

Conway High School Athletic Handbook

2025-26

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Introduction

Any student who represents his or her school in extra-curricular and co-curricular activities shall be enrolled as an undergraduate student of the school (except as provided in By-Law 238.2a), and shall meet the following general standards of eligibility and the specific applicable MSHSAA standards in ByLaws 230 through 283. Eligibility to represent a school in such activities is a privilege to be attained by meeting the standards of eligibility cooperatively set by the member schools through MSHSAA and any additional standards set by the Laclede County R-1 School District. An extra-curricular or co-curricular activity shall be defined as any activity in which a recognized organization of the Laclede County R-1 Schools sponsors, attends or participates. This includes practices, banquets, performances, meetings and competitions. Recognized organizations are those included in the student activities handbook. Students who represent a school in co-curricular or extra-curricular activities must be creditable citizens and judged so by the proper school authority certifying a list of students eligible. Those students whose character or conduct is such as to reflect discredit upon themselves or their schools are not considered "creditable citizens". Conduct shall be satisfactory in accord with the standards of good discipline. A student shall not be considered eligible to participate or attend such activities while under suspension. The student who is expelled or who withdraws from school because of disciplinary measures shall not be considered eligible for 365 days from the date of expulsion or withdrawal. By your student participating in Laclede County R-1 extracurricular activities you are agreeing to the following.

Activity/Team Meeting

Prior to the start of the activity, each sponsor/coach will hold a meeting with students desiring to participate in programs sponsored by the school and the MSHSAA. The purpose of the meeting will be to clarify the rules, regulations, and consequences for violations of state, school or team policy.

Attendance at Practices and Games

If a student misses class(es) without being excused by the principal, or their designee, the student shall not be considered eligible to participate or attend on that date.

Each member of a Conway High School Athletic team must assume the responsibilities associated with such a position. The athlete has an ethical obligation to the team and the school. This obligation includes regular attendance at practices and athletic contests. Commitment to Conway teams should come before any club or outside team. If a practice or competition is missed due to outside commitments, there will be consequences for missing the Conway practice or competition. It is possible that emergency situations may arise (e.g., illness, death in a family, etc.) that render it impossible for an athlete to attend a practice session or an athletic contest. Absences should be few and far between and arranged with the coach as early as possible. When athletic team practices occur on school vacation days, all varsity athletes are expected to be in attendance. If a conflict arises and the athlete may have to miss a practice it is of utmost importance that the athlete communicates this with the coach, immediately knowing that consequences may follow. Summer and off-season activities are strongly encouraged but cannot be required by coaches.

Absences from practice sessions or athletic contests will be handled in the following manner:

Excused absence-are missed practices or game where parent or player has communicated in advanced of such an event and received permission from the coach and the Athletic Administrator.

Unexcused Absence-are missed practices or games when the student nor parent has not communicated in advance that the student athlete will be missing from an event.

Absence From Practice

Unexcused Absence-1 st Offense	Conference with coach and discipline of athlete
Unexcused Absence-2 nd Offense	Suspension from the next interscholastic contest
Unexcused Absence-3 rd Offense	Dismissal from team (Athlete forfeits all awards)

Absence From Athletic Contest

Unexcused Absence-1 st Offense	Suspension from next two interscholastic contests
Unexcused Absence-2 nd Offense	Dismissal from the team can take place at coaches and administrative discretion.

Tobacco and Vaping,

Use or possession of tobacco will not be permitted by student participants. Offenses will be subject to the following discipline. Vapes with THC or any other drug substance will fall under the Drug and Alcohol policy. Offenses are not per school year but per Jr. High career and then again for High School career.

1st offense – 3 game suspension, plus whatever punishment the sponsor deems appropriate.
2nd offense – 6 game suspension, plus whatever punishment the sponsor deems appropriate.
3rd offense – 9 game suspension, plus whatever punishment the sponsor deems appropriate.
4th offense – Removal from all extracurricular organizations.

Use or possession of drugs or alcoholic beverages will not be permitted by student participants. Offenses will be subject to the following discipline. Offenses are not per school year but per JH/HS career.

Discipline Concerning Drugs and Alcohol

A minimum **twenty-one (21) calendar day suspension** from participation or attendance in all extracurricular and/or co-curricular activities shall be assessed for use, possession or distribution of alcohol and/or illegal drugs including all controlled substances, counterfeit drugs, and other substances purported to be drugs. Drug violations also include possession of drug paraphernalia. *If the violation occurs when a student is NOT involved in an activity/sport the suspension would begin with the next activity/sport the student participates in, unless they do not participate in any activities/sports for 2 consecutive semesters. During the 21 day suspension the student will be permitted to participate in practice, but will not be allowed to compete in games or travel with teams.* A suspension can overlap from one sport to another. If a student-athlete is caught violating this policy at the end of a sports season the 21 days will start with the remainder of the season and will then be continued at the start of games during the next sports season.

