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## **LINCOLN PUBLIC SCHOOLS INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETIC POLICY**

The Lincoln Public Schools recognize that a comprehensive program of athletics is important to the educational development of students. Therefore, the interscholastic athletic program is an integral part of the educational program in the Lincoln Public Schools. The Lincoln Public Schools are committed to providing athletic programs that promote and develop respect for self and others, fellowship and goodwill, sportsmanship, ethical conduct, teamwork, physical skill and constructive competition. The Lincoln Public Schools support access to athletics for all students. The objectives of the athletic program are to provide:

- A positive atmosphere of school athletics within the Lincoln Public Schools.
- Development of leadership qualities.
- Opportunities for physical, mental, social and emotional growth and development.
- Refinement of skills in sports activities of each student's choice.
- Self-discipline, self-motivation, excellence and the ideals of good sportsmanship that make for winning and losing graciously.
- Achievement of school goals and the student's individual goals.

Interscholastic athletic activities shall be conducted in accordance with the [Rules and Regulations of the Rhode Island Interscholastic League](#) and Rhode Island Principal's Committee on Athletics Grades 6-8.

### **I. Requirements.**

Participation in interscholastic athletics is subject to satisfaction of the eligibility requirements of this policy, the [Rules and Regulations of the Rhode Island Interscholastic League](#), and the Rhode Island Principal's Committee on Athletics Grades 6-8, as applicable. In the event of a conflict amongst the respective eligibility requirements set forth in the preceding sentence, the stricter requirement shall apply.

#### **A. Academic/Age Eligibility**

In order to participate in interscholastic athletics, students must:

- Arrive at school no later than 9:30 a.m. and remain in attendance thereafter on the day of an athletic activity if played on a weekday, and the day before if played on a Saturday. Unexcused absences or tardiness from school or from any class period, and absences due to disciplinary or social suspensions, will be the basis for exclusion from all athletic activity on that day, including tryouts, practices and contests.

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- Not have received a failing grade for more than one course as determined by the final course grades of the preceding school year (fall athletes will have the opportunity to attend summer school to achieve eligible status); winter and spring athletes must not have received a failing grade for more than one course as determined by the quarter grades preceding the start of the respective season. Students who are academically ineligible to play can have their cases reviewed after mid-quarter interim reports.
- Not have reached his/her nineteenth birthday prior to September 1st. Post-graduates are ineligible for competition.

#### B. Athletic Eligibility

Students should be encouraged to participate in the sports for which they have an interest and aptitude and should not be limited to a single sport. However, limitations on individual participation on teams or in games may be imposed based upon:

- The skill or achievement level of the student.
- The safety and welfare of those students not suited for participation in that particular sport.
- The needs of the team.
- Funding limitations.
- A determination of a reasonable number of participants relative to the availability of coaching staff.

Every student desirous of participating in an interscholastic athletic activity is required to attend scheduled tryout sessions for the subject activity. A student may be excused from attending a scheduled tryout session only for good cause. Requests for excusals must be submitted by the student's parent/guardian, in writing, to the Athletic Director, in advance of the proposed absence. The Athletic Director shall grant or deny the request for excusal in writing. The Athletic Director shall provide the coach with a copy of the grant or denial and shall retain a copy on file in the Athletic Director's office. Any student having an absence which has not been excused in writing and in advance by the Athletic Director shall not be considered for the team.

During tryout sessions, the coach shall prepare a written evaluation of each participant's performance in accordance with a scoring system predetermined by the coach. The Athletic Director shall keep the evaluations on file in the Athletic Director's office. The evaluation shall be made available to the student's parent/guardian upon written request made to the Athletic Director.

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In order to try out for a team, students must provide a health physical and clearance to play which will be kept on file with the school nurse in compliance with Article IV below.

In order to be eligible for participation in interscholastic sports, students must provide: (i) proof of insurance in compliance with Article II below; (ii) a Parental Permission and Acknowledgment of the Lincoln Public Schools Interscholastic Athletic Policy Form signed by the student's parent/guardian in compliance with Article III below; (iii) an updated health physical and clearance to play in compliance with Article IV below; (iv) a *Rhode Island Interscholastic League's Assumption of Risk Form* signed by the student's parent/guardian in compliance with Article V below; and (v) a consent form concerning concussion awareness signed by the student and parent/guardian in compliance with Article VI below.

II. Insurance.

Students participating in interscholastic athletic activities are required to carry *accidental/medical insurance*. Parents may purchase accidental/medical insurance for their children via arrangements made by the Lincoln Public Schools with an insurance company. The Lincoln Public Schools do not assume responsibility for medical expenses resulting from injuries to participants in sports.

III. Parental Permission and Acknowledgement of Athletic Policies.

At the time students are selected for an athletic team, they will receive the Lincoln High School Athletics Handbook or Lincoln Middle School Athletics Handbook, as applicable. Each parent/guardian will read all of the enclosed material and certify that they understand the athletic eligibility rules and policies of the school district. Each student athlete's parent/guardian will complete a Parental Permission Acknowledgement of the applicable handbook for each sport acknowledging knowledge and understanding of all school policies and giving permission to participate in that interscholastic sport. This form will be kept on file in the Athletic Director's office.

