurricular Activity - Grounds for Suspension

This policy is supplemental to the South Central NE USD #5 policy entitled Grounds for Short-Term Suspension, Long-Term Suspension, Expulsion or Mandatory Reassignment, and any action taken hereunder may be in addition to any action under said policy.

These rules will be enforced from the official starting day of the fall co-curricular activity season as established by the NSAA and extends to the last day of the spring co-curricular activity season as established by the NSAA. A student must comply with these rules whether or not the student is a participant in an activity at the time of the student’s questioned conduct.

Students who engage in the following conduct may be suspended from practices, participation in interscholastic competition, or other participation in co-curricular activities and competitions:

1. Willfully disobeying any reasonable written or oral request of a school staff member, or the voicing of disrespect to those in authority.

2. Use of violence, force, coercion, threat, intimidation, or similar conduct in a manner that constitutes a substantial interference with school purposes.

3. Sexual assault or attempting to sexually assault any person.

4. Willfully causing or attempting to cause substantial damage to property, stealing or attempting to steal property of substantial value, or repeated damage or theft involving property.

5. Causing or attempting to cause personal injury to a school employee, to a school volunteer, or to any student.

6. Threatening or intimidating any student for the purpose of, or with the intent of, obtaining money or anything of value from such student.

7. Knowingly possessing, handling, or transmitting any object or material that is ordinarily or generally considered a weapon.

8. Engaging in the selling, using, possessing or dispensing of alcoholic beverages, tobacco, narcotics, drugs, controlled substance, inhalant or being under the influence of any of the above; or possession of drug paraphernalia.

9. Engaging in the selling, using, possessing, or dispensing of an imitation controlled substance as defined in section 28-401, of the Nebraska statutes, or material represented to be alcoholic beverages, narcotics, drugs, controlled substance or inhalant.

10. Truancy or failure to attend assigned classes or assigned activities.

11. Tardiness to school, assigned classes or assigned activities.

12. The use of language, written or oral, or conduct, including gestures, which is profane or abusive to students or staff members. Profane or abusive language or conduct includes, but is not limited to, that which is commonly understood and intended to be derogatory toward a group or individual based upon race, gender, national origin, or religion.

13. Public indecency as defined in Nebraska statutes, except that this subdivision shall apply only to students at least twelve (12) years of age but less than nineteen (19) years of age.

14. Repeated violation of any of the rules adopted by the School District or the school.

15. Engaging in any unlawful activity as determined by the United States or the State of Nebraska.

16. Dressing in a manner wherein such dress is dangerous to the student's health and safety or to the health and safety of others or is distractive or indecent to the extent that it interferes with the learning and educational process.

17. Willfully violating the behavioral expectations for those students riding South Central NE USD #5 buses.

18. The knowing and intentional possession, use, or transmission of a firearm or other dangerous weapon.

19. The knowing and intentional use of force in causing, or attempting to cause, personal injury to a school employee, school volunteer, or student, except if caused by accident, self-defense, or on the reasonable belief that the force used was necessary to protect some other person and the extent of force used was reasonably believed to be necessary.

20. Failure to report for the activity at the beginning of each season; reporting for one activity may count as reporting on time if there is a change in activity within the season approved by the coach or the supervisor.

21. Failure to participate in regularly scheduled classes on the day of an athletic/activity event.

22. Failure to attend all scheduled practices and meetings. If circumstances arise to prevent the participant's attendance, the coach will determine the validity of the reason. Every reasonable effort should be made to notify the coach or supervisor prior to all missed practices or meetings.

23. All other reasonable rules or regulations adopted by the coach or supervisor of a co-curricular activity shall be followed, provided that participants shall be advised by the coach or supervisor of such rules and regulations by written handouts or posting on bulletin boards prior to the beginning of the season.

24. Failure to comply with any rule established by the Nebraska School Activities Association, including, but not limited to, the rules relating to eligibility.

25. Receipt of a criminal citation by law enforcement for any reason.

26. Conviction of a crime in adult court or the adjudication of a criminal charge in juvenile court.

27. Any conduct that substantially interferes with the educational process or disrupts the activity or event.

28. Possession, use, distribution, or being at parties in the presence of alcohol, illicit drugs, or controlled substances without parental supervision or under the influence of alcohol, elicit drugs, or tobacco.

