

Alden Central Schools

Athletic Handbook



“...Where sportsmanship is an expectation!”

**Written for student-athletes, parents/guardians, coaches, and
spectators**

Alden Central School’s Sportsmanship Pledge

Welcome to Alden High School, where sportsmanship is an expectation.

So please...Let the players play. Let the cheerleaders cheer.

Let the coaches coach. Let the officials officiate.

Let the spectators be positive.

(Revised June 15, 2023)

Foreword

This handbook is meant to be a living, breathing document. It will be relevant and effective so long as it is reviewed and revised regularly over time. The committee that was charged with revising the guidelines herein believes that the final product is appropriate and relevant in our present interscholastic athletic environment. It is our hope that this document serves as the framework for a successful athletic program in the Alden Central School District.

Athletic Handbook Revision Committee (met in May 2018)

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The guidelines herein are consistent with the Alden Central School District Student Code of Conduct and those set forth by the NYSPHSAA (www.nysphsaa.org).

The New York State Public High School Athletic Association (NYSPHSAA) Code of Ethics

It is the duty of all concerned with High School athletics:

1. **To emphasize** the proper ideals of sportsmanship, ethical conduct and fair play.
2. **To eliminate** all possibilities which tend to destroy the best values of the game.
3. **To stress** the values derived from playing the game fairly.
4. **To show** cordial courtesy to visiting teams and officials.
5. **To establish** a happy relationship between visitors and hosts.
6. **To respect** the integrity and judgment of the sports officials.
7. **To achieve** a thorough understanding and acceptance of the rules of the game and standards of eligibility.
8. **To encourage** leadership, use of incentive, and good judgment by the players on the team.
9. **To recognize** that the purpose of athletics is to promote the physical, mental, moral, social, and emotional well-being of individual players.
10. **To remember** that an athletic contest is only a game...not a matter of life or death for player, coach, school, official, fan, community, state, or nation.

Governing Agencies

1. **The New York State Public High School Athletic Association (NYSPHSAA)** sets the standards for participation and competition in interscholastic athletics.
2. **Section VI** is our representative subdivision which interprets and implements the state regulations.
3. **Erie County Interscholastic Conference (ECIC)** is our local division of Section VI.
4. **The Alden Central School Board of Education** establishes policies and procedures that are implemented by the Athletic Department and school administration.

“The preeminent purpose of sports and activities is not to teach someone how to hit a three-pointer or to throw a curveball but how to harness the discipline, desire and commitment that come from striving to achieve those goals and then channeling those traits into overcoming the challenges of everyday life. We must instill a sense of determination to do things the right way; not to cheat, lie deceive, taunt, or flaunt our abilities or successes over others but to respect them and ourselves through our actions.

That is what the spirit of sport is all about: students finding in themselves an inner core of commitment, determination, and resiliency. Students discover they can do more than they thought. They learn that success in life comes with patience, with control, with discipline, and with help from others. We need to preserve and promote in our education system those experiences that encourage character development. Such situations abound in sports and other co-curricular activities – if we take the time to find them and use them. It is the curriculum of sports.”

- By Robert F. Kanaby, Retired NFHS Executive Director and Jim Tenopir, NFHS COO

Athletic Department Philosophy

Dear Student-Athletes, Parents, Coaches, Faculty, Staff, and Community Members:

Welcome to the Alden Central School District Interscholastic-Athletic Program. We are excited for your participation and grateful for your support. As with all our programs, both curricular and extra-curricular, our primary focus is the growth and development of the student-athletes that we work with daily. Interscholastic athletic participation and competition are two very important ways in which our students learn life lessons and skills that will serve them well in perpetuity. We strive to promote and develop positive traits such as sportsmanship, leadership, teamwork, oral communication, positive physical development, healthy lifestyle habits, and the list goes on.

On the other hand, our interscholastic athletic program is not about winning at all costs. We strive for excellence in all our endeavors, in and out of the classroom. Winning a competition is sometimes the natural by-product of those efforts. The good feelings and accolades that come with winning provide motivation and memories that sustain us for a lifetime. Sometimes, however, our own excellent efforts cannot match the excellent efforts of our opponents. It is in the experience of defeat that we learn and grow as well, sometimes even more so than in victory. Through defeat we also hope to teach the lessons of perseverance and commitment to improvement. The once great coach Vince Lombardi said, "it is not in falling down that we are defeated, it is in not getting up."

