

Garden County Schools Code of Conduct
for students participating in extra-curricular and co-curricular activities

Membership and participation in extra-curricular and co-curricular activities can have a very positive effect in the development of constructive attitudes and desirable qualities for future citizenship. Those qualities may be the principles of justice, fair play, good sportsmanship, respect for rules and authority, respect for others, leadership, group pride, teamwork, self-discipline and the value of self-sacrifice.

Garden County Schools recognizes that rules and regulations concerning the decorum and conduct of the student body will vary with the times and values of the community. Further, the individual family should be the primary guiding influence and determinant of student behavior. However, the school district also has a significant interest in teaching students to behave responsibly and appropriately. Consequently, participation in any extra-curricular or co-curricular activity is dependent upon the adherence to the school district's policies, procedures and rules.

Annually, before beginning any sports program at Garden County Schools, participants and their parents are required to attend an explanatory meeting that clearly details the program's philosophy, opportunities, and the set of policies and procedures that guide participation. In the event students are unable to attend the meeting or enroll in school due to a residency change or as an option student, the information will be provided to the student and parent or legal guardian before the student can participate in any extra-curricular or co-curricular activity.

Extra-curricular and co-curricular activities include, but are not limited to, the following: all sports, all contests, dance team, royalty, National Honor Society, speech team, Student Council, One-Act, Student Advisory Board, FCCLA, Pep Club, Pep Band, and other school organizations listed in the Student-Parent Handbook.

A GCS participant is defined as a student who participates in, has participated in, or will participate in any of the above activities.

Those GCS students not participating in sports, who participate in any of the other listed activities, shall sign the student participation and approval form when they sign the Student-Parent Handbook form.

Rules of Conduct Regarding Tobacco, Alcohol, Controlled Substances and Criminal Offenses,

Code of Conduct. The banned substances for GCS participants are: tobacco, alcohol, illegal drugs, and inhalants or controlled substances (except under authorized prescription). The use or possession of such substances, or procuring such substances for others, is a violation of the Garden County Schools Code of Conduct for extra-curricular and co-curricular activity participation. Possession for purposes of the Code of Conduct is broader than possession under criminal laws. It includes situations where, for example: (1) alcohol is in a vehicle in which a participant is present-- the participant is considered to be in possession if the participant is aware that the alcohol is in the vehicle, even though the participant has not touched or consumed the alcohol, provided that the alcohol is not in the control of a parent or guardian or other responsible adult (age 21 or older) and (2) alcohol is present at a party attended by the participant--the participant is considered to be in possession if the participant is aware that alcohol is at the party, even though the participant has not touched or consumed the alcohol, provided that the alcohol is not in the control of a parent or guardian or other responsible adult (age 21 or older). In addition, GCS participants are expected to not engage in violation of the criminal laws. A student charged with a criminal offense shall be considered to be in violation of the Garden County Schools Code of Conduct for extra-curricular and co-curricular activity participation in the event school officials determine a violation of the law has occurred or that, if the conduct had been committed on school grounds, such would be a violation of school rules.

Scope of Conduct Rules. This policy is in effect year-round, beginning with the date a student is enrolled or otherwise becomes eligible for Garden County Schools' services. "School year" offenses are offenses committed anytime during the school year, which includes the time frame which begins with 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, whether or not the student is a participant in an activity at the time of such conduct. "Summer offenses" are offenses committed at any time other than during the school year.

Offenses are cumulative during a student's career (junior high and high school are considered separate careers for accumulation of offenses). Any student who has been suspended from athletics or extra-curricular activities in another district and moves or opts in to Garden County Schools shall be placed on the GCS Code of Conduct at the appropriate level.

Penalties. Whenever school officials determine that a violation of the Code of Conduct has occurred, the student shall be ineligible to participate in any extra-curricular and co-curricular activities or to represent the school in any performance or scheduled contest until reinstated by the GCS Code of Conduct Committee and the coach or sponsor according to the following schedule:

First Offense --	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 15 school day suspension from extra-curricular activities. • Must self report. If fail to self-report, length of suspension from co/extra-curricular activities is 20 school days. • If self-reports and takes class and does community service, suspension is reduced to 10 school days. • Must take class and do 10 hours of community service.
Second Offense --	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 20 school day suspension from extra-curricular activities. • Must self report. If fail to self-report, length of suspension from co/extra-curricular activities is 35 school days. • Must take class and do 20 hours of community service.
Third Offense --	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 35 school day suspension from extra-curricular activities. • Must self report. If fail to self-report, length of suspension from co/extra-curricular activities is for the remainder of the school year. • Must take class and do 30 hours of community service.
Fourth Offense --	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suspension from co/extra-curricular activities for the remainder of the school year. If the suspension begins in the second semester, the period of the suspension shall be the remainder of that school year and for the length of the full NSAA fall sports activity in the following year. • Must self report. If fails to self-report, length of suspension shall be twelve months. • Must take class and do 40 hours of community service.
Summer Offenses --	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summer offenses carry the same penalty as school year offenses.

