

**123-AG-1. INTERSCHOLASTIC AND UCFSD APPROVED
CLUB ATHLETIC ACTIVITIES
Administrative Guideline**

Rules and Regulations Interpreting Board Policy of Interscholastic Athletics (123)

I. Philosophy of Athletics

The Unionville-Chadds Ford School District (hereafter UCFSD) recognizes that athletics is an integral component of the total school experience for all district students. Athletics are a conduit for community involvement to foster loyalty within the student body and to stimulate community interest. Through athletics, students develop positive values and attitudes to enrich their growth and preparation to become vital members of society.

Athletics is an extension of the classroom and provides students with many learning opportunities. As a learning experience, the UCFSD athletic program will:

- Promote the physical, mental, emotional, and moral well-being of the student-athlete.
- Teach goal setting for improvement and success of both the individual and team.
- Sponsor a competitive athletic program grades 7 – 12.
- Provide coaches, facilities and equipment to ensure program success.
- Encourage participation, physical education, teamwork, scholarship and sportsmanship in all programs and activities.

Open to all students, athletics provide our young people an opportunity to develop their talents and abilities to the highest level possible. Therefore, UCFSD is committed to offering a wide variety of athletic teams to as many students as possible. Every student desiring membership on a respective team may not have the opportunity to participate due to finite resources, experience and performance levels of members, scheduling and matters of safety. Students selected for membership may experience varied levels of competition playing time. Membership and participation is the decision of the coach, and for club sports, the approved organizational guidelines for the respective team. Through membership and participation, the student gives time, energy and loyalty to the team and accepts the associated policies, regulations, rules and responsibilities. This document incorporates the standards and guidelines established by the UCFSD and, as applicable, the Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association (PIAA). Assessment of needs and review of this document will occur on a periodic, or as needed basis. The UCFSD reserves the right to make policies and decisions to address specific issues that may arise which are not explicitly covered in these guidelines.

The UCFSD recognizes the importance of Club Sport programs. Club Sports sanctioned by the UCFSD are expected to operate in a manner consistent with the UCFSD philosophy of athletics and the expectations for students, coaches and parents. The UCFSD reserves the right to no longer sanction the organization if incidents, events, or behaviors occur which are determined to be inconsistent with UCFSD policies and guidelines. Any Club Sport that has

their sanctioning revoked by the UCFSD will forfeit the privilege of using the school name, and will no longer be a sanctioned UCFSD Club Sport.

These guidelines are in effect from the first day of participation for all students, coaches and parents involved in an approved UCFSD Interscholastic or Club Sport athletic team.

II. Athletic Opportunities

The opportunities for students to participate can be found in the building specific handbooks and other information guides provided at the building levels. These publications may be in hard copy and/or electronic format. The process for starting a new sport will include the interested individual(s) initiating the formal process through the Athletic Director in the respective building. District and school board approvals will complete the process.

III. Participation and Responsibilities

The UCFSD fully recognizes the importance of athletic participation. As a PIAA member school district, we share the beliefs from *“Extending Student-Athlete Success,”* A Study of Scholastic Sport Across Pennsylvania, 2008 - Study Director, Dr. Aimee C. Kimball, University of Pittsburgh.

A. Student-athletes

The first priority of our student-athletes is to be the best academic student possible based upon their ability level. The opportunity to participate in the UCFSD athletic program is extended to all students who are willing to assume responsibilities as outlined in these guidelines, student handbooks and those established by the coaches and club organizations.

It is expected UCFSD student-athletes will:

1. Display outstanding character and sportsmanship.
2. Display proper respect for authority.
3. Display a spirit of cooperation and teamwork.
4. Dress appropriately when representing the UCFSD.
5. Use appropriate language and act in a manner socially acceptable.
6. Develop and demonstrate a sense of pride in individual and team effort.
7. Perform to the best of their ability.
8. Work with the coach to establish and to achieve individual and team goals.
9. Adhere to all UCFSD, PIAA, coach and club policies, rules and regulations.
10. Reflect credit upon themselves, coaches, parents, school and community.