Ultimately, it is our desire to support a thriving athletic program that conveys a healthy perspective regarding its important place in our lives. It is a human endeavor, thereby involving both emotion and imperfections. Therein lives both the beauty and the source of frustration. Sport and athletic competitions are not, however, life and death, despite the many metaphors we use to describe it as such. As most of us experience it at the community and scholastic levels, it is not a business or money-making machine where human beings are sometimes treated as possessions or commodities. Here, in our school community, it is a classroom, like all other classrooms in the schoolhouse where our children go to learn and grow. The challenge for us will always be to provide good teachers for that classroom and those lessons. In that sense, all of us, together, are both the teacher and the student. The potential for growth and success is never ending. Our opportunities will come unceasingly, because in sports "there is always next season."

Thank you and good luck!

Alden Athletic Department

*Failure to comply with the stated expectations and guidelines set forth for spectators according to Board policy, the NYSPHSAA Code of Ethics, the Student Code of Conduct, the Athletic Handbook, and the Sportsmanship Pledge will result in removal from the athletic contest and possible further consequences.

The Three Levels of Competition

Modified – This level emphasizes team play as well as teaching and practicing the fundamentals of a given sport. The goal is for all participants to receive meaningful playing time. Playing time may not be equal for all participants. Each participant will compete in every contest unless a rule has been violated or the coach has a valid reason that the participant should not be a part of that contest. Winning is not the primary objective.

Junior Varsity – At this level, an increased emphasis is placed on team play, physical conditioning and refining fundamental skills. Winning is emphasized but is not the primary focus. Meaningful contest participation will exist over the course of the season, however, a specified amount of playing time is never guaranteed.

Varsity – Team play, sportsmanship, individual ability, physical conditioning, motivation, and attitude are all important aspects of competing at the varsity level. Winning is emphasized and not all players may play in every competition. It is vital that each team member understands their role on the team and knows its importance.

I. Available Sports

ADJUSTED CHART BASED ON CURRENT OFFERINGS

Season	Sport	Boys	Girls
Fall (August-October)	Cross Country	Varsity, Modified	Varsity, Modified
	Golf	Varsity	NA
	Football	Varsity, JV, Modified	NA
	Cheerleading	NA	Varsity
	Soccer	Varsity, JV, Modified	Varsity, JV, Modified
	Swimming	NA	Varsity
	Tennis	NA	Varsity
	Volleyball	NA	Varsity, JV, Modified
Winter (November - February)	Basketball	Varsity, JV, Modified	Varsity, JV, Modified
	Bowling	Varsity	Varsity
	Cheerleading	NA	Varsity
	Hockey	Varsity	Varsity
	Rifle	Varsity	Varsity
	Swimming	Varsity, Modified	Modified
	Unified Bowling	Varsity	Varsity
Spring (March-June)	Baseball	Varsity, JV, Modified	NA
	Softball	NA	Varsity, JV, Modified
	Tennis	Varsity	NA
	Track & Field	Varsity, Modified	Varsity, Modified

II. Student - Athlete Eligibility

- a. Any bona fide student enrolled in grades 7-12 may participate. NYSPHSAA defines a bona fide student as a “regularly enrolled student who is taking sufficient subjects to make an aggregate amount of three courses and who satisfies the physical education requirement.”
- b. A pupil shall be eligible for interscholastic athletic competition in a sport during each of four consecutive seasons of such sport commencing with the pupil’s entry into the 9th grade and prior to graduation. Additional years are granted should a student start at the JV or Varsity level while in 7th or 8th grade. Years played at the modified level do not count against the four years of eligibility.
- c. If the age of 19 years is reached on or after July 1, the student may continue to participate during that school year in all sports.
- d. Students may be eligible regardless of age or grade if they have been approved through the State Education Department’s Athletic Placement Program (APP).
- e. A 15-year-old below the 9th grade needs only to meet APP maturity standards to be eligible at the high school level.

