



**AUSTINTOWN FITCH
2025-26 STUDENT-ATHLETE
HANDBOOK**

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AUSTINTOWN LOCAL SCHOOLS ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT

STATEMENT OF PHILOSOPHY

The Austintown Local Schools support the philosophy that a quality interscholastic athletic program is vital to the positive social, physical and educational developments of students. The interscholastic athletic program enhances and supports the academic mission of the school system. We are committed to promoting the proper ideal of sportsmanship, ethical conduct, and fair play at all athletic contests. We support high standards of good citizenship and propriety, along with the regard for the rights of others. Furthermore, we support diversification over specialization regarding interscholastic participation by student-athletes.

The Athletic Administration, coaches and players will perpetually work together on a plan on continual improvement for playing excellence that will produce winning teams within the bounds of good sportsmanship.

Participation in interscholastic sports is a voluntary privilege. Such participation will always be based on healthy competition between team members for starting positions and playing time. An attitude of entitlement, on the part of any team member, has absolutely no place in any of our athletic programs.

All interscholastic sports in the Austintown Local Schools are team sports. Consequently, while our various programs will continually stress individual development, it will always be within the framework and emphasis on the **TEAM**. Each time participants step into a school or onto the practice field and anytime they participate in a contest they are expected to represent themselves, family, team, school and community in a responsible, sportsmanlike manner.

Interscholastic sports in the Austintown Local Schools are meant to develop character, sportsmanship, self-confidence, teamwork, unselfishness, responsibility, leadership, competitive spirit, decision-making and physical skills through the processes of hard work, commitment and loyalty.

STUDENT-ATHLETE'S PLEDGE

The Student-Athlete's Pledge extends beyond participation in an athletic endeavor. It requires a full commitment from the participant as a student, athlete, and citizen. Mutual respect and team membership are to be expected equally of a player and coach and for the player involve the following pledge:

As a student-athlete in Austintown, I promise:

1. To be a model of appropriate language and behavior as an ambassador of good sportsmanship.
2. To be accountable and responsible in a trustworthy manner.
3. To respect and dignify each of my teammates and coaches as an individual.
4. To place the team's goals welfare and success above my own.
5. To consistently attend all practices and be coachable, push myself to reach my full potential.
6. To be receptive to constructive criticism from my coaches and keep my focus and composure at all times.
7. To accept time demands with respect to my academic, athletic and family responsibilities.
8. To demonstrate a genuine concern and respect for my sport, my teammates and coaches, my opponents and officials.
9. To communicate openly and honestly with my parents and coaches regarding my status on the team.
10. To abide by the Austintown Local School District Substance Abuse Policy.

COACH'S PLEDGE

The Coach's Pledge extends beyond knowledge of athletics and reaches into the life of each of his/her students. It is one of the most important responsibilities in the school and involves at least the same level of commitment that coaches expect of their players. Mutual respect and team membership is to be expected equally of student and coach, and for the coach involve the following promises:

As a coach in Austintown, I promise:

1. To uphold the dignity honor and integrity of the coaching profession.
2. To be a model of appropriate language and behavior.
3. To respect and dignify each of my athletes as an individual.
4. To be totally honest and objective in determining roles for team members and to promote a sense of team membership among all students, coaches and staff.
5. To promote the safety and well being of each student and to take an active role in the prevention and used of drugs, alcohol and tobacco.
6. To enlighten my students about the primary importance of each student's family and academic responsibilities while imposing time demands that acknowledge these priorities.
7. To encourage and promote sportsmanship among both the home and visiting teams, the coaching staffs, officials and spectators.
8. To be available to parent(s)/guardian(s) at times that are mutually convenient to discuss appropriate topics.
9. To aid all students in their interests following high school.
10. To be knowledgeable and adhere to the rules of the Ohio High School Athletic Association, the Austintown Local School District and the athletic department

AUSTINTOWN LOCAL SCHOOLS ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT

ATHLETIC CHAIN OF COMMUNICATION

Within the Austintown Local Schools, the following chain of communication is in effect:

PRINCIPAL

ATHLETIC DIRECTOR

HEAD COACH

ASSISTANT/POSITION COACHES

STUDENT ATHLETES/PARENTS

If there are any questions or concerns involving some aspect of our athletic program, the student should first contact the appropriate assistant/position coach. If there is no resolution, the student would then go to the head coach etc. The same is true of coaches. Assistant coaches are responsible to their respective head coaches and should follow the chain of communication while addressing their concerns.