A second drug and/or alcohol violation would mean the student would be suspended *90 calendar days* with the option to receive counseling services to return to play sooner. The student would have to provide documentation of an assessment for substance abuse at a school approved treatment center for drug/alcohol abuse. If the student regularly attended counseling, and did not have any other discipline issues, they could be eligible to return to play after 45 days suspension. This would be under the discretion of the coach and administration. They would be able to practice with the team and attend home games but not travel or sit on the bench.

A third drug and/or alcohol violation would mean suspension for *three hundred and sixty-five (365) calendar days* starting from the date of the infraction. In the event of a fourth offense, the student would be suspended for the length of the student's enrollment in the Laclede County R-1 Schools. These offenses are cumulative over their four years of enrollment. Violations of this nature from a previous school will also fall under our handbook standards and suspension schedule.

MSHSAA Policy

A student who commits an act for which charges may be or have been filed by law enforcement authorities under any municipal ordinance, misdemeanor or felony statute shall not be eligible until all proceedings with the legal system have been concluded and any penalty (i.e. jail time, fine, court costs, etc.) or special condition of probation (i.e. restitution, community service, counseling, etc.) has been satisfied. If law enforcement authorities determine that charges will not be filed, eligibility will be contingent upon local school policies. After a student has completed all court appearances and penalties, and has satisfied all special conditions of probation and remains under general probation only, local school authorities shall determine eligibility. Moving traffic offenses shall not affect eligibility, unless they involve drugs, alcohol, or injuries to others. (Editor's Note: If a traffic offense is accompanied by an act listed above, such as property damage, bench warrant, etc., eligibility will be delayed per letter.)

ISS Infraction

1st offense and 2nd offense: Please see student handbook

3rd offense: 3 game suspension and subject to removal from the team per discretion of Coach and Administrator.

OSS Infraction

Any student receiving out of school suspension will not be allowed to attend practice or attend games and may be subject to removal from the team per the discretion of the Coach, Athletic Administrator and Principal. Students would be eligible for the next school year to come back out for the same activity or sport, if in good standing with the school.

Hazing

Hazing—Soliciting, encouraging, aiding, or engaging in hazing is prohibited. "Hazing" means any activity that a reasonable person believes would negatively impact the mental or physical health or safety of a student. This activity may put the student in a ridiculous, humiliating, stressful or disconcerting position for the purposes of initiation, affiliation, admission, membership or maintenance of membership in any group, class, organization, club or athletic team. This may include, but not limited to, a grade level, student organization, or school sponsored activity. Hazing may occur even when all students involved are willing participants.

1. Any activity which recklessly endangers the physical health or safety of the student or prospective member, including but not limited to physical brutality, whipping, beating, branding, exposure to the elements, forced consumption of any food, liquor, drug, or other substance or forced smoking or chewing of tobacco products: or
2. Any activity which recklessly endangers the mental health of the student or prospective member, including but not limited to sleep deprivation, physical confinement, or other extreme stress inducing activity: or
3. Any activity that requires the student or prospective member to perform a duty or task which involves a violation of the criminal laws of this state or any political subdivision in this state. Students engaging in hazing will be subject to one or more of the following disciplinary actions:
 - a. Conference with parent(s)/guardian(s).
 - b. Removal from the co-curricular or extra-curricular activities.
 - c. Referral to appropriate law enforcement agencies.
 - d. Suspension for up to 180 days Expulsion for the remainder of the school term.
 - e. Permanent expulsion.

Academic Eligibility

Any student receiving more than one failing grade at the end of a progress report grade will be ineligible to participate in any extra-curricular activity (including non-educational field trips) until the next grade check. If a student is failing, a grade check will be evaluated on a weekly basis until the next grade reports. Students will be eligible to participate in practices during this time.

1. Students not meeting this standard may become eligible at the weekly grade check by the coach or at the next school-wide grade check by having no more than one failing grade at that time.
2. Any student failing two or more classes at the end of the semester will be ineligible to participate in any extra-curricular activity (including non-educational field trips) for the next semester. In addition, students will be ineligible to participate in any practices during this time.
3. Summer school credits may count toward maintaining academic eligibility provided the following requirements are met.
 - a. The course(es) must be a requirement toward meeting graduation/promotion requirements (math, science, language arts, etc.)
 - b. No electives may be counted toward this requirement.
 - c. Correspondence courses may not count as summer school credit.
 - d. No more than one credit earned in summer school shall count toward maintaining academic eligibility.

