

# Kearsarge Regional High School



## Student-Athlete & Parent / Guardian Handbook

### **Mission:**

Along with the Kearsarge Regional High School Statement of Core Values and Beliefs, the mission and purpose of Athletics at Kearsarge is to facilitate and perpetuate development, growth, and learning, as well as enhance the educational experience using interscholastic competition to teach life lessons such as resiliency, empathy, self-awareness, curiosity, sportsmanship, communication, commitment, time management, embracing challenges, patience and understanding the impact decisions and actions have on ourselves and others.

### **Expectations:**

Inherent within the educational process of the Athletic Department are a few components:

1. Athletics are co-curricular elective activities where participation is contingent upon meeting criteria consistent with the mission and standards of the NHIAA, Kearsarge Regional High School, and the KRHS Athletic Department. Additionally, each team reserves the right to limit the number of participants on the basis of roster size and / or skill level.
2. Commitment (and the associated life lessons) are main tenants of interscholastic athletics at the high school level. When students voluntarily choose to join / commit to a team, the expectation is that they will honor that commitment through their daily attendance and investment into the program. Unexcused absences will impact a student's playing time / participation in competition on some level. Additionally, even if an absence (or absences) is / are excused, it may impact playing time / participation in competition as practice is as equally (if not more) important than the competition, so all scheduled events, practices and competitions should be treated accordingly.
3. All student-athletes are considered representatives of Kearsarge Regional High School and the Kearsarge School District, and therefore are expected to compete and conduct themselves in a sportsmanlike and appropriate manner at all times.

### **Inherent Risk of Participation:**

By its very nature, competitive athletics may put students in situations in which **SERIOUS, CATASTROPHIC** and perhaps **FATAL ACCIDENTS** may occur. 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 totally eliminate all risk of injury. Just as driving an automobile involves choice of risk; athletic participation by high school students also may be inherently dangerous. The obligation of parents and students in making this choice to participate cannot be over-stated. There have been accidents resulting in death, paraplegia, quadriplegia and other very serious permanent physical impairment as a result of athletic competition.

By granting permission for your student to participate in athletic competition, you, the parent or guardian, acknowledge that such risk exists.

By choosing to participate, you, the student, acknowledge that such risk exists.

**Eligibility:**

**Academic** – In order to represent Kearsarge in interscholastic athletics, a student must be a full-time student (full-time status can be / is confirmed through the main office).

A student must pass (BP or better / 65 or above) or be passing a minimum of four (4) classes at the designated review time in order to be eligible; therefore eligibility will be based off of the following:

**Fall Season** – Based off of 2<sup>nd</sup> semester grades from the previous school year.

**\*\* All incoming freshmen are automatically academically eligible for the fall season \*\***

**Winter & Spring Season** – Based off of the current grades at the time grades are checked (which will be prior to the first regular season game).

If a student is not passing the required four (4) classes, that student is not eligible for games / contests, but may still practice with the team. Students have the ability to regain their eligibility for games / contests by getting their grade up to passing for at least four (4) classes.

**\* Grades and conduct will be monitored throughout the school year. Therefore, any student who is struggling academically and / or socially may be removed from participation in competition until the deficiency is rectified.**

**\*\* Home school students must contact Athletic Director in order to have eligibility affidavit filled out and filed by the Principal with the NHIAA prior to the first contest \***

**Attendance** – Students must be in attendance at school on the day of a game or practice. Students that arrive late without documentation of an excused absence will not be permitted to participate in any extracurricular or school sponsored events that are held that same day. This includes participation in sports, clubs, plays, field trips, etc. Please see the Tardy Policy in the Student Handbook for specifics on how this will be administered.

**Medical** – In order to participate, a student must have a physical examination prior to participation (i.e. prior to the first practice) upon entry to the high school, or the first time a student becomes involved in athletics during the course of their high school years.

Additionally, each year students will be required to provide emergency medical information as a part of the Athletic Agreement.