Sports Physicals and Athletic Registration

- a. All student-athletes must be medically cleared to participate in any interscholastic sport by passing a sports physical conducted by their primary medical provider. The district does not schedule annual sports physicals.
- b. If the student-athlete has not had their annual physical and submitted official physical exam paperwork approving sports participation, he/she cannot and will not be allowed to participate in any tryout, practice, or competition.
- c. Be advised that once a student-athlete is medically cleared to play he/she will be required to (according to state regulations) participate successfully in a sport specific number of conditioning practices to be eligible for interscholastic competition.
- d. Parents and student-athletes must use the online registration system to sign up for sports participation. The registration period starts 30 days prior to the first eligible day of practice. The nurse will review the student’s physical and answers to the health questionnaire before clearing the child for sports participation. Failure to register on time may result in ineligibility for the athletic season.

Injuries

- a. It is imperative that **all injuries** sustained during any tryout, practice, or contest be reported to the coach immediately. The coach will file a report on all injuries and communicate with the parent/guardian of the student-athlete. The school nurse/district athletic trainer will review the incident report on each injury and work with the student-athlete and coach to return the student-athlete to play as soon as he/she is medically cleared.
- b. If a student-athlete is injured at any time during any season (from day one of tryouts until the end of the last competition), it is required that he/she be “re-certified” or “cleared” to participate again by the student-athlete’s doctor and/or the district’s medical provider if those individuals held the student-athlete out of

competition. Following a serious injury, it will need to be determined by the student-athlete's doctor and/or the district's medical provider, and any guidelines established by NYSPHSAA, when the student-athlete may return to competition and what kind of re-conditioning protocol will be established.

Attendance

- a. Student-athletes must attend school to participate in any school activity, including tryouts, practices, team meetings, contests, or any other school-related activity.
- b. To be eligible for participation on any given school day, student-athletes must be in attendance at least one-half (3 hours 20 minutes) of the regular school day in accordance with their specific building schedule. A legal excuse must be submitted for the time the student is not in school on that day.
- c. Exceptions can be made to this rule in extenuating circumstances. Examples include, but are not limited to, funerals, unusual medical appointments, etc. The student should contact the athletic director(s) to discuss unusual situations. Documentation may be requested.

Academic Eligibility

An academic eligibility policy is in place for all students participating in all extra-curricular activities, including athletics. Students failing two or more classes are deemed ineligible. Ineligible students are not permitted to participate in any athletic contests or competitions without the permission of all current teachers. A student who is unable to obtain permission from their teachers is limited to practice participation but is expected to be in attendance with the team at all games, home or away. Students can obtain teacher approval on a weekly basis. Students ineligible due to year-end grades will be ineligible at the start of the fall season based on school policy. Please see the student handbook for more details.

Athletic Placement Process

The Athletic Placement Process (APP) is a program for evaluating top student-athletes to play at a higher level. The intent of this program is to provide a mechanism to safely participate at an appropriate level of competition based upon readiness rather than age and grade. This program has been designed to assess a student's physical maturation, physical fitness, and skill, so the student may be placed at a level of competition which should result in increased opportunity, a fairer competitive environment, reduced injury, and greater personal satisfaction.

- a. The Athletic Placement Process begins with the varsity coach of any given sport for which APP is an option. **The process is not initiated by a parent or a student-athlete.** If a varsity coach, in consultation with the other coaches in the school program, observes and identifies a student who shows exceptional physical fitness and skill, he/she will communicate this information in writing to the athletic director(s).
- b. Generally, 7th grade students will participate in the school's modified program and will be evaluated by our coaching staff as potential candidates for APP in their 8th grade year.
- c. The athletic director(s) will review the written recommendation from the coach. If the recommendation is favorable for the student, the athletic director(s) will contact the parent to review the recommendation and determine whether the student will continue the process.

- d. The decision to test is made with the best interest of the student as the determining factor. No student-athlete will be moved to a different competitive level if his/her development (i.e. mental, physical, emotional, athletic, academic, and social) will be negatively affected in any way. It is anticipated that students meeting these requirements will have significant playing time at that level.
- e. The district medical director will determine a student's physical maturity level and compare the physical size of the student in relation to that of the students against whom the student wishes to compete. If the student is determined to have attained the appropriate physical maturity level and comparable physical size for the desired sport, the student may proceed with the performance testing.
- f. The President's Physical Fitness Test has been selected as the test for this process, and the student must meet the 85th percentile level for their age in 4 out of 5 test components.
- g. If the student passes the performance test, he/she may then be eligible to try out for the desired team and must qualify for the team if tryouts are held. Successful APP completion does not guarantee any student a position on any team at any level.

