CMS ATHLETIC HANDBOOK

All students participating in athletics will abide by the Michigan High School Athletic Association (MHSAA) and League rules and regulations as well as the Cherryland Middle School Athletic Code of Conduct. Athletic schedules may be available throughout the year on our web page (www.erschools.com). All students participating in the athletic program are required to have a physical examination and medical insurance waivers. Listed below are the CMS sports according to season.

FALL	WINTER	SPRING
Volleyball (girls)	Basketball (boys)	Track & Field (6, 7, & 8)
Football	Basketball (girls)	Equestrian (6, 7, & 8)
Cross Country (6, 7, & 8)	Cheerleading (7,8)	Softball (7,8)
Cheerleading (7,8)		

CHERRYLAND MIDDLE SCHOOL ATHLETIC CODE

Participation on an athletic team is a privilege and the participants must earn the right to represent Cherryland Middle School by conducting themselves in such a way that the image of the school would not be tarnished in any matter. Any participant whose conduct is judged to reflect a discredit upon himself/herself, the team, or the Elk Rapids Public Schools, whether or not such activity takes place during or outside school hours and sessions of the sport season, will be subject to disciplinary action as determined by the coach, the athletic director, and/or the school administration.

The school system recognizes that the use of mood altering chemicals is a significant health problem for many adolescents, resulting in negative effects on behavior, learning, and the total development of each individual. Adolescent use and abuse of alcohol and other drugs likewise affects the development of skills related to participation in extra-curricular activities.

During the school year, during the season of practice or play, and during the summer, an athlete shall not use or possess tobacco products, alcohol, marijuana, paraphernalia, steroids or other substances defined as a drug or a look-alike drug. It is not a violation for a student to be in the possession of a legally defined drug specifically prescribed for the athlete's own use by the athlete's doctor. The term *athlete* shall apply to all 6th, 7th, and 8th grade students.

A. Adherence to the MHSAA Constitution and Rules

The student will abide by all the rules and regulations of the Michigan High School Athletic Association Constitution and Rules Handbook. Copies of the handbook are available in the athletic director's office. Coaches of each sport are responsible for interpreting, explaining, and ensuring that these rules and regulations are upheld. A summary of the MHSAA eligibility rules for the senior high and junior high students are listed below.

B. Eligibility

State Requirements

1. A student must have passed 4 academic classes the previous semester.
2. A student must be under the age of nineteen (19) prior to September 1st.
3. A student must have passed a physical exam for the present year.
4. All other rules of the MHSAA will be followed.

Cherryland Middle School Academic Requirements

1. A student must have earned a grade of at least a "D" in all school subjects in which they are enrolled.
2. The athletic office will, once each week, conduct an eligibility check starting at the beginning of the season; the exact date of the first grade check is subject to the discretion of the athletic director and staff based on the number of grades entered in to PowerSchool at the beginning of a semester. The administration will complete the grade check and report to the staff and coaches on Monday afternoon. A student receiving less than a "D" in any class will receive a warning. A student is allowed just one warning per class, per semester. If they do not get at least a "D" at the next grade check in that same class OR a different class, they will be ineligible for the entire week. A week runs Monday through Sunday. Ineligible students will continue to practice, but will not be allowed to dress or participate in any contests or activities. They may travel with the team and cheer from the team area with approval from their coach.
3. Students who receive a grade lower than a "D" for the semester will be ineligible as follows:
   a. Two weeks of competition if involved in an activity at that time.
   b. Two weeks of competition for the next activity, in the next semester.
4. Any student who receives three ineligibilities may be removed from the team for the remainder of the season.

Forms and Releases

Before the beginning of the fall, winter, and spring seasons, the athlete and parent/guardian may attend a meeting with the coach and/or school administration to discuss the athletic code, team expectations, and to answer athlete and parent questions. In addition, before a student may participate in any athletic activity (including conditioning and practices), the student must provide the following information to the athletic director's office:

a. A properly completed physical examination form dated on or after April 15 of the previous school year with the athlete, parent/guardian, and physician/physician's assistant/nurse practitioner's signatures.
b. Insurance release information with parent/guardian signature and date.
c. Athletic Philosophy/Academic Eligibility form signed by the student.