**Mouth / Face Guards** - In accordance with NHIAA by-laws, all athletes participating in the following sports must wear a colored mouth guard at practices and games: **soccer, field hockey, football, basketball, ice hockey, lacrosse and wrestlers with braces**. Also, all athletes in the sport of Field Hockey and Girls Lacrosse must wear an ATSM certified protective eyewear.

## **Offerings:**

### ***Varsity Sports***

#### **Fall**

Bass Fishing (Co-ed)  
Cheerleading (Co-ed)  
Cross Country (Boys & Girls)  
Field Hockey  
Football  
Golf (Co-ed)  
Mountain Biking  
Boys Soccer  
Girls Soccer  
Girls Volleyball

#### **Winter**

Boys Basketball  
Girls Basketball  
Unified Basketball  
Boys Ice Hockey  
Girls Ice Hockey  
Indoor Track (Boys & Girls)  
Skiing – Alpine (Boys & Girls)  
Skiing – Nordic (Boys & Girls)  
Swimming (Boys & Girls)  
Wrestling

#### **Spring**

Baseball  
Equestrian  
Boys Lacrosse  
Girls Lacrosse  
Outdoor Track (Boys & Girls)  
Softball  
Boys Tennis  
Girls Tennis

## **Team Policies:**

Each team / program should distribute a team document regarding areas such as commitment levels, impact of excused and unexcused absences, riding the bus home from away contests, and others of that nature which are outside of the rules, procedures, etc. covered in this handbook. All coaches must make a written copy of their team's policies available for both student-athletes and parents / guardians.

## **Drugs & Alcohol:**

Students (including those involved in any club team) who use alcohol and / or illegal drugs / performance enhancement supplements during their season (either on or off campus) will be suspended from athletic activities for 10 days. Students are not allowed to be in attendance for any games / practices for 5 days (off days do not count towards the total) but can return to practice after the 5 days and will remain ineligible for competitions for the remaining 5 days (off days do not count towards this total). If a student receives a school related consequence such as an out of school suspension, those school days in which the student is suspended will count towards the 5 days of not being eligible to attend any practices or games.

If a second offense occurs during the season, that student will be suspended from the team for the remainder of the season and the Principal and Athletic Director will determine eligibility for that student for the remainder of the school year.

\* If a team practices / competes less than 4 days a week, then the suspension should not exceed 20% of the season on the first offense

\*\* This rule may also apply to students found to have been using tobacco or other related products such as vapes and e-cigarettes on campus.

**Out-of-school suspensions:**

Upon their return from an out-of-school suspension, students will not be eligible to participate in the next scheduled game or event (this excludes practice). Additionally, students who are serving an out-of-school suspension are not allowed to attend any home games, events or practices during the suspension.

**Early Dismissals:**

When a team needs to leave school early to get to an away game or match, students will be dismissed 10 minutes prior to the scheduled bus departure time. All students must go to their class until the scheduled dismissal time (all schedules can be found on-line at <https://kearsargehighschool.bigteams.com/>)

**Transportation:**

If a student chooses to not ride home on the bus (and that falls within team policy), this must be communicated (emails are also acceptable if done prior to the team leaving for the event) by the parent or guardian to either the Coach or Athletic Director. Ideally, this is done prior to the bus leaving for the event, but a parent / guardian may also speak to the head coach after the game directly to let her or him know they are taking their daughter or son home. However, coaches may choose to require students to ride home on the bus from away trips. If this is the case, the only exceptions are if the family is leaving from the away site to travel somewhere (ie away game at Somersworth and family is going to Maine for the weekend), or if the bus will be going by the house on the way back from the game (ie away game at Lebanon and the family resides in Springfield).

Students are not allowed to drive themselves to or from away contests unless special permission is granted by the principal (which would only happen in extremely rare cases).