III. What is Expected of Parents/Guardians

Prior to the student being allowed to participate, a parent/guardian will:

- a. Attend the pre-season meeting hosted by the coach(es) and/or read the team handout provided by the coach regarding specific team rules and inquire about any questions that you may have.
- b. Review the Athletic Handbook with your child(ren) and ask for clarification if any part of it is not understood.
- c. Ensure that the online registration is completed prior to the first day of tryouts. Your child(ren) must also have an up-to-date physical examination to participate.

During the sport season, the parent/guardian will:

- a. Be a positive role model for your child as a student-athlete who will need support in juggling athletics and academics.
- b. Be a positive role model for your child as a spectator at practices, games, and other team events. (See Sportsmanship Pledge and Expectations for Spectators)
- c. If an issue arises with your child's coach, encourage them to communicate with the head coach. It is always preferred that the student athlete learns to advocate for him/herself whenever possible. If this is not possible, you may join your child or contact the head coach yourself. In all cases, it is preferred that the "24-hour-rule" be followed. In other words, it is better to let a day pass before speaking to the coach about a disagreement that you may have. It is not acceptable to speak to a coach about playing time or other athletes on the team. It is acceptable to find out how your son/daughter can become a better teammate/athlete on that team and in that sport. A meeting of this sort should be held at a previously arranged time and location, not after a contest or practice. Communicate with the athletic director(s) if you cannot resolve the issue you have with the coach.

- d. Communicate with the coach and athletic trainer immediately regarding any and all injuries (no matter how minor) sustained by your son/daughter during his/her participation in any team activity (i.e. tryouts, practices, scrimmages, meetings, contests, etc.).
- e. Understand that, following a lengthy injury, a doctor's release may be necessary and there may be a recertification and retraining period before the student-athlete can resume participation.
- f. Support, whenever possible, the efforts of the Sports Boosters Organization, which is run solely by parents and community members, and independently from the school itself.

Following the Season, the Parent/Guardian Will:

- a. Ensure that all property of the Alden Central School District associated with the sport in which your son/daughter has participated is returned to the coach clean and in good condition. Please note that you will be charged for equipment/uniforms that are damaged or not returned.

IV. Spectator Expectations

Definition: A spectator is defined as any non-participant who is present at an Alden athletic contest, home or away.

- a. The primary purpose for attending a sporting event as a spectator is to enjoy watching our student athletes compete to the best of their ability. Your presence and cheering at the contest should always be positive and supportive of the efforts of student-athletes. Negative cheers/gestures/actions directed towards any individual present at the contest are prohibited.
- b. Spectators should respect the judgment of the officials and the coaches during a contest. Spectators should refrain from any attempt at direct communication with these individuals during or after the contest.
- c. Spectators should refrain from entering the official playing areas of any athletic contest, unless otherwise directed by a coach or an athletic administrator. This includes the player bench and warm-up areas.
- d. Spectators should make every effort to learn the official rules of play for any given sport to better appreciate the event, including the play of both teams, and the decisions of the officials and coaches.
- e. Sportsmanship is an expectation. Unsportsmanlike conduct and behavior may result in removal from the school premises and further possible consequences. Progressive discipline will apply to repeated infractions.
- f. Spectators who violate the expectations may be required to meet with the athletic director(s) and/or complete an online educational certification program before they are permitted to return to an Alden sporting event.
- g. All public-school properties (inside and out) in New York State are drug, alcohol, and tobacco free zones. Use of prohibited items on school property may result in removal from the contest and further possible consequences.
- h. NYSPHSAA's sportsmanship spectator expectation (as given below) is, likewise, the expectation at Alden Central School athletic events.
 - a. NYSPHSAA understands and recognizes officials, just like student athletes and coaches, are not going to be perfect 100% of the time. Officials, just like student athletes and coaches, are essential to

interscholastic sports programs. Without officials, NYSPHSAA and its member schools would not be able to provide interscholastic sports in the manner that is desired and expected by student athletes, coaches, and parents. Spectators are expected to “Be Loud, Be Proud, and Be Positive.”