AUSTINTOWN LOCAL SCHOOLS ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT

MEDICAL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

PHYSICAL EXAMINATION FORMS

Each student-athlete is required to have a completed OHSAA Preparticipation Physical Examination Evaluation form on file before participation in any off-season, pre-season or in-season activities. The athletic department will sponsor annual physicals each year for both middle school and high school students. According to OHSAA Bylaws, a physical is valid for one calendar year.

Neither the school system nor the athletic department is responsible for the cost of the school sponsored physical exams.

Physical exam forms will be kept on file with the athletic department.

It is the head coach's responsibility to monitor the status of his/her student-athletes with regards to physicals. Head coaches are to review forms carefully and only once forms are complete should they be turned in to the athletic department.

EMERGENCY MEDICAL AUTHORIZATION FORMS

Each student-athlete is required to have two copies of a completed Emergency Medical Authorization form on file. One with the athletic department and one with his/her coach in order to participate in off-season, pre-season and in-season activities. Student-athletes that participate in multiple sports throughout the school year must complete a single EMA form for each sport. These must be in the possession of the current sport coach. EMA forms are valid for one school year.

It is the responsibility of each head coach to have his/het team's EMA's with them at all times. This includes all off-season, pre-season and in-season activities. This is necessary in case of serious injury where a student-athlete is unable to supply information or in cases where parents or guardians are not in attendance and cannot be reached by phone.

It is the coach's responsibility to monitor the status of his/her student-athletes with regards to EMA forms. Head coaches are to review forms carefully and only once forms are complete should they be turned in to the athletic department.

MEDICAL REFERRALS

Injured student-athletes evaluated by the board-approved athletic trainer and team doctor.

A student-athlete who has been referred to a physician must return a completed medical release form to the athletic trainer or coach before returning to practice or competition.

Recommendations listed by the student-athlete's physician will not be altered and will be closely followed for the well-being of the student-athlete.

In the event a student-athlete goes to a physician or urgent care facility for medical attention for an injury or non-sports related illness, without the prior knowledge of the athletic trainer, a note or referral slip giving the physician's recommendations date of return to athletic participation and physician's signature is necessary before the student-athlete practice or competes. Injured student-athletes are expected to report to the coach, even if unable to practice, unless excused by the athletic trainer or head coach.

AUSTINTOWN LOCAL SCHOOLS ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT

ELIGIBILITY

SCHOLARSHIP

High School students (grades 9-12) must be currently enrolled in a member school and have received passing grades in a minimum of **FIVE** one-credit courses, or the equivalent, in the immediately preceding grading period.

Students entering the 7th grade for the first time will be eligible for the first grading period regardless of previous academic record. Thereafter, students in 7th, 8th and entering 9th grade must received passing grades in a four subject in the preceding period. Additionally, if a student has two failing grades in a grading period will be ineligible for the next grading period.

- Students may not use summer school grades for failing grades received or lack of courses taken in the final grading period.
- Semester and yearly grades have no effect on eligibility.
- Students taking postsecondary school courses must comply with OHSAA scholarship regulations.

AUSTINTOWN LOCAL SCHOOLS ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Student-athletes in Austintown Local Schools must maintain a minimum grade point average of 2.0 and receive no more than one failing grade for any course in the district's graded course of study in the previous grade period. A physical education class does not count as one of the five required courses, but does count towards the student-athlete's GPA.

If a student-athlete is ineligible after a 9-week grading period they may fully practice, but not compete, with their current or next team

If a student-athlete is ineligible after two consecutive 9-week grading period, they are immediately dismissed from current team and will not be allowed to practice with team or attend strength and conditioning sessions.

RESIDENCE AND TRANSFER OF SCHOOLS

Students may attend any public or non-public high school in which they are accepted when entering high school (grade 9) from a 7th – 8th grade school. Eligibility at that school is established by:

- Participating in a contest (scrimmage, preview or regular season game) prior to the first day of school, or
- Attending the first day of school at any high school.

Once a student establishes eligibility at a high school, a transfer to a different high school will mean they will ineligible for athletics for one year from the date of enrollment in the new school.

- There are eight exceptions to this regulation. To see if a see if a student qualifies for an exception, the student and parents should arrange a meeting with the principal or athletic administrator and review the OHSAA Transfer Bylaw, which is found online at www.ohsaa.org prior to transferring to another school.

AUSTINTOWN LOCAL SCHOOLS ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT

ELIGIBILITY

- If a student's parent or legal guardian lives outside of the state of Ohio, they are ineligible unless one of the four exceptions to the regulation is met. These exceptions to the out-of-residency rules are found in Bylaw 4-6 at www.ohsaa.org.

SEMESTERS OF ENROLLMENT

After establishing 9th grade eligibility, you are permitted eight semesters of athletic eligibility.