**Uniforms:**

Student-Athletes should take a great deal of pride in the opportunity to wear a Kearsarge uniform, and that should be reflected in the care taken while in possession of the uniform. Additionally, uniforms are the property of Kearsarge Regional High School and should be returned to the head coach within one week of the completion of the season. Uniforms not returned, or returned in a damaged or unusable condition will result in the student-athlete / parent being billed for the uniform. Please note that most companies charge extra to produce a single uniform, consequently that charge will be passed onto the student.

**Ejections:**

Simply put, this should not happen. Any student-athlete who is ejected from a game must meet with the Coach and Athletic Director (along with serving any NHIAA sanctions resulting from the suspension) prior to being allowed to return to participate in games, matches, etc. Additional consequences above and beyond the NHIAA required suspension are likely to be implemented (each incidence will be reviewed on a case by case basis).

\*There may also be school consequences levied dependent upon the specifics surrounding the associated behavior

### **Common Agreement Between Coaches & Parents:**

Parenting and coaching are both challenging endeavors. Clearly, coaches and parents have at least one strong, common bond. They share concern for the wellbeing of each student-athlete. By establishing mutual understanding, parents and coaches are better able to accept the actions of the other in order to provide a greater benefit to each student-athlete. We are ALL about the complete education of our student-athletes. Part of the process of growing up is learning to handle one's own difficult situations. If a conflict or misunderstanding between an athlete and coach occurs, learning to resolve it is an important educational experience for the student-athlete so we strongly encourage students to communicate any issues they are having directly with their coach(es).

Of course, a parent always retains the right to intervene on behalf of their student-athlete. Therefore, we have established ground rules to help make parental intervention less contentious and more productive.

#### **HOW TO DISCUSS AN APPROPRIATE CONCERN WITH THE COACH:**

Whenever a question, concern or complaint arises regarding an athletic situation, we have found the following line of communication very effective in resolving issues:

**1. START WITH THE SOURCE:** Talk directly with the coach, in private, face to face, away from the practice site or game arena. A telephone call may be necessary to arrange an appointment. E-mail, voice mail, and letters are good methods, but are not as effective for communicating information. By their nature they tend to distance coaches and parents. Making an appointment, sitting down and listening to both sides is far more productive in reaching a mutually satisfying resolution. ALL complaints will follow a chain of communication BEFORE intervention by a higher authority can occur (please see example below). However, the next level arbitrator will always be willing to meet with a complainant if sub-level discussions do not accomplish their intended purpose.

Our coaches are expected and encouraged to meet with individual parents to discuss concerns that affect that parent's student-athlete. Our coaches are not expected to meet with groups of parents to discuss issues of concern. Please do not attempt to confront a coach before or after practice or a contest (use the 24 hour rule). These can be emotional times for both the parent and coach. Our coaches are not expected to endure verbal or physical abuse from parents. Make an appointment. Help teach your student-athlete the skills of mature conflict resolution.

#### **Chain of Communication:**

- If your concern is with a sub-varsity coach, start with the source. The next level of communication then would be with the varsity coach for the sport/program.
- If not resolved, a parent should make an appointment to meet with the athletic director and the coach.
- If still not resolved, a parent should make an appointment with the principal and the athletic director.
- From that meeting if still unresolved, a parent should make an appointment to meet with the superintendent, principal and the athletic director.

**Areas in which the coach alone has the final say:**

1. Playing time.
2. Position(s), lineups, team strategy, etc.
3. Offensive and defensive strategies and style of play.
4. Other student-athletes: matters regarding other student-athletes are to be left to their respective parents.