- b. Negative comments and inappropriate behaviors by spectators are required to be addressed by all and any school supervisors and administrators, as a member of NYSPHSAA. Spectators may be prohibited from attending current and future interscholastic contests based on their behavior.
- c. Any negative, inappropriate, derogatory comments or actions that brings direct attention to a supervisor or school administrator by a spectator or group of spectators are required to be addressed by the host school in the following non-sequential order depending on the comments or behavior:
 - i. First warning – Directing the spectator or group of spectators to refrain from any negative comments or actions.
 - ii. Second warning – A personal discussion with the spectators or group of spectators on the above NYSPHSAA expectations and reminding the spectators or group of spectators of the next step, removal of the game or event, will be utilized if the behavior continues.
 - iii. Removal from the contest – The spectator or group of spectators will be directed to leave the facility for the remainder of the game or event. If spectators or group of spectators refuse to leave the game or event, play will be stopped until they vacate the premise.
- d. Penalty for being removed from a game or event: Any spectator removed from a game or event will have a minimum penalty of completing the NFHS Parent Credential course or a one-game suspension before they are allowed to attend any interscholastic event, home or away. Once the course is completed the spectator will provide a certificate of completion to the athletic department office. Schools are required to communicate with the offending spectator on the NYSPHSAA Sportsmanship Spectator Expectations.
- e. Depending on the severity of the behavior/comments or future disqualifications by the offending spectator NYSPHSAA and the Section may get directly involved in the situation.
 - i. Note: A school may take any or all these actions during or after an interscholastic contest.

V. Expectations for Coaches

- a. As teachers of a given sport, coaches will create a positive learning environment for their student-athletes in which all team members and individuals associated with the team conduct themselves respectfully and in a sportsmanlike manner.
- b. They will adhere to the philosophy of athletics as established by the district and written herein.
- c. They will meet with players and parents to establish their team expectations, either in person or in writing, to include (but not limited to) tryouts, cuts, attendance, playing time, paperwork, practice and game schedules, appropriate conduct, transportation, injuries, communication, etc.
- d. They will be on time for practices, contests, and other team functions.
- e. They will always supervise student-athletes while in their care.

- f. They will communicate to parents any necessary information in a timely manner, especially regarding injuries, misconduct, and consequences.
- g. They will represent themselves, their team, and the Alden community to the best of their ability.
- h. They will coach our student-athletes in a way that will prepare them to be successful on the playing field and throughout life by teaching lessons in sportsmanship, teamwork, leadership, perseverance, and character.

VI. Student–Athlete Expectations

- a. It is the responsibility of the student-athlete to attend his/her academic program. If a student-athlete is not successful in school according to our student ineligibility policy, then he/she will be deemed ineligible and will need to meet weekly requirements to remain eligible. See the student handbook for the complete policy and requirements.
- b. Participation in athletics does not make any student-athlete exempt from physical education. Every student must complete two units (1/2 unit each year) of physical education to graduate from high school. To be eligible to participate in a practice or athletic contest, the student must be prepared and ready to participate in physical education. Otherwise, the student-athlete must sit out at the practice or contest the day that they are not prepared for physical education.
- c. It is the expectation that all student-athletes represent our community with pride, humility, good sportsmanship, and respect for oneself and others. It is important to remember that when a student-athlete wears an Alden uniform and competes interscholastically, he/she is representing the entire community and not just him/herself.
- d. All student-athletes are required to follow the reasonable expectations of their coaches. The key is to know what will be expected from your coaches to diminish the likelihood of misunderstandings. A working relationship based on mutual respect should be the goal.
- e. During the school day, student-athletes are subject to the school dress code. On game days, it is acceptable for team members to wear their uniform top in school.
- f. Communication with your coaches is extremely important. As young adults, you must learn to advocate for yourself in a respectful and private manner. If you have concerns about anything, you should approach your coach and ask for some time to speak privately. If the matter cannot be resolved, seek help from the athletic director(s) or a parent.
- g. Some sports may need to be make cuts following a tryout period. The head coach, after the tryout period, will select the final team roster. In this matter, the head coach's decision is final.
- h. If a student-athlete makes the final roster in a particular sport, he/she may leave the team without penalty in the first 10 days following the final roster selection. However, choosing to discontinue your participation with a team is a decision not to be taken lightly. Student-athletes who consider terminating their position on a team should first speak to their parents and the coach directly. After the initial 10-day period, the coach must agree with the student-athlete regarding their decisions/reasons for leaving the team. Otherwise, the student-athlete's eligibility for the next season in which he/she participates may be in jeopardy. This policy is meant to

discourage quitting and to encourage student-athletes to fulfill their commitment to a team despite difficult circumstances.