- The semesters are taken in order of attendance once 9th grade eligibility has been established.
- Semesters are counted toward eligibility whether students participate in interscholastic athletics or is even eligible to participate in accordance to eligibility bylaws.

AGE LIMITATIONS

Once a student attains the age of 20, the student will no longer be eligible for interscholastic competition notwithstanding where their 20th birthday falls in relation to the sports season.

7th and 8th grade students who turn 15 years of age prior to August 1 are ineligible for middle school athletics.

- Students with a disability may qualify for an exception to this regulation and should arrange a meeting with the principal or athletic administrator to review the exception.

AWARDS

Students may receive awards, gifts and/or prizes resulting from their participation/finish in athletic competition in sports which they are an interscholastic athletic, provided the item does not exceed \$500 in total value per competition and the award is not money/cash.

AMATEUR STATUS

Students will lost amateur status and forfeit eligibility if they:

- Compete for money or other monetary compensation.

EXCEPTION: If a student competes in a competition where travel, meals and lodging expenses are being reimbursed or where prize money is available, the student shall complete, prior to the competition, a Request for Retention of Amateur Stats declaring: they will not accept any money/cash, will only accept awards, gifts, and/or prizes that do not exceed the \$500 limit, and they will only accept allowable travel meals and lodging expenses and receipt of expenses shall be reported to the OHSAA via the approved form.

- Capitalize on status as a student-athlete by receiving money, merchandise or services
- Sign a contract or make a commitment to play professional athletics
- Receive services, merchandise or any form of financial assistance from a professional sports organization

AUSTINTOWN LOCAL SCHOOLS ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT

ELIGIBILITY

OPEN GYMS/FACILITIES

School officials may designate open gyms or facilities and the sports to be played. Students may participate in open gyms or facilities provided:

- No student is limited from participating
- No students is required to attend
- No school officials invite selected students or determine teams
- No timing or written scoring is kept
- No coaching or instruction is provided

Violating these rules may result in students being declared ineligible by the OHSAA.

MANDATORY NO CONTACT PERIOD – COACHES

Any coach (paid or volunteer) approved by the Board of Education to coach basketball, football, soccer, or volleyball is prohibited from athletic or athletic related contact with squad members (i.e., physical fitness weight training, open gyms, video study, etc.) in the same sport for the period of time starting with the first day after the school's last interscholastic contest and ending 28 days later.

Any coach (paid or volunteer) approved by the Board of Education to coach baseball, basketball, or softball and is prohibited from any athletic or athletic related contact with squad members (i.e., physical fitness weight training, open gyms, video study, etc.) in the same sport for the period of time between August 1 and August 31.

REGULAR SEASON PARTICIPATION LIMITATION PENALTY

A team that exceeds the regular season participation limitation (maximum number of contests permitted) or participates in regular season contest (s) prior to the designated start date in that respective sports is subject to penalties by the OHSAA which may include denial of any school team in the respective sport from participation in the OHSAA tournament.

An athlete who exceeds the regular season participation limitation (periods, quarters, halves or contests) as specified in the individual sport regulations becomes an ineligible athlete.

Should a team in an individual sports exceed the regular season participation limitation but a specific individual athlete on that team did not exceed the individual participation limitation, that specific individual athlete may be eligible for participation in the OHSAA tournament.

AUSTINTOWN LOCAL SCHOOLS ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT

ELIGIBILITY

PARTICIPATION ON NON-INTERSCHOLASTIC TEAMS DURING SCHOOL TEAM'S SEASON

A non-interscholastic program is one in which a student-athlete participates in team play or as an individual, and that program is not under the director or indirect control of the OHSAA member school.

Team Sports – A member of an interscholastic team in the sports of baseball, basketball, football, soccer, softball and volleyball may not participate in an athletic contest, a tryout of any type of interscholastic team or group training or practices (including open gyms/fields) with a non-interscholastic team in that same sport during the interscholastic team's season.

Individual Sports – A member of an interscholastic team in the sports of bowling, cross country, golf, swimming and diving, tennis, track & field and wrestling may not participate in an athletic contest with a non-interscholastic team or in non-interscholastic competition in that same sport during the interscholastic team's season.

PARTICIPATION ON NON-INTERSCHOLASTIC TEAMS OUTSIDE SCHOOL TEAM'S SEASON

Team Sports – A member of an interscholastic team in the sports of baseball, basketball, soccer, softball and volleyball may participate with a non interscholastic team in contests, tryouts, training and/or practices under the following condition:

The number of team members on the non-interscholastic team who are enrolled at the same school and/or participated in that sport at that same school in the preceding season, or team members on the non-interscholastic team who participated in that sport at another school in the preceding season and transferred or matriculated to the same school, is limited to the number of team members outlined below. Rotating players from the same team is not permitted withing the player limitation. in that same sport during the interscholastic team's season.