**However, this is what you can expect from the coach:**

1. To be intently focused on daily improvement for student-athletes and for themselves, while prioritizing personal traits and habits (life skills) which will help them when they leave Kearsarge.
2. Teaching, instructing, and overseeing all practice sessions.
3. Running fair tryouts and using an effective evaluation process.
4. Determining starting lineups and making decisions regarding playing time, as well as determining the style of play, including offensive and defensive philosophy.
5. Establishing and enforcing team and school rules as well as maintaining compliance with all NHIAA by-laws, policies and procedures.
6. Determining how captains are selected (if captains are being selected), the criteria used for that selection, communicating the process and criteria to the student-athletes prior to selection, providing clear expectations for the role of captain, as well as providing support and guidance for student-athletes in the leadership development process.
7. Coordinating consistent communication with players and parents with regards to games, practices, and relevant team information.
8. Providing appropriate supervision at all times.
9. Presenting themselves as appropriate role models, and leading by example.
10. Fostering and perpetuating an environment which encourages productive coach / student-athlete relationships and communication.
11. To be consistent, fair, and respectful of individual differences.
12. Fostering a healthy atmosphere for athletic competition.
13. Maintaining confidentiality about other athletes and students.

**Concussion Protocol:**

Medical management of sports related concussion is evolving. In recent years there has been a significant amount of research into sports-related concussion in high school athletes. Kearsarge Regional High School has established this protocol to provide education about concussion for athletic department staff and other school personnel. This protocol outlines procedures for staff to follow in managing head injuries, and outlines school policy as it pertains to participation in athletics after concussion.

Kearsarge Regional High School seeks to provide a safe return to activity for all athletes after injury, particularly after a concussion. In order to effectively and consistently manage these injuries, procedures have been developed to aid in ensuring that concussed athletes are identified, treated, referred appropriately, and receive appropriate follow-up medical care.

In addition to recent research, two primary documents were consulted in developing this protocol. The “Consensus statement on concussion in sport-The 3rd International Conference on Concussion in Sport, held in Zurich, November 2008”(referred to in this document as the Zurich statement), and the “National Athletic Trainers’ Association Position Statement: Management of Sport Related Concussion” (referred to in this document as the NATA Statement).

Contents:

1. Recognize Remove Refer
2. Initial Assessment
3. ImPACT neuropsychological requirements
4. ATC procedures
5. Return to Play

**I. Recognize, remove, refer**

**a. Recognize Concussion**

All Coaches should become familiar with the signs, symptoms, and mechanism of concussion. The following signs and symptoms are indicative of a probable concussion. Other causes for symptoms should also be considered.

<b><u>Signs (Observed by others)</u></b>	<b><u>Symptoms (reported by the athlete)</u></b>
Athlete appears dazed or stunned	Headache
Confusion (about assignments, play, etc.)	Fatigue
Forgets Plays	Nausea or Vomiting
Unsure about game, score, opponent	Double vision, blurry vision
Moved clumsily (altered coordination)	Sensitivity to light or noise
Balance Problems	Feels sluggish
Personality Changes	Feels ‘foggy’
Responds slowly to questions	Problems concentrating
Forgets events prior to the hit	Problems remembering
Forgets events after the hit	
Loss of consciousness (any duration)	

Very basic cognitive testing should be performed to determine cognitive deficits

**b. Remove from Activity**

i. In accordance with NH SB 402 any coach, official, licensed Athletic Trainer, or health care provider who suspects that a student-athlete has sustained a concussion or head injury in a practice or a game shall remove the student-athlete immediately until evaluated medically by a Certified Athletic Trainer or health care provider.

**c. Refer the Athlete for Medical Evaluation**

Coaches should report all head injuries to the Certified Athletic Trainer as soon as possible for medical assessment, management, and coordination of home instructions and follow up care.

**II. Initial Assessment (when available)**



\_\_a. The Certified Athletic Trainer will assess the injury, or provide the guidance to the coach if unavailable to personally attend to the athlete.

i. Modified-Sport Concussion Assessment Tool

General cognitive status can be determined by simple sideline cognitive testing.

The Certified Athletic Trainer will utilize a modified SCAT5 for serial sideline assessment as recommended by the NATA and Zurich Statements.

**III. ImPACT Neuropsychological testing requirements.**

a. ImPACT(Immediate Post Concussion Assessment and Cognitive Testing) is a researched based software tool utilized to evaluate recovery after concussion. It was developed at the University of Pittsburg Medical Center (UPMC). ImPACT evaluates multiple aspects of neurocognitive function, including memory, attention, and brain processing speed, reaction time, and post-concussion symptoms.