- i. All student-athletes are responsible for the equipment and uniforms issued to them for any given season. The district does not provide footwear for any sport. The issued equipment is for team use only and not to be worn/used for physical education classes or elsewhere. If the issued equipment is defective or becomes damaged, please report it to the coach immediately. A monetary charge will be levied for any equipment or uniforms that are not returned in a timely fashion or in satisfactory condition. All uniforms are the property of the district. We do not sell jerseys to any student athletes, including seniors.
- j. The same school code of conduct that applies to a classroom also applies to a school bus. Any misconduct will be dealt with in accordance with the general school code of conduct first **and then** the athletic code of conduct established for student-athletes herein. It is expected that all student-athletes conduct themselves in a safe and respectful manner on every school bus according to the directions of the bus driver and the coach as well as the universal safety rules posted on every bus.
- k. Attendance at practice and all team functions is critical and will directly impact the playing time of the student athlete as determined by the coach. Failure to attend regularly will most definitely impact playing time in a negative way.
- l. Student-athletes are no longer eligible to represent Alden Central School in a particular sport in that season if the student-athlete participates in practice or competition with or against any individual or team(s) representing a college that season. This is pursuant to NYSPHSAA regulation.

VII. Transportation Policy

- a. Except where set forth below, all student-athletes must ride the team bus to all away contests/off-campus practices. Prior arrangements for parent transportation may be made with the athletic office in exceptional circumstances.
- b. A parent/guardian may transport their own child home after notifying and signing out with the respective coach. The student athlete may also be transported home by another adult party (not a student and over the age of 18) only if the parent of the athlete provides a note to the coach prior to or on the day of the game granting permission for that athlete to be transported by the other adult and the other adult notifies and signs out with the respective coach prior to transporting the student. Other high school students, regardless of age and parental permission, shall not be permitted to transport another student unless the student driving the vehicle is a sibling with a valid driver's license that is verified with the district.
- c. The district may grant certain exceptions to the transportation policy if a team practices off campus (e.g., primary school, Robert O. Smith Park, bowling alley, golf course, hockey rink, etc.) and the student athlete possesses a valid driver's license and parental permission is obtained. The student athlete may transport any siblings to the practice but shall not be allowed to transport any other students regardless of any parental permission.

VIII. Code of Conduct for Student-Athletes

- It is critical for all to understand that participation in interscholastic athletics is a privilege and not a right. If a student-athlete abuses this privilege, there will be consequences. In most cases, the consequences will be two-fold. First, all student-athletes are subject to the consequences of the student code of conduct that all students are subject. Secondly, student-athletes are subject to the consequences as written in this document that pertain specifically to their participation in athletics.
- All student-athletes are expected to always exhibit sportsmanship and emotional control. This means that student-athletes give and show respect for themselves, their coach(es), teammates, opponents, officials, school personnel, spectators, media members, their physical environment, and the property of others, etc. If a student engages in unsportsmanlike behavior from the beginning of the season (first day of tryouts) to the end of the season (the last contest or scheduled team event) or at any point in between, he/she will be subject to progressive discipline.

The following infractions will be referred to the Athletic Review Council to determine the appropriate consequences:

1. Violations of the student code of conduct resulting in any type of suspension from school.
2. Any display of unsportsmanlike conduct.
3. Substance abuse policy violations include:
 - a. Possession or use of tobacco or tobacco products, on or off school property. It is prohibited by the school code of conduct, district policy, and, in most cases (depending on the age of the student-athlete), the law.
 - b. Possessing or using vaporizers/e-cigarettes and associated liquid substances.
 - c. Possessing or being under the influence of alcohol, on or off school property. This infraction is also in violation of the school code of conduct and the law.
 - d. Possessing or consuming illegal drugs or substances not prescribed to you by a physician, or even “over the counter” stimulants, on or off school property. This includes steroids and any performance enhancing drugs. Students may be subject to a Superintendent’s Hearing and a one-year suspension from school.
4. Possessing or attempting to use any item (illegal or otherwise) as a weapon on or off school property. Student-athletes may be subject to a Superintendent’s Hearing.
5. Hazing in any form on or off school property, including initiation which is degrading and strictly prohibited by law. No student-athlete shall conspire to engage in hazing, participate in hazing, or commit any act that causes or is likely to cause bodily danger, physical harm, personal degradation, or disgrace, resulting in physical or mental harm to any student or other person.
6. Harassment of any kind on or off school property, directed toward another individual with technology/the internet/cell phone or otherwise.