When Suspensions Begin. All suspensions begin with the next school-sponsored, school year-scheduled event in which the student is a participant, after the determination by school officials of the sanction to be imposed. During a suspension, participants may be required or permitted to practice at the sole discretion of the coach or activity sponsor.

Class and Community Service. The class to be taken will be a drug/alcohol counseling class approved by school administration. Tobacco offenses and criminal offenses not involving drugs or alcohol will not require the taking of the class. The participant is responsible for the cost of the drug/alcohol counseling class. In the event the participant and the participant's parents/guardians are unable to afford the class, the parents/guardians should contact the Superintendent who will arrange where appropriate for the participant to work within the District in return for the District paying for the class.

There will be no reduction in penalty for class and community service; but participant cannot return to activities until the class has been taken and community service hours completed. On request, the Superintendent or designee can allow return to activities if the participant had committed to taking the class and completing the community service hours and scheduling does not allow such to be completed prior to the end of the suspension period.

Letters and Post-Season Honors. Participants who commit a Code of Conduct Offense are: (1) eligible to letter, provided the participant meets the criteria of the coach or sponsor, and (2) are eligible to receive honors during the sport or activity in which they are participating at the time of the offense and/or in sports or activities in which they have missed events due to code violations. A sport is considered over when all members of the team are finished competing in NSAA-sponsored state activities.

Students who have violated the Code of Conduct will be allowed to receive post-season honors, if they meet the coach's criteria. However, these students cannot be nominated for all-star teams. (Rationale: All Stars do not compromise the team by engaging in selfish behavior.)

Other Offenses. In addition to the Code of Conduct offenses, coaches and sponsor may establish additional conduct rules and expectations for subjects other than tobacco, alcohol, drugs and crimes. Participants may be disciplined for violations of the conduct rules and expectations, and such discipline may include suspensions from extra-curricular and co-curricular activities.

Self-Reporting

A participant who violates the Code of Conduct must self-report. The self-report must be made to: the principal, athletic director, or the head coach or sponsor of an activity in which the student participates. The participant's parent or guardian may initiate the self-reporting process, but the participant will be later required to give a written statement of the self-report. The self-report must be made the earlier of: (1) before the end of the next school day after the conduct occurred and (2) before participation in an extracurricular or co-curricular activity. For a "summer offense," the self-report must be made within the next day (excluding weekends and holidays). In making a self-report, the student must:

- identify the events that took place,
- explain what conduct the participant engaged in,
- identify any witnesses to the participant's conduct,
- put this information in a written statement.

In the event the participant has received a criminal citation, charge, or ticket, and proclaims innocence of a violation, the participant will be required to self-report such offense and provide information as to why they should be found innocent, not as it relates to the criminal offense, but as it relates to the Code of Conduct.

All participants are expected to be honest and forthright with school officials. In the event the activity sponsor or coach or any school administrator asks a student for information pertaining to compliance (or lack of compliance) by the participant or other participants with the rules, standards, guidelines, or eligibility conditions for participation in activities, the participant is expected to fully, completely, and honestly provide the information and may be disciplined for a failure to be honest and forthright.

Determining a Violation Has Occurred

A violation of the Code of Conduct for extra-curricular and co-curricular activity participation will be determined to have occurred:

1. When a participant is cited by law enforcement and school officials have a reasonable basis for determining that grounds for the issuance of the citation exist, or if a participant is found guilty or pleads no contest to a criminal charge.
2. When a participant admits to violating one of the standards.
3. When a participant is accused by one or more school employees of GCS and school officials determine that such information is reliable.
4. When school officials otherwise find sufficient evidence to support a determination that a violation has occurred.

Procedures

The following procedures shall be followed with regard to suspensions from extra-curricular or co-curricular activities:

1. The school official considering the suspension shall make a reasonable investigation of the facts and circumstances.
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. (Detail is not required where the student has made a self-report).
3. The student and the student's parents/guardian 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. If the student or student's parents/guardian are not satisfied with the determination, an informal hearing may be requested before the superintendent.
6. Upon conclusion of the hearing, a written decision will be rendered by the Superintendent. The decision will be delivered to the participant, parents or guardian. A record of the hearing shall be kept by the school.
7. 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.

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