Neuropsychological testing is utilized to help determine recovery after a concussion.

b. All KRHS athletes are required to take a baseline ImPACT test prior to participation in sports.

c. Athletes are required to establish a “new” ImPACT baseline score prior to participation in athletics during their junior year. All Transfer students will be required to test unless they can provide testing from previous testing site.

**IV. Procedures for ATC**

a. The ATC will assess the injury, or provide guidance to the coach if unable to personally attend to the athlete.

Immediate referral to a health care provider when medically appropriate.

The ATC will perform serial assessments following the recommendations in the NATA Statement, and utilize a modified SCAT5 as the concussion assessment tool.

The ATC will notified the Athletes parents or guardians and provide written and verbal instructions.

b. The ATC will notify the Neuropsychologist involved with ImPACT at Kearsarge Regional High School.

c. The next school day the ATC will notify the School Nurse of the injury. The School Nurse can initiate appropriate in-school follow up.

d. The initial post-injury test will be administered within 48-72 hours post injury, whenever possible.

Repeat post-concussion tests will be given at appropriate intervals, depending on clinical presentation.

e. The ATC will review post-injury concussion test data with the athlete and the athlete’s parents as a general review and can be looked at in detail upon request.

f. ImPACT Data will be forwarded to the Neuropsychologist involved with ImPACT and Kearsarge Regional High School for review and consultation.

g. The ATC will forward the post injury testing results and the sideline modified SCAT5 to the athlete’s treating health care provider.

- h. The ATC or the athlete's parent/guardian may request that a neuropsychologist consultant review. The athlete's parents will be responsible for the charges associated with the consultation.
- i. The ATC will monitor the athlete, and will work with the school nurse to monitor the athlete's symptomatology and neurocognitive status. This is to aid in the purpose of developing or modification of an appropriate health care plan for the Student-Athlete.
- j. The ATC is responsible for monitoring recovery and coordinating the appropriate return to play activity progression, in accordance with NH SB 402.
- k. The ATC will maintain appropriate documentation regarding assessment and management of the injury.

## **5. Return to Participation Procedures after concussion**

- a. Returning to participation on the same day of the injury.
  - As previously discussed in this protocol, an athlete who exhibits signs or symptoms of a concussion or has abnormal cognitive testing will not be permitted to return to play on the day of the injury.
  - Any athlete who denies symptoms but has abnormal sideline cognitive testing will be held out of activity for at least that day.
  - “When in doubt, hold them out”
- b. Return to play after a concussion
  - The Athlete must meet all of the following criteria in order to progress to activity:
    - 1: Asymptomatic at rest AND exertion. (including mental exertion in school).
    - AND
    - 2: Post Concussion ImPACT test scores are within normal range of baseline
    - AND
    - 3: In accordance with NH SB 402 the Student-Athlete's health care provider must provide written documentation to provide clearance for progression to activity and subsequent return to play.
    - 4. In accordance with NH SB 402 the Student-Athletes parents must also provide written documentation to acknowledge understanding of the risks involved with return to participation, and acknowledge that their child was evaluated by the health care provider.
- c. Once the above criteria are met, the athlete will be progressed back to full activity following a stepwise process, (also recommended by both Zurich and NATA statements), under the direct supervision of the ATC.
- d. Step-wise progression as describe in the Zurich Statement:
  - The Athlete will continue to proceed to the next level of asymptomatic at the current level.
  - Generally each step will take 24 hours so that an athlete would take approximately one week to proceed through the full rehabilitation protocol once they are asymptomatic at rest and physical exertion. If any post-concussion symptoms occur during the stepwise progression, the athlete will drop back to the previous asymptomatic level and attempt to progress from that level after a 24 hour period of rest has passed.