IX. Athletic Review Council

- a. The Athletic Review Council will consist of the athletic director(s), the student’s principal or assistant principal, and a current head coach of any sport except for the sport for which the review is being conducted. The head coach of the student-athlete under review will be available to the council for questioning/information.

- b. The Review Council will determine the consequences for any of the above-named infractions or other infractions not listed here that may be deemed significant. The decision of the Council is final. Appeals are to be directed to the Superintendent of Schools.
- c. Should a student-athlete be suspended by the high school or middle school administration for any reason (other than substance abuse violations), the following will be enforced by the review council:
 1. The first suspension from school will result in a one-game athletic suspension beyond any games missed while out on suspension.
 2. If two suspensions from school are given in the same season, the student athlete will be removed from the athletic team for the remainder of that season.
 3. If a third suspension is given in a single school year, the student athlete will be removed from athletic participation for the remainder of the school year.
- d. Should a student-athlete violate the substance abuse policy, the following will be enforced by the review council:
 1. Use or possession of tobacco/vaporizers or affiliated paraphernalia – 10 days without participation with the team.
 2. Use or possession of alcohol – eight weeks without participation with the team.
 3. Use or possession of illicit drugs – Student’s situation will be sent to the athletic review council to determine an appropriate consequence. The time without participation with the team should be greater than 8 weeks.

Note: Days without participation are only counted when there is an organized team practice or contest.

Student athletes, parents, and spectators are subject to completing an online tutorial in sportsmanship, spectator conduct, and other topics that may be deemed suitable for corrective action should an offense arise. The individual would be responsible for completing this tutorial prior to being able to return to their team, as a spectator, etc. This may be issued on top of a suspension from athletic competition. Should the tutorial not be completed at the end of the suspension, the suspension will continue until proof of completion is submitted to the athletic director(s).

X. Athletic Awards

The Athletic Department award system has been established for the purpose of acknowledging the young men and women who participate on any varsity, junior varsity, or modified sports team. Individual coaches and teams may give out other awards specific to their team or sport.

Modified Sports – awarded by coach

- Modified athletes of character awards (MAC Awards)

Varsity Sports – awarded by ACS Athletic Department and coach

- Athlete of the week program
- An Alden letter “A” issued one time for lettering on a varsity team
- Insignia pins for every varsity sport
- Service bars for additional years of participation after first letter
- Letterman Award – awarded by the coach to a varsity athlete on each team who exhibits excellence in any combination of skill, character, leadership, sportsmanship, etc.

Note on athletes who “move up” to varsity: If a JV athlete is asked by the varsity coach to compete on the varsity team throughout any given season, the threshold for being considered a “full-time” varsity athlete is 50% of the number of contests. This number shall be used as the guideline to determine whether the athlete receives a varsity letter for the season.

Sports Booster Awards

In association with the Athletic Department, the Sports Boosters, an independent, parent-run organization, sponsors senior recognition nights. Senior athletes will be recognized at their last regular season home game, team banquet, or other venue determined by the coaches that best honors their senior athletes.

NYS Scholar Athlete Award Program – awarded by NYSPHSAA

The NYSPHSAA believes that the athletic participation of students enhances their academic performance. To support this belief, the Scholar/Athlete Team Award was begun in 1991. Varsity teams who earn a 90% or higher average during their sport season qualify for the award. This is a varsity team award. The entire district is eligible for recognition as a School of Distinction if all its athletic teams meet this goal.

Individual Scholar Athlete Award – awarded by Section VI

Senior athletes are eligible for the individual scholar athlete award for each of the three sports seasons. Requirements for this award are that the senior has held a cumulative average of 90 or above for their entire high school scholastic career and is a starter or important reserve on the team.

All-ECIC and All-WNY Awards

Varsity athletes are eligible for these awards based on their performance in any given sport/season. Selection to All-Star teams is typically based on nominations from the coach to a selection committee.