B. Coaches

The responsibility of the coach is to be a role model while properly educating student-athletes through participation in athletics. Promotion of the health, safety and welfare in the overall development of each student-athlete is the primary focus of the coach.

The UCFSD recognizes that volunteer coaches bring unique skills, talents and abilities to the district. They enrich the athletic experience, and provide invaluable assistance to the district’s staff and programs.

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The Athletic Director will be responsible for the screening and assignment of volunteer coaches. The list of volunteers will be provided each year to the Human Resources Coordinator. These positions shall not supplant coaching positions outlined in the collective bargaining agreement.

It is expected UCFSD coaches will:

1. Complete, at his/her expense, procedural clearances required by law.
2. Have a signed contract with the UCFSD. (volunteers see attachment 1)
3. Exercise discretion in disclosing any confidential student matters that the coach becomes aware as a result of their position.
4. Consult with the Athletic Director regarding any matter of concern in discharging their duties and responsibilities.
5. Model sportsmanship, use appropriate language, be professional in appearance, promote a healthy environment for all students, and create an atmosphere of respect.
6. Provide information regarding activity requirements, fees, and special equipment, out of season opportunities, and locations and times for all practices, events and contests.
7. Follow all national, state, local, UCFSD and, as applicable, PIAA guidelines for their sport.
8. Provide regulations and expectations outside the UCFSD policies, codes and guidelines (i.e., missed events, practices, activities and resulting consequences).
9. Have well planned practices and events to include planning by participants as appropriate.
10. Supervise athletes at all scheduled events. No student organized/led events may occur on school property without coach supervision. Coaches will clearly communicate, if applicable; pick up times for the conclusion of activities. It is important to respect those times established as parent/guardian planning is often based on the time communicated. Any team overnight activities require administration and Athletic Director approval.
11. Be responsible for the distribution, inventory report and collection of all school equipment provided for assigned activity.
12. Ensure facilities are clean, as applicable, following all meetings and practices.
13. Understand that coaching positions are offered on a yearly basis and subject to the approval of the Board of School Directors.
14. Meet with the Booster Organizations regarding the needs of the team as determined by the coach.
15. Develop an effective process of communicating with parents such as phone chains, email, etc.
16. Encourage student-athletes to participate in community service.
17. Speak with varsity student-athletes to determine their interest in intercollegiate athletics and offer guidance and assistance as appropriate.
18. Coordinate fundraising through the Athletic Director and building administration.
19. Act in the best interest of the group or team at all times.
20. In coordination with the Athletic Director, monitor academic eligibility of student-athletes. Coaches are encouraged to track their team's GPA to emphasize the importance of academic success.

C. Parents

A goal of the UCFSD is to establish a positive partnership to include clear communication between parents and coaches. Failure to follow these guidelines may compromise your child's membership on the team and/or your attendance at events.

UCFSD parents/guardians have the responsibility to be role models for our students as representatives of his/her child's school and community. It is expected parents/guardians will:

1. Support the UCFSD athletic policies, guidelines, codes and all activity regulations.
2. Provide positive support to their child, coaches and other members of their child's team or activity.
3. Model good sportsmanship toward officials, judges, players, coaches and other participants.
4. Use appropriate language and act in a manner socially acceptable.
5. Notify coaches well in advance of any schedule conflict that may impact the planned activities of the team or group.
6. Encourage their child to express any concerns directly to the coach following the communication protocol in Section E of this document.
7. Ensure students arrive and are picked up per the times established by the coach. Parents are to be respectful of time established, as failure to do so may result in student-athlete's exclusion from future activities.
8. Act in the best interest of the group or team at all times.