Squad Selection at the Middle School

Philosophy - Elk Rapids Athletic Department and its programs are an extension of the learning process. We are striving to provide a program of which the student body and community can be proud. Throughout the program, the quest is to allow the student/athlete to be the best possible person, and team member that he/she can be.

The middle school program is designed to offer a variety of interscholastic experiences. Fundamentals of sports are emphasized: the teaching of commitment to the team and the sport, the building of character, and respect toward coaches and officials. Each eligible student on the team will receive similar playing time at the coach's discretion. Playing time may be varied based on practice attendance, attitude, and eligibility. These are examples of reasons playing time may be adjusted, but is not an exhaustive list.

Parent – Coach Communications

Both parenting and coaching are extremely difficult vocations. By establishing an understanding of each position, we are better able to accept the actions of others and provide greater benefit to the students. As parents, when your son/daughter becomes involved in a school's programs, you have the right to understand what expectations are placed on your child. This begins with clear communications to the coach of your son/daughter. If you have a concern to address, the following is the procedure you are expected to follow:

(1) Call the coach and set up an appointment
(2) Please do not attempt to confront a coach before or after a contest or practice. These can be emotional times for the parent and the coach. Meetings of this nature do not promote resolution.
(3) If the meeting with the coach did not provide satisfactory resolution call and set an appointment with the athletic director.
(4) If the meeting with the athletic director did not provide resolution set an appointment with the high school athletic directorl. At this meeting the appropriate next step can be taken.

AN ATHLETIC CODE FOR ATHLETES

THE CONTEST DEMANDS:

1. Fair play at all times.
2. A square deal to opponents by players and spectators.
3. Playing for the joy of playing and for the success of the team.
4. Playing hard to the end.
5. Keeping one's head and PLAYING the game not TALKING it.
6. Respect for officials and expectation that they will enforce the rules.
7. That an athlete should not quit, bet, or "grandstand".

THE SCHOOL DEMANDS:

1. Out-of-school and out-of town conduct of the highest type.
2. Faithful completion of school work as practical evidence of loyalty to the school and team.
3. Complete observance of training rules as duty to school, team, and self.

SPORTSMANSHIP DEMANDS:

1. Treatment of visiting team and officials as guests and the extension of every courtesy to them.
2. Giving opponents full credit when they win and learning to correct one's own faults through failures.
3. Modesty and consideration when one's team wins.
4. An athlete will not "crow" when the team wins or blame the officials when it loses.

Quitting a Team

Once an athlete has decided upon a sport to try, and after 10 consecutive days, the athlete may not quit, and change to another sport without permission from the coach for the sport the athlete is dropping and the permission of the coach for the sport the athlete is adding. If a student is cut from a team for reasons other than discipline, the student may immediately tryout for another team.

Attendance

A student must be in attendance by the beginning of third period in order to participate in practice or competition that day.

Exception: Prior clearance was granted from the athletic director or designee.

If students miss class due to an athletic activity, the student-athletes are required to pick up assignments ahead of time and coordinate any missed materials from their appropriate teachers.

Care of School Equipment

Each athlete and parent will assume the responsibility for caring for all equipment and supplies issued to the athlete by the coach or the coach's representative(s) and for returning all such supplies and equipment to the coach or other designated personnel at the conclusion of each season. Parents and athlete will be charged the replacement value for any lost or damaged equipment.

The uniform issued by the school is to be used for athletic contests scheduled by the school district. No part of the uniform should be used as a personal garment. Selected items, as designated by the coach, may be worn on game days for spirit purposes. Athletes who wear the uniform inappropriately may be suspended from the next athletic contest scheduled after the infraction.

Transportation to Athletic Contests

School-approved and scheduled transportation may be used to away events and some practices for specific teams. The student is expected to ride to the contest and return from the contest in the school-approved transportation. Any change from this policy must be cleared with the athletic director or coach, prior to the contest, unless it is an emergency.