No Quit Policy

If a high school or middle school student is selected for a position on one of the Conway athletic teams, it is important that he/she makes a firm commitment to that team. Therefore, quitting a team

after being selected is strongly discouraged. Students are allowed a 3-day grace period to try out the sport to determine if they want to participate for the remainder of the season. If any student athlete quits a team after the first contest, that student athlete is prohibited from trying out for another Conway School team or extracurricular activity during the same season. The student will be obligated to pay for any player pack items that were ordered. Furthermore, quitting a team in one season will impact a student's ability to participate in a sport the following season.

Playing Time Policy

Conway coaches and administration believe it is important to broaden the experience of Conway School students and athletes. That broadening is enhanced by playing time, it is also an important goal of the Conway School athletic program to strive toward excellence. Therefore, no minimum per game playing time provisions or minimum numbers of athletic meets, in which athletes must compete, are established. Playing time decisions are left up to the individual coaches.

Try-outs & Cuts

Conway High School has a cut policy in place allowing coaches to make cuts following a three day try-out period. Every student wishing to try-out for a sport must be given an equal opportunity to make the squad unless previous discipline problems prohibit the player from participating. All try-outs must include a minimum of three practice sessions before the squad is announced. If a program does choose to make cuts, the head coach and their staff will make cuts based on their evaluation of each athlete during the three-day tryout period. Each sport has a set number of athletes that must be met before cuts can be made. Dismissal from a team due to behavior and being cut are two different things and do not count as the same thing. Conway High School encourages students that get cut from a sport to visit with the Athletic Administrator to see what other sports and activities may be a good fit for that particular student.

Each team will keep at minimum:

Baseball/Softball-18----cuts can be made after 21 students come out for the sport

Boys/Girls Basketball-16----cuts can be made after 19 students come out for the sport

Volleyball-18-----cuts can be made after 21 students come out for the sport

Cheerleading-18----- cuts can be made after 21 students come out for the sport

Cross Country-There will be no cuts

Track and Field-There will be no cuts

Jr. High Sports - Cuts for the season will be discussed with the JH Principal and Athletic Director to determine an optimal number of athletes based on the number of coaches for that sport.

Communication with Coaches

Conway High School is proud of the men and women who make up our coaching staff and are pleased to say that they are genuinely dedicated to not only athletic performance but emotional, mental, social, and physical growth and development of our athletes. However, we also recognize that there will be situations in which athletes are dissatisfied with their situation on a team and/or unhappy

with the coach. If that occurs, our desire is to resolve the issue(s) fairly, expeditiously, and professionally. Doing so requires these steps:

1. The athlete should meet privately with the coach to express his/her concerns and to receive the coach's explanation of his/her status on the team.
2. If the athlete meeting does not result in a resolution of the problem, the parent(s) should call Conway High School to arrange an appointment to meet with the coach to express their view and listen to the coach's perspective.
3. Only after steps 1 and 2 have failed to result in resolution of the issue should the Athletic Director and/or Administrator be contacted. (Concerns regarding playing time or coaching strategies are not administrative matters and will not be discussed with coaches and not with the administration.)

Parents or athletes should not attempt to talk to a coach with a complaint or concern after a contest. We ask that athletes and parents wait to contact the Coach or Athletic Administrator until after 24 business hours of the event to discuss the issue. We appreciate your compliance with this policy. We are in the business of educating young people and the examples set by parents and coaches leave lasting impressions. Handling problems and disputes maturely and professionally is a great example for our students and a valuable experience for all concerned.

Extracurricular Conflicts

If a conflict arises involving an athletic contest and an event related to another school activity, the coach and teacher/sponsor will discuss whether accommodations can be made to allow the student to participate in both events. If an agreement cannot be reached in this manner, the student and parent(s) will decide how best to proceed, keeping the best interest of the student in mind. Teachers and coaches may assign alternative work/tasks in place of the missed event. No additional or punitive penalties may be assessed beyond the loss of benefits (e.g., grades, participation) inherent in the event itself. It is understood that postseason contests/performances will take priority over regular in-season contests/performances.

Lettering Policy

For a student to receive a Varsity Letter in their activity they must meet the following requirements or a portion of the following requirements based on the discretion of the sponsor/coach and Athletic Administrator.

1. The student must participate in 66% of the season's competitions, example: 30 baseball games, must participate in 20 games.
2. Must maintain good standing in the classroom, school, and community.
3. Students must practice and play for the entirety of the season, decisions on players injured during the season will be up to the discretion of the coach.
4. If a student is dismissed from a team they will forfeit any claim to a varsity letter.
5. If a student is a senior with a long service to the program, the coach, along with approval from the Athletic Administrator, may waive prior criteria needed to award a letter.

6. Managers/Statisticians could earn a Varsity Letter if they meet the guidelines set out by the head coach and based on the head coach's judgment.
7. Each sponsor/coach may add, with approval of the administration, include other criteria specific to their activity.