D. Special Interest Items (SII):

1. Transportation - All participants of school sponsored activities must take district transportation, if provided, to and from all activities unless previous arrangements have been made for the student to be picked up directly from the activity. A letter signed by the parent must be provided ahead of time; however, we understand that occasionally an extenuating circumstance may arise. In that case, the parent may write a letter on the spot, which he/she will provide to the coach, allowing the student to be driven home by the individual designated in the written note (e.g. parent, grandparent, neighbor, sibling, etc.). On the occasion of an extraordinary activity for which student driving needs to occur, the parent, coach, and Athletic Director will be the coordination team for approval. Except for the rare occurrence, staff members will not transport students in their private vehicle, unless prior approval among staff member, parent, and Athletic Director occurs.
2. Hazing – (See Board Policy #247) hazing in any form by any member of any athletic team will not be tolerated. Hazing has the potential to endanger the mental or physical health, safety, and/or welfare of a fellow participant regardless of the willingness of the member to be hazed. Hazing shall include, but is not limited to, any brutality of a physical nature, forced consumption of foods or liquids, any activity that will subject the member to mental stress, or various initiations or rites of passage practices. The penalty for hazing may include both school and athletic disciplinary action, which may result in dismissal from the team.

3. Participation in Multiple Activities – UCFSD students are encouraged to be involved in multiple activities during their school years. Many of these activities occur concurrently or even simultaneously based upon the participant’s choices.

Simultaneous or concurrent participation in multiple school activities should be discussed in advance between and among all parties involved. The outcome may be a workable solution resulting in participation in each, or it may result in the student having to make a choice of one activity over another. The multiple sport student-athlete is expected to make his/her “in-season” school team the priority, and should not be pressured regarding “out of season” workouts or programs. The “in-season” school team coach reserves the right to field the team best able to perform at peak readiness based upon the coach’s professional judgment.

E. Communication

Team selection, player utilization, and team strategy, are solely the prerogatives of the coach. However, UCFSD welcomes all participants and parents/guardians to speak with the coach of their child’s team if there are any other concerns. Students are encouraged to speak directly to the coach regarding any concern prior to involving parents. Speaking to a coach immediately before or after a contest or event regarding any concerns is not permitted. As this is usually counterproductive as emotions are frequently higher at those times, making an appointment for a subsequent meeting time will allow a more productive conversation to occur. If the student and/or parent are not satisfied with this level of communication, the following steps should be followed:

Communication Protocol:

1. Student-athlete speaks with the coach
2. Parent speaks with the coach, preferably with student-athlete present
3. Parent speaks with Athletic Director
4. Parent speaks with UCFSD Building Principal
5. Parent contacts the Superintendent’s office

UCFSD asks all involved to be reasonable and patient in waiting for a response before moving to the next level of communication. Failure to follow these guidelines may compromise your child’s membership on the team.

IV. Levels of Athletic Participation and Expectations

- A. Middle School (Grades 7 & 8) and Freshmen Level Athletics: Middle school level athletics provide an opportunity for a continuation of skill development and participation from community youth programs. Freshmen level athletics provide an opportunity for a continuation of skill development and participation from middle school programs. At these levels, participation and skill development is stressed more than competition. Equal playing time is not guaranteed, as multiple criteria factor into decision-making. These levels promote work ethic, skill development, positive attitude and responsibility to others. The number of participants may be limited based upon available resources.

- B. Junior Varsity Level Athletics: The junior varsity level generally will be comprised of athletes from grades 9 through 11. At this level, competition is stressed more than participation. Athletes begin to understand that athletes with more ability, a stronger work ethic, a more positive attitude and/or team players who are physically fit generally experience more playing time. The junior varsity level prepares student-athletes for varsity level competition. The number of participants on respective teams may be limited based upon available resources.
- C. Varsity Level Athletics: The varsity level is the most competitive athletic program at UCFSD. The primary objective is to place the most skilled individuals together as a team to win each game that is played. Coaches and players should focus on improving player skills, defining player roles, and establishing individual and team goals. The head coach determines playing time and playing position according to team needs. Playing time or position is not guaranteed. Each varsity player should realize that participation at the varsity level requires greater commitment and dedication to the sport than at previous levels. Each individual has a responsibility to the other members of the team and must contribute accordingly. Those who do not make the necessary level of commitment may find their participation time diminished, and possibly compromise his/her membership. The number of participants on respective teams may be limited based upon available resources.