29. Hazing, defined as any activity expected of someone joining a group, team, or activity that humiliates, degrades or risks emotional and/or physical harm, regardless of the person's willingness to participate. Hazing activities are generally considered to be: physically or verbally abusive, hazardous, and/or sexually violating and include but are not limited to the following: personal servitude; sleep deprivation and restrictions on personal hygiene; yelling, swearing and insulting team members; being forced to wear embarrassing or humiliating attire in public; consumption of vile substances or smearing of such on one's skin; branding; physical beatings; binge drinking and drinking games; sexual simulation and sexual assault.

30. Bullying which shall include cyber-bullying, defined as the use of the internet, including but not limited to social networking sites such as Facebook, cell phones or other devices to send, post or text message images and material intended to hurt or embarrass another person. This may include, but is not limited to; continuing to send e-mail to someone who has said they want no further contact with the sender; sending or posting threats, sexual remarks or pejorative labels (i.e., hate speech); ganging up on victims by making them the subject of ridicule in forums, and posting false statements as fact intended to humiliate the victim; disclosure of personal data, such as the victim's real name, address, or school at websites or forums; posing as the identity of the victim for the purpose of publishing material in their name that defames or ridicules them; sending threatening and harassing text, instant messages or emails to the victims; and posting or sending rumors or gossip to instigate others to dislike and gang up on the target.

31. Using any Internet or social networking websites to make statements, post pictures, or take any other actions that are indecent, vulgar, lewd, slanderous, abusive, threatening, harassing or terrorizing.

**Reporting of Incident.** Students, including victims, witnesses and perpetrators, shall report any violation of these rules to the coach, any staff member, the principal, or superintendent within the next two days that school is in session after the violation has occurred. The report may be written or verbal. Failure to report an incident will constitute a violation of these rules and will be taken into consideration in making disciplinary determinations under this policy.

**Misrepresentations.** Any misrepresentation of fact by a student regarding any alleged violation of these rules shall be considered a separate violation of these rules, and the student shall be subject to additional disciplinary action.

Additionally, students who are found to be in violation of sub-paragraphs 8 and/or 9 of this policy shall be subject to the following disciplinary action.

First Violation – Suspension from co-curricular program for designated activities for one (1) calendar year from date of finding or violation is discovered by or reported to the coach, any staff member, the principal, or the superintendent.

Or

Students and parents agree to participate in a school-approved program for chemical dependency. Said program must be administered by a certified alcohol and drug abuse professional and be approved by the school authorities. The student will need to successfully complete an approved chemical dependency program. Proof of successful completion of program will be submitted in writing to school’s Activities Director. Failure to participate and successfully complete the approved chemical dependency program may cause the participating student to be suspended from co-curricular activities for one (1) calendar year from date of finding of violation. The student must not compete or participate in the designated activities for four (4) calendar weeks from the date the violation is discovered by or reported to the coach, any staff member, the principal, or the superintendent. All costs associated with the program are to be borne by the student/parent or guardian.

Second Violation – Suspension from co-curricular program for designated activities for the remainder of high school eligibility;

Or

Students and parents agree to participate in a minimum eight (8) week outpatient program for chemical dependency. Said program must be administered by a certified alcohol and drug abuse professional and be approved by the school authorities. The student will need to successfully complete the approved outpatient chemical dependency program. Proof of successful completion of program will be submitted in writing to school’s Activities Director. Failure to participate and successfully complete the approved outpatient chemical dependency program may cause the participating student to be suspended from co-curricular activities for the remainder of his or her high school eligibility. The student must not compete or participate in the designated activities for eight (8) calendar weeks from the date the violation is discovered by or reported to the coach, any staff member, the principal, or the superintendent. All costs associated with the program are to be borne by the student/parent guardian.

Third Violation – Upon finding of violation, the student shall be suspended from all designated activities for the remainder of high school eligibility form the date the violation is discovered by or reported to the coach, any staff member, the principal, or the superintendent.

A student who possesses, dispenses, delivers, or administers anabolic steroids shall be subject to the following sanctions:

First Offense: The student shall be prohibited from participating in any extracurricular activities for 30 consecutive days.

Second or Any Subsequent Offense: The student shall be prohibited from participating in any extracurricular activities for one (1) calendar year from date of finding of violation.

Violations and offenses will carry forward from the official starting day of the Fall co-curricular activity season as established by the NSAA of a student’s ninth (9) grade year and extend through the last day of the Spring co-curricular activity season as established by the NSAA of a student’s twelve (12) grade year. A student must comply with these rules whether or not the student is a participant in an activity at the time of the student’s questioned conduct.