1. No Activity- do not progress to Step 2 until asymptomatic for 24 hours.
2. Light aerobic activity (e.g. Exercise walking, stationary bike)
3. Sport specific training (e.g. skating in hockey, running in soccer)
4. Non-contact training drills.
5. Full-contact training after medical clearance from Health Care Provider
6. Game Play

### **NHIAA:**

All policies, procedures and by-laws for the NHIAA can be found on-line at <http://www.nhiaa.org/about-nhiaa/handbook>

### **Highlighted NHIAA Policies:**

Eligibility regulations of the NHIAA apply to each category of interscholastic participation: Varsity and sub-varsity levels. Students entering grade nine in the fall for the first time do not have to meet the Scholastic Standing requirements of By-Law Article II, Sect. 2. Subsequent to their initial entry during the first fall marking period of their grade nine year they must meet the minimum requirement for Scholastic Standing. All other standards for eligibility must be met. In order to represent a member school in interscholastic athletics, a student must be in attendance as a full time student in the district where his/her parents/guardians legally reside.(Exception: Charter, Home Educated and Non Public Students – Sect. 13). No students will represent their school in an interscholastic athletic event unless the principal of that school has certified the student's eligibility through the official Eligibility Affidavit as filed with the NHIAA. The sole responsibility for determining athletic eligibility rests with the principal of the high school. The principal is the official representative of the school at all hearings and appeals. This responsibility cannot be delegated unless prior approval from the NHIAA has been granted.

### ***Sect. 1: Age of Contestants***

A student who has reached the age of 19 on or after September 1<sup>st</sup> may represent the school in any interscholastic athletic contest during that school year.

### **Rationale for Age of Contestants Rule:**

An age limitation requirement: provides commonality between student-athletes and schools in interscholastic competition; inhibits "redshirting," allows the participation of younger and less experienced players; enhances the opportunity for more students to participate; promotes equality of competition; avoids over-emphasis on athletics, and helps to diminish the risk of injury associated with participation in interscholastic athletics. To ensure equality of competition and opportunity, a standard must be established at some point to determine the cut-off date for age eligibility. Use of a specific cut-off date gives notice to all parties involved in interscholastic athletics and maintains equality of participant eligibility among schools.

### ***Sect. 3: Semester Rule***

A student is eligible for competition, whether or not he/she competes in interscholastic athletics, for no more than eight (8) consecutive semesters beyond the eighth grade. Approved participation by seventh and eighth graders does not count toward the eight (8) allowed semesters. Also, if a student terminates at one school he/she may not transfer to another school to increase eligibility.

#### Rationale for the Semester Rule:

A maximum participation requirement: promotes timely progress toward graduation by discouraging students from delaying or interrupting their high school education; disallows students to enroll for one (1) semester each school year to increase athletic ability and skill; promotes equality of competition; diminishes risks stemming from unequal competition, and places emphasis on the academic mission of the school.

#### ***Sect. 7: Non-School Competition***

A. A member of a school team is a student athlete who is regularly present for, and actively participates in, all team tryouts, practices and competitions. Bona fide members, as of the first date to practice in that sport as listed in By-Law Article XXXVII of the NHIAA Handbook, of a school team are prevented from missing a high school practice or competition to compete with an out-of-school team, practice or competition to include tournaments, showcases, combines or other athletic events. Whenever a conflict arises between the high school team practice/competition and an out-of-school practice/competition on the same day, the high school team practice/competition must be honored by the student athlete. Priority must be given at all times to the high school team, its practices, and its contests unless a waiver has been granted by the principal and athletic director. It is expressly understood that waivers shall not be granted on a regular basis and shall only be granted in extraordinary circumstances.

**\*\*** An example of an “extraordinary circumstance” would be the opportunity to try-out for a national level team **\*\***

Penalties: Any student athlete who violates this rule, unless a waiver has been granted as stated above, for the first time shall be declared ineligible for the next four (4) consecutive interscholastic events or three (3) weeks of a season in which the student athlete is a participant, whichever is greater. This penalty is effective from the date of his or her last participation in a high school sport. Any student athlete who violates this rule a second time or subsequent time shall be declared ineligible for participation in any high school sport for the balance of the school year.