V. Eligibility Requirements

The number one priority for all student-athletes should be their academic progress. All student-athletes are expected to perform due diligence in achieving to their potential in all courses scheduled. In order to represent UCFSD in any athletic activity, a student must meet all applicable academic and attendance eligibility requirements per UCFSD and PIAA policies, procedures, and building specific guidelines. Failure to be in compliance may compromise participation and/or team membership.

- A. To ensure that the UCFSD is consistent with P.I.A.A. and Ches-Mont league policy, the following will govern athletic eligibility:
1. A student shall be ineligible for interscholastic competition upon attaining the age of nineteen (19) years, with the following exception: if the age of nineteen (19) is attained on or after July 1, the student shall be eligible to compete through that school year. For middle school students the age limit is fifteen (15) years with a similar exception allowance.
 2. Parental/Guardian consent is necessary to compete in athletics.
 3. A current physical examination form (furnished by the P.I.A.A.) must be completed by an authorized medical examiner prior to the beginning of practice for any sports season. Smoking, the use of alcohol or involvement with illegal drugs may result in removal from the team.
 4. Athletes must be amateurs who regularly attend Unionville High School or home schooled per UCFSD Board Policy 137.

5. An athlete must be passing the equivalent of 4 full-credit subjects in the current marking period to be eligible to participate in interscholastic contests. The UCFSD has the right to adopt more stringent academic standards.
 - a. Once the school year begins, athletic eligibility shall be determined on a weekly basis. When the athlete's cumulative work from the beginning of the marking period does not as of any Friday meet the standards stated in UCFSD policy, the athlete shall be ineligible from the immediate Sunday through the next Saturday.
 - b. The Athletic Director, or designee, shall determine the names of the student-athletes who have a failing grade at the end of each week by checking the grades that have been electronically entered by the teachers. Having a failing grade at the end of a week means the student-athlete is failing the subject for the marking period, at that point in the marking period. The Athletic Director, or designee, will contact the teacher of the student-athlete to confirm their grade.
 6. An athlete must have passed the equivalent of four (4) full-credit subjects in the previous marking period to be eligible to participate in subsequent marking periods.
 - a. In cases where an athlete's work in any preceding marking period does not meet the standards provided for by UCFSD Policy, said athlete shall be ineligible to participate in interscholastic contests for at least fifteen (15) school days of the next marking period beginning on the day report cards are issued.
 - b. At the end of the school year, the athlete's final grades for each subject shall be used to determine the athlete's eligibility for the first marking period of the next school year.
 - i. In cases where an athlete's final grades for the year do not meet the standards provided for by UCFSD Policy, said athlete shall be ineligible to participate in interscholastic contests for at least fifteen (15) school days of the marking period beginning on the first student day of the next school year. These athletes may participate in pre-season practices prior to the first student day.
 - ii. Athletes who fail to meet the eligibility requirement for the next school year may attend summer school to correct their deficiencies.
- B. The PIAA regulations permit the UCFSD to establish more stringent academic requirements for athletic eligibility. In addition to passing the equivalent of 4 full-credit subjects the UCFSD establishes the following to govern athletic eligibility:
1. During the school year any athlete who is failing two (2) subjects in any week shall be ineligible for athletic participation for the next week as defined in the P.I.A.A. Eligibility paragraph 5a.
 2. Any athlete who is failing two (2) subjects at the end of the first, second, or third marking period shall be ineligible for athletic participation for the next 15 school days as defined in the P.I.A.A. Eligibility paragraph 6a.
 3. Any athlete who has failed two (2) subjects at the end of the school year shall be ineligible for athletic participation for the next 15 school days as defined in the P.I.A.A. Eligibility paragraph 6b.

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4. No athlete may play, practice, weight train, or be part of any meeting with his / her team during any period of ineligibility. Athletes may participate in open tryouts for team selection but may not scrimmage against another school.
5. After the end of any ineligibility period an athlete may participate in the practices or games immediately, at the discretion of the supervising adult.