IV. Physical Examination.

In order to try out for a team, a student must have a health physical and clearance to play performed by a physician. The physical and clearance to play covers all sports provided the examination occurred within one year of the ending date of the respective athletic season(s). If the physical and clearance to play expires during the season, an update will be required to complete the season. This form will be kept on file in the school nurse's office. Students and parents/guardians will be responsible for communicating with the school nurse about any preexisting conditions that may affect athletic participation.

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V. Risk of Participation.

Athletes and parents/guardians must realize the risk of injury, both serious and minor, which may occur as a result of athletic participation. In order to participate in interscholastic sports, students and parents/legal guardians are required to sign two copies of the *Rhode Island Interscholastic League's Assumption of Risk Form*. This form must be notarized and submitted to the coach prior to participation. One copy will be kept on file in the Athletic Director's office. The second copy will be filed at the Rhode Island Interscholastic League office.

VI. Concussion Awareness Information.

Rhode Island state law requires that athletes and parents/guardians review materials about signs and symptoms of concussions. A signed consent form will be required by both the athlete and parent/guardian.

VII. Expectations.

The Lincoln athlete is expected to:

- Demonstrate the highest levels of sportsmanship and fair play at all times, regardless of the circumstances.
- Comply with all rules and regulations of the Lincoln Public Schools, Rhode Island Interscholastic League and Rhode Island Principal's Committee on Athletics Grades 6-8.
- Apply him/herself academically to the best of his/her abilities and to the minimum requirements set forth in Article I(A) above.
- Abstain from the use of alcohol, tobacco and illegal substances (of any kind).
- Respect the integrity and judgment of game officials even in the case of disagreement with their judgment.
- Attend all meetings, practices, and games unless excused by the coach.
- Abstain from hazing.

Hazing is defined as any activity that humiliates, degrades, abuses, or endangers a person's physical or emotional health for the purpose of initiation or membership in an organization regardless of the person's willingness to participate. Team initiations are a form of hazing. An athlete's participation in any such conduct will result in immediate disqualification of that athlete from a team and possible further school and legal disciplinary measures and consequences. There is no recognized initiation of any kind in the Lincoln Public Schools.

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Participation in interscholastic athletics is a privilege which may be revoked for failure to comply with the rules and regulations of the school or the athletic department. The athlete in violation may be required to sit out games, at the discretion of the coach, or for major violations, be dismissed from the team, at the discretion of the Athletic Director.

- VIII. Communication. The Lincoln Public Schools recognize the importance of keeping lines of communication open with the coach. Most communication can take place effectively between the coach and the athlete. However, there are appropriate concerns a parent may wish to discuss with the coach. If the parent has concerns about the treatment of an athlete, academic concerns, or concerns about the athlete’s behavior, the parent should contact the coach or the Athletic Director. The coach or the Athletic Director should be contacted at school, not at home, and a return call will be made promptly. Concerns about athletics are most productive if addressed during the applicable sport season.

It is not appropriate to discuss with the coach playing time, team strategy, play calling or other student athletes. It is also not appropriate to confront a coach before, during or after a game or practice. The coach’s responsibility at those times is to supervise his/her athletes.

It is important that the coach schedules a pre-season meeting with parents and that all parents attend this meeting. At this time, the coach will disseminate all pertinent information concerning expectations, practice time, policies and procedure, and answer questions concerning the rules and regulations.

- IX. Transportation.

Transportation is provided to and from scheduled interscholastic events that take place outside of the district. All coaches, including assistant coaches, are required to use the provided transportation. All athletes are required to use the provided transportation unless approved in writing in advance by the building administrator. Such approvals shall be kept on file in the office of the building administrator.

- X. Equipment and Uniforms.

For most sports, uniforms and equipment are owned by the Lincoln Public Schools and are loaned to athletes. The care of such uniforms and equipment is the responsibility of the athlete, therefore, the cost of damaged, lost or stolen uniforms and equipment is the responsibility of the athlete. In those sports where the athletes themselves purchase parts of the uniform or equipment, the athlete would keep the uniforms and equipment that he/she purchased.

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XI. Appeal Process.

A student, by and through his/her parent/guardian, who feels aggrieved because of an action taken as a result of any provision of this policy may appeal said action to the building administrator of the school at which action was taken. Appeals from decisions made by the building administrator may be taken to the Superintendent of Schools and from decisions made by the Superintendent of Schools to the School Committee. Appeals from decisions made by the School Committee may be taken through the process defined in Title 16 of the General Laws of Rhode Island.

First Reading: July 10, 2013  
 Second Reading: July 30, 2013  
 Adopted: July 30, 2013

***TOWN OF LINCOLN SCHOOL COMMITTEE, Lincoln, Rhode Island***