Violations and offenses will carry forward from the official starting day of school of a student’s seventh (7) grade year and extend through the last official day of school of a student’s eighth (8) grade year. A student must comply with these rules whether or not the student is a participant in an activity at the time of the student’s questioned conduct.

Students may be suspended by the principal or designee from practices or participation in interscholastic competition or participation in co-curricular activities for violation of rules and standards of behavior adopted by the South Central NE USD #5 Board of Education or the administrative staff of the school.

Disciplinary action may include a probationary period and conditions that must be satisfied prior to or following reinstatement. Administrators and coaches will take the following into consideration when making disciplinary decisions:

1. Any prior or additional misconduct;

2. The nature and seriousness of the offense including, but not limited to possible criminal implications of the misconduct;

3. The motivation for the offense;

4. The amount of violence involved;

5. The student’s demeanor and attitude regarding the violation;

6. The actual, threatened, or potential risk to the student and others due to the student’s behavior;

7. The student’s willingness to make restitution for the consequences for his/her misbehavior including, but not limited to, compensating the victim in the event of property damage, issuance of a genuine apology, willingness to speak to other student groups about the student’s misconduct and the like;

8. Whether the circumstances of the violation are likely to recur;

9. The student and family’s willingness to participate in evaluations, counseling, or other programs;

10. The cooperation and support of the student’s family

11. Any mitigating factors;

12. Any other relevant factors.

The following procedures shall be followed with regard to suspension:

1. The party considering the suspension shall make a reasonable investigation of the facts and circumstances. In addition, suspension shall be made only after a determination that the suspension is necessary to help any student, to further school purposes, or to prevent an interference with school purpose.

2. Prior to commencement of the suspension, the student shall be given oral or written notice of the charges against the student. The student shall be advised of what the student is accused of having done, and the basis of the accusation, and an explanation of the evidence the authorities have.

3. The student shall be afforded the opportunity to explain the student's version of the facts to the person making the suspension decision.

4. Within twenty-four (24) hours or such additional time as is reasonably necessary following suspension, the principal or designee shall send a written statement to the student, student's parents, or guardian describing the student's conduct, misconduct or violation of the rule or standard and the reason for the action taken and the right to a hearing upon request on the specified charges.

5. An opportunity shall be afforded the student, parents, or guardian of the student to confer with regard to the matter with the principal or administrator ordering the suspension.

6. If the student or student's parents/guardian are not satisfied with the determination, an informal hearing may be requested before the superintendent. A form or a request for hearing must be signed by such parties and delivered to the superintendent in person or by registered or certified mail. This request must be received by the building principal within five (5) days of receiving notice of suspension.

7. If a hearing is requested, it shall be held within ten (10) days of the request and a notice of the time and place of the hearing will be given to the participants, and parents or guardian within five (5) days of receiving the request. The notice shall contain an outline of the alleged infraction. There shall be no stay of the penalty imposed pending an appeal.

8. Upon conclusion of the hearing, a written decision will be rendered within five (5) school days. The statement of finding of fact and decision will be mailed to the participant, parents or guardian. A record of the hearing shall be kept by the school.

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

**A PARENT’S GUIDE TO CONCUSSION**

**WHAT IS A CONCUSSION?**

A concussion is a brain injury which results in a temporary disruption of normal brain function. A concussion occurs when the brain is violently rocked back and forth or twisted inside the skull as a result of a blow to the head or body. An athlete does not have to lose consciousness (“knocked-out”) to suffer a concussion.

**CONCUSSION FACTS**

* It is estimated that more than 140,000 high school athletes across the United States suffer a concussion each year. (Data from NFHS Injury Surveillance System).
* Concussions occur most frequently in football, but girl’s lacrosse, girls’ soccer, boy’s lacrosse, wrestling and girls’ basketball follow closely behind. All athletes are at risk.
* A concussion is a traumatic injury to the brain.
* Concussion symptoms may last from a few days to several months.
* Concussions can cause symptoms which interfere with school, work, and social life.
* Athletes who have symptoms from a concussion should not return to sports because they are still at risk for prolonging symptoms and further injury.
* A concussion may cause multiple symptoms. Many symptoms appear immediately after the injury, while others may develop over the next several days or weeks. The symptoms may be subtle and are often difficult to fully recognize.