Medical Release to Resume Participation

If an athlete is seriously injured, the athlete must have a doctor's release before the athlete can practice or compete in athletic contests.

Letters and Awards

The individual coach will determine any and all criteria for the winning of an athletic award by a student athlete. Violations of the training regulations may result in the revoking of any awards for which the athlete might otherwise be eligible. Athletes are not considered to have completed their season until the athlete's team has been eliminated from tournament play or the award ceremonies have been completed, whichever occurs last.

Dress Code

We expect our athletes to dress appropriately and to project a favorable image of our school. Coaches may set specific dress code standards for their respective teams.

Inclement Weather Policy

At the middle school level, in the event of school being called for hazardous weather (i.e. snow day, ice storm), practices and contests will also be cancelled. The only variance to this would be if the athletic director, principal, and superintendent are in agreement that the weather has improved significantly and that the opposing team's school also agrees that it is safe enough to travel or are still willing to host.

Athletic Banquets

All coaches are encouraged to hold some type of awards recognition gathering with their teams. The type of gathering and location is the responsibility of the coach. The Athletic department recommends holding it at the high school, and offering only desserts. There should be no cost to the athlete and their family. The athletic director's office will assist in any reasonable manner requested.

Suspensions

a. The coach of the sport, the athletic director, or school administrator may make temporary suspensions. Parents and coaches are expected to report knowledge of conduct "unbecoming an athlete" to the athletic director or other school administrators. The athletic director and/or administrator will confer with the coach before action is taken. Causes for temporary suspensions may include, but are not limited to the following:
   1. Grades
   2. Personal misconduct
   3. Unexcused absences from meetings and practices
   4. Violation(s) of athletic policies
   5. Unsportsmanlike conduct
   6. Civil infractions

b. Temporary suspensions may also be invoked during that period of investigation in which an athlete may be removed from a team. An athlete suspended under this section shall be allowed the rights of due process as established by the Elk Rapids School District.

c. Coaches or school officials may impose more severe penalties at their discretion. Coaches of each sport will also establish additional training regulations and rules of conduct, and clearly will communicate these rules and regulations to the athletes at the beginning of the season.

d. Suspensions must be appealed in writing to either the principal or the athletic director within two (2) school days of the parents' receipt of the written suspension notice. Students will remain suspended.
   The written appeal must contain the reason(s) that the suspension is being appealed.
   1. Students shall not participate until appeal process is completed.
   2. Upon review, the principal/athletic director may uphold the suspension, establish an alternative suspension of lesser severity, or reverse the suspension in its entirety. The review may include, but not be limited to, a meeting with parents if, in the principal's/athletic director's opinion, this is appropriate.
   3. The principal/athletic director will reach the decision and inform the parents in writing within ten (10) school days after the receipt of the written request.
   4. The decision of the principal/athletic director will be final if the suspension is less than 20% of the athletic season. If the suspension is 20% or more of the athletic season, the decision of the principal/athletic director may be appealed in writing to the superintendent within two (2) school days of the parents' notification of the decision. The superintendent will reach a decision and inform the parents in writing within ten (10) school days after the receipt of the written request.
   5. The superintendent's decision shall be considered final. The parents may appeal to the Board only in cases of alleged violation of due process (policy 5611) by the superintendent. In such cases, the appeal will be made in writing to the Board President within two (2) school days after the parents' receipt of the decision and shall include a statement of the alleged violation of the policy. The Board shall notify the parents of its decision within ten (10) school days of receipt of the written request.

Athletic Code Violations

a. Penalties:

1. Use and/or possession of tobacco products, alcohol, marijuana, paraphernalia, steroids, or other substances defined as a drug or a look-alike drug shall be handled using the following procedures:

   First Offense:

   a. The Athlete will be suspended for 20% of the interscholastic dates of competition for the activity in progress or the next activity he/she goes out for.
   b. During this suspension period, the athlete will meet with the high school counselor for substance abuse/crime education. The counselor will evaluate the situation and determine the extent of what will be required of the student. Ex. Third Level counseling, research projects, other visitations…
   c. Also, during the suspension period, the athlete will be required to serve 20 hours of community service. The community service will be prescribed by the athletic director. The athlete will attend all practices and contests which occur during this time. The athlete will not be allowed to dress for competition. If not enough time remains in the activity to satisfy the

penalty, it will carry over to the next activity the student participates in. The athlete will be able to participate in contests when all of the above criteria have been met.