C. Other UCFSD requirements governing athletic participation:

1. No athlete may participate in another sport until all obligations are met for the season he/she has concluded; this includes return of equipment.
2. No athlete may participate in a sport until he/she has paid the associated fee as determined by the UCFSD. This fee may be waived by the administration on an individual basis.
3. There are three (3) sport seasons per school year: fall, winter, and spring. An athlete may not be a member of two (2) teams in one (1) season without the consent of both coaches.
4. No athlete may miss practices without the approval of the coach of that sport.
5. If the coach gives prior approval, no athlete will be penalized because of lateness due to staying for after-school help.
6. The safest and most acceptable attendance for an athlete participating in an athletic activity is to attend school all day. A doctor's or verifiable written note must accompany an excused tardy or early dismissal request.
 - a. Athletes who are unexcused tardy but arrive before 8:10 AM are eligible to participate that day. However, athletes who have exceeded the maximum number of tardies for the year must have a note from a doctor when they report to school to be eligible to participate that day.
 - b. Athletes who are excused tardy but arrive before 11:00 AM are eligible to participate that day.
 - c. Athletes who have an excused early dismissal may return to participate in their athletic activity later that day.
 - d. Athletes who leave school because of illness may not participate in their athletic activity later that day without administrative approval.
 - e. Athletes who are going to be absent from school during their season for reasons such as a college visit, bereavement, or award ceremony **must** get approval from their assistant principal prior to the date of the absence in order to be able to participate in their sport activity on that date. To get approval, athletes must provide a written note from the parent/guardian explaining the reason for the absence. Without prior approval, athletes may not participate in any sport activity on that date.
7. Student-athletes who violate these guidelines and / or coaches rules may be dismissed from the team.
 - a. Regular, Extended and Saturday detentions.
 - i. For high school students these are not considered suspensions. Therefore, an athlete is eligible to participate in his/her athletic activity after fulfilling his/her detention obligation. Athletes who miss detentions but attend their athletic activity are subject to out-of-school suspension.
 - ii. For middle school students a Saturday detention will result in an athlete being suspended from participation for one week.

- b. If an athlete is suspended out-of-school he/she is not eligible to participate on the day of the suspension.
 - i. If the out-of-school suspension is for a Friday and a Monday, the athlete may not participate for the weekend between the two (2) days of out-of-school suspension.
 - ii. The school policy for any suspension from four (4) to ten (10) days requires re-admittance to the school through the Superintendent or designee. If the school year ends before the athlete may return, then any remaining days will carry into the next school year.

VI. Sportsmanship at Athletic Contests

All spectators are expected to demonstrate proper behavior at sporting events by respecting all involved, by cheering on and commending players, and by showing self control at all times. Any disrespectful or improper behavior may result in removal from the contest and possible disciplinary action. Sporting events are excellent opportunities to display school pride, and everyone is advised to take advantage of these opportunities.

ATTACHMENT 1 TO POLICY #123
UCFSD VOLUNTEER ATHLETIC COACH CONTRACT

I, _____,
(Print name)

understand and agree that my involvement with the Unionville–Chadds Ford School District
(UCFSD) _____
(Print name of team)

team in the athletic program is performed with and under the following conditions:

1. I will complete, at my expense, procedural clearances required by law.
2. I waive payment of any salary or stipend for my services.
3. I waive any eligibility for any benefits for my services.
4. I will familiarize myself with and adhere to all UCFSD policies and procedures related to athletics.
5. I understand my duties and responsibilities for my position and will not perform services outside of those.
6. I will attend any in-service meetings designated to enhance student relationship skills as deemed necessary by UCFSD administration and /or Athletic Director.
7. I will not be issued keys or have access to any school facility at any time other than when working under the supervision of another coach or the Athletic Director.
8. I will not have access to student records.
9. I will not intentionally or wantonly cause any injury or damage to person or property of UCFSD or any participant, coaching staff member, or spectator involved in such athletic event.
10. I will perform on the condition that I am covered by and included as an insured under all applicable liability insurance policies of the UCFSD.
11. I may be relieved of my volunteer position immediately, with or without cause with such action to be recommended to the school board

Volunteer Signature

Athletic Director Signature