**WHAT ARE THE SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF A CONCUSSION?**

**Signs Observed by Parents or Guardians**

* Appears dazed or stunned
* Is confused about assignment or position
* Forgets an instruction
* Is unsure of game, score, or opponent
* Moves clumsily
* Answers questions slowly
* Loses consciousness (even briefly)
* Shows behavior or personality changes
* Can’t recall events prior to hit or fall
* Can’t recall events after hit or fall

**Symptoms Reported by Athlete**

* Headache or “pressure” in head
* Nausea or vomiting
* Balance problems or dizziness
* Double or blurry vision
* Sensitivity to light or noise
* Feeling sluggish, hazy, foggy, or groggy
* Concentration or memory problems
* Confusion
* Does not “feel right”

**WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I THINK MY CHILD HAS HAD A CONCUSSION**?

An athlete who is suspected of having a concussion must be removed from play immediately, whether it a game or practice. Continuing to participate in physical activity after a concussion can lead to worsening concussion symptoms, increased risk of further injury, and even death. Parents and coaches are not expected to be able to “diagnose” a concussion, as that is the job of a medical professional. However, they must be aware of the signs and symptoms of a concussion and if they are suspicious, the child must stop playing:

**WHEN IN DOUBT – SIT THEM OUT!**

Every athlete who sustains a concussion needs to be evaluated by a health care professional who is familiar with sports concussions. Parents should call their child’s physician, explain what has happened, and follow the physician’s instructions. A child who is vomiting, has a severe headache, or has difficulty staying awake or answering simple questions should be taken to the parent’s doctor or emergency room immediately.

**WHEN MAY AN ATHLETE RETURN TO PLAY FOLLOWING A CONCUSSION?**

No athlete who has suffered a concussion should return to play or practice the same day. Previously, athletes were allowed to return to play if their symptoms resolved within 15 minutes of the injury. Studies have shown that the young brain does not recover quickly enough for an athlete to return to activity in such a short time.

Concerns about athletes who return to play too quickly have led state lawmakers in Oregon and Washington to pass laws stating that **no athlete shall return to play on the day he or she suffered a concussion and the athlete must be cleared by an appropriate health care professional before he or she are allowed to return to play in games or practices**. The laws also mandate that coaches receive education on recognizing the signs and symptoms of concussion.

Once an athlete is free of symptoms of a concussion and is cleared to return to play by a health care professional knowledgeable in the care of sports concussions, he or she should proceed with activity in a step-wise fashion to allow the brain to readjust to exertion. On average, the athlete will complete a new step each day. The return-to-play schedule should proceed as below following medical clearance:

* *Step 1*: Light exercise, including walking or riding an exercise bike. No

weight-lifting.

* *Step 2*: Running in the gym or on the field. No helmet or other equipment.
* *Step 3*: Non-contact training drills in full equipment. Weight training can begin.
* *Step 4*: Full contact practice or training.
* *Step 5*: Game play.

If symptoms occur at any step, the athlete should cease activity and be re-evaluated by a health care provider.

**HOW CAN A CONCUSSION AFFECT SCHOOLWORK?**

Following a concussion, many athletes will have difficulty in school. These problems may last from days to months and often involve difficulties with short and long-term memory, concentration, and organization.

In many cases, it is best to reduce the athlete’s class load after the injury. This may include staying home from school for a few days, followed by a lightened schedule for a few days or perhaps a longer period of time if needed. Decreasing the stress on the brain soon after a concussion may reduce symptoms and shorten the recovery period.

**WHAT CAN YOU DO?**

* Both you and your child should learn to recognize the “Signs and Symptoms” of a concussion as listed above.
* Emphasize to administrators, coaches, teachers, and other parents your concerns and expectations about concussion and safe play.
* Teach your child to tell the coaching staff if he or she experiences such symptoms.
* Teach your child to tell the coaching staff if he or she suspects that a teammate has a concussion.
* Monitor sports equipment for safety, fit, and maintenance.
* Ask teachers to monitor any decrease in grades or changes in behavior that could indicate concussion.
* Report concussions that occurred during the school year to appropriate school staff. This will help in monitoring injured athletes as they move to the next season’s sports.

**OTHER FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:**

**Why is it so important that an athlete not return to play until they have completely recovered from a concussion?**

An athlete who has not fully recovered from an initial concussion is very vulnerable to recurrent, cumulative, and even catastrophic consequences of a second concussive injury. Such difficulties are prevented if the athlete is allowed time to recover from the concussion and return-to-play decisions are carefully made. No athlete should return to sport or other at-risk participation when symptoms of a concussion are present and recovery is ongoing.

**Is a “CT scan” or MRI needed to diagnose a concussion?**

Diagnostic testing which includes CT (“CAT”) and MRI scans are rarely needed following a concussion. While these are helpful in identifying life-threatening brain injuries (e.g., skull fracture, bleeding, swelling), they are not normally used, even by athletes who have sustained severe concussions. A concussion is diagnosed based upon the athlete’s story of the injury and the health care provider’s physical examination.