Second Offense:

a. The Athlete will be suspended for 30% of the interscholastic dates of competition for the activity in progress or the next activity he/she goes out for.
b. During this suspension period, the athlete will meet with the high school counselor for substance abuse/crime education. The counselor will evaluate the situation and determine the extent of what will be required of the student. Ex. Third Level counseling, research projects, other visitations…
c. Also, during the suspension period, the athlete will be required to serve 30 hours of community service. The community service will be prescribed by the athletic director. The athlete will attend all practices and contests which occur during this time. The athlete will not be allowed to dress for competition. If not enough time remains in the activity to satisfy the penalty, it will carry over to the next activity the student participates in. The athlete will be able to participate in contests when all of the above criteria have been met.

Third Offense:

a. The Athlete will be suspended for 50% of the interscholastic dates of competition for the activity in progress or the next activity he/she goes out for.
b. During this suspension period, the athlete will meet with the high school counselor for substance abuse/crime education. The counselor will evaluate the situation and determine the extent of what will be required of the student. Ex. Third Level counseling, research projects, other visitations…
c. Also, during the suspension period, the athlete will be required to serve 40 hours of community service. The community service will be prescribed by the athletic director. The athlete will attend all practices and contests which occur during this time. The athlete will not be allowed to dress for competition. If not enough time remains in the activity to satisfy the penalty, it will carry over to the next activity the student participates in. The athlete will be able to participate in contests when all of the above criteria have been met.

Fourth Offense:

a. The Athlete will be suspended for one (1) calendar year of interscholastic competition. This will begin on the date of the infraction.
b. During this suspension period, the athlete will meet with the high school counselor for substance abuse/crime education. The counselor will evaluate the situation and determine the extent of what will be required of the student. Ex. Third Level counseling, research projects, other visitations…
c. Also, during the suspension period, the athlete will be required to serve 60 hours of community service. The community service will be prescribed by the athletic director. The athlete will attend all practices and contests which occur during this time. The athlete will not be allowed to dress for competition. If not enough time remains in the activity to satisfy the penalty, it will carry over to the next activity the student participates in. The athlete will be able to participate in contests when all of the above criteria have been met.

Fifth Offense:

a. The Athlete will be suspended from interscholastic athletics for the remainder of their middle school career.

*Note: If a student violates the athletic code, they may not join a sport, which is already in season, to serve their suspension. A student may join a sport on the first day of practice, and must complete the season to fulfill any violation requirements.

Also, Cherryland Middle School believes in honesty and integrity amongst our athletes. If an athlete is willing to come forward and confess to any wrong-doing, which they did not receive a citation for, the athlete may be given relief from a full suspension. The administration may lessen the penalty by up to 50%.

NOTE: If the violation occurs on school grounds or at a school function, consequences outlined in the Student Code of Conduct also apply.

Implementing the Athletic Rules

a. The first step in implementing this code will be that the person with information regarding a violation or possible violation will notify the athletic director of the nature of the behavior.
b. The athletic director will implement the athletic code.
c. The athletic director will confer with the coach as to the nature of the offense and inform the coach of any previous violations that will impact the consequences of the violations. A written record of all violations and disciplinary actions shall be kept in the athletic director's office.

This student handbook has been prepared to guide you through your middle school experience. We want both students and parents to understand the policies and procedures that are in effect at Cherryland Middle School. By signing the attached document, each student and parent/guardian acknowledges that they have either received a copy of the handbook, or are knowledgeable that it is available on the school website, at www.erschools.com and are responsible for understanding the contents. Please review carefully with your child and keep it handy for ready reference throughout the school year. At Cherryland Middle School, we believe strongly in the combined involvement of parents and students working together with the school.