**What is the best treatment to help my child recover more quickly from a concussion?**

The best treatment for a concussion is rest. There are no medications that can speed the recovery from a concussion. Exposure to loud noises, bright lights, computers, video games, television and phones (including text messaging) may exacerbate the symptoms of a concussion. You should allow your child to rest as much as possible in the days following a concussion. As the symptoms decrease, you may allow increased use of computers, phone, video games, etc., but the access must be reduced if symptoms worsen.

**How long do the symptoms of a concussion usually last?**

The symptoms of a concussion will usually go away within one week of the initial injury. You should anticipate that your child will likely be out of sports for about two weeks following a concussion. However, in some cases, symptoms may last for several weeks or even months. Symptoms such as headache, memory problems, poor concentration, and mood changes can interfere with school, work, and social interactions. The potential for such long-term symptoms indicates the need for careful management of all concussions.

**How many concussions can an athlete have before he or she should stop playing sports?**

There is no “magic number” of concussions that determine when an athlete should give up playing contact or collision sports. The circumstances surrounding each individual injury, such as the way the injury happened and length of symptoms following the concussion are very important and must be considered when assessing the athlete’s risk for further and potentially more serious concussions. The decision to “retire” from sports is a decision best reached following a complete evaluation by your child’s primary care provider and consultation with a physician or neuropsychologist who specializes in treating sports concussion.

**I’ve read recently that concussions may cause long-term brain damage in professional football players. Is this a risk for high school athletes who have had a concussion?**

The issue of “chronic encephalopathy” in several former NFL players has received a great deal of media attention lately. Very little is known about what may be causing dramatic abnormalities in the brains of these unfortunate retired football players. At this time, we have very little knowledge of the long-term effects of concussions which happen during high school athletics.

In the cases of the retired NFL players, it appears that most had long careers in the NFL after playing in high school and college. In most cases, they played football for over 20 years and suffered multiple concussions in addition to hundreds of other blows to their heads. Alcohol and steroid use may also be contributing factors in some cases. Obviously, the average high school athlete does not come close to suffering the total number or sheer force of head trauma seen by professional football players. However, the fact that we know very little about the long-term effects of concussions in young athletes is further reason to carefully manage each concussion.

Adapted from A Parent’s Guide to Concussion in Sports, National Federation of High School Associations.

Some of this information has been adapted from the CDC’s “Heads Up: Concussion in High School Sports” materials by the NFHS’s Sports Medicine Advisory Committee. Please go to [www.cdc.gov/ncipc/tbi/Coaches\_Tool\_Kit.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/ncipc/tbi/Coaches_Tool_Kit.htm) for more information.

**AUTHORIZATION AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

**WARNING: SERIOUS CATASTROPHIC AND PERHAPS FATAL INJURY MAY RESULT FROM ATHLETIC PARTICIPATION**

Many forms of athletic competition result in violent physical contact among players, the use of equipment, which may result in accidents, strenuous physical exertion and numerous other exposures to risk of injury. Students and parents must assess the risks involved in such participation and make their choice to participate in spite of those risks. No amount of instruction, precaution or supervision will eliminate these risks. Students have suffered accidents resulting in death, paraplegia, quadriplegia, and other very serious permanent physical impairment while playing sports. By granting permission for your student to participate in athletic competition, you, the parent or guardian, acknowledge that such risk exists. Students will be instructed in proper techniques to be used in athletic competition and in the proper utilization of all equipment worn or used in practice and competition. Students must adhere to that instruction and utilization and must refrain from improper uses and techniques.

I understand the statement above and I understand that by allowing my student to participate in athletic events, I assume the risk that he/she may be injured, perhaps severely.

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Signature of Parent

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Printed Name of Parent Date

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF CONDUCT CODE**

I understand that as a student representing the school district in activities, I am obligated to comply with the athletic handbook, including the code of conduct. **This means that I may not possess, use or be at parties in the presence of alcohol, illicit drugs, or controlled substances at any time during the school term unless I am accompanied by a parent.**  I understand that if I violate the code of conduct or other rules in this handbook, I may be suspended from participation in all co-curricular activities and/or school sponsored activities or events.

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Signature of Student

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Printed Name of Student Date

I understand that this handbook obligates my student, including the statements above.

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Signature of Parent

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Printed Name of Parent Date