Baseball, Soccer, Softball:	6
Basketball, Volleyball:	3

The team limit is not in effect for the sports of basketball, soccer and volleyball from June 1 through July 31 when the non-interscholastic team is coach by a coach not employed by the school in which the team members are participating.

Individual Sports – A member of an interscholastic team in the sports of bowling, cross country, golf, swimming and diving, tennis, track & field and wrestling may participate with a non-interscholastic program or team in tests, tryouts, training and/or practices prior to and after the school's season with no restriction when coached by either a school coach or non-interscholastic coach.

Violating these rules during the school season may result in the student being declared ineligible for the remainder of the school season and violating these rules outside the school season may result in the student being declared ineligible for the next season.

AUSTINTOWN LOCAL SCHOOLS ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT

ELIGIBILITY

PHYSICAL EXAMINATION FORMS

Each school year, students must submit a physical examination form signed by a medical examiner, the student's parent's or guardians and the student before beginning any athletic related activities. Procedures will be reviewed by school officials. Physical examinations are valid for one year from the date of the exam.

STUDENT CONDUCT AND EJECTION POLICIES

Students are expected to accept the responsibility and privilege of representing their school and community while participating in interscholastic athletics. Student-athletes are expected to:

- Treat opponents, coaches and officials with respect.
- Display no behavior that could incite fans or other participants in the contest or which is intended to embarrass, ridicule or demean others under any circumstances including on the basis of race religion, gender or national origin.

The OHSAA has established a policy for students ejected for unsporting behavior. If a student is ejected, the following guidelines will be followed:

- Student will be ineligible for all contests for the remainder of that day
- Student will be ineligible for all contests at all levels in that sport until two regular season tournament contests are played at the same level as the ejection (one contest in the sport of football).

EXCEPTION: In the sport of soccer, if a student is disqualified for a "double yellow", the student is ineligible for the remainder of the current contest as well as one subsequent contest at the same level.

If a student is ejected for fighting, the following guidelines will followed:

- Student will be ineligible for the all contest for the remainder of that day
- Student will be ineligible for all contests at all levels in that sport until four regular season/ tournament contest are played at the same level as the ejection (two contests in the sport of football).

If a student is ejected a second time in a season, the student is subject to additional penalties including suspension from play for the remainder of the season in that sport.

COACH EJECTION POLICIES

Any coach ejected or disqualified from an interscholastic contest for unsporting conduct shall be suspended from coaching in all contests for the remainder of that day. In addition, the coach shall be suspended from coaching all contests at all levels in that sport until two regular season/ tournament contests (one in football) are played at the same level as the ejection or disqualification and shall be fined \$100 and complete the National Federation of State High School Associations Fundamentals of Coaching Course

EXCEPTION: In the sport of soccer, if a coach is disqualified for a "double yellow", the coach is ineligible for the remainder of the current contest as well as one subsequent contest at the same level.

AUSTINTOWN LOCAL SCHOOLS ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT

CONCUSSION PROTOCOL-RETURN TO LEARN/PLAY

Beginning with the 2022-23 school year the Austintown Local School District allowed for student-athletes in grades 9-12 to have baseline testing to be used in the event of a mTBI (concussion). The following details the baseline testing, concussion evaluation process, post-concussive care, Return to School/Learn procedures and the Return to Play procedures.

BASELINE TESTING

Preseason neurocognitive testing will be administered to all student-athletes in high contact/high-risk sports on an annual basis. These neurocognitive assessments will be used as a baseline measurement to compare with future assessments.

Neurocognitive assessments will utilize SWAY, which is a medical application/software designed to make concussion assessments more streamlined and quantifiable. The neurocognitive assessment will consist of a symptom checklist and test motor function reaction time and memory processing.

Annual baseline test will be administered the Certified Athletic Trainer and/or Team Physician.

CONCUSSION EVALUATION

Once a student-athlete is suspected of sustaining a head injury, that athlete will be immediately removed from participation and evaluated for a concussion by the Certified Athletic Trainer and/or Team Physician.

The neurocognitive assessment administered will be the exact same as the assessment utilized during their baseline testing in order to make an accurate comparison. Further clinical exam to rule out the presence of a potential catastrophic injury may also be administered if deemed necessary.

If either of the Certified Athletic Trainer or the Team Physician suspect that a student-athlete has suffered a concussion, that athlete will be immediately removed from athletic participation for the remainder of the day. The athlete will be monitored for any significant changes in their symptoms.

Any student-athlete that sustains an head injury outside of sport participation should immediately report the injury and symptoms to the Certified Athletic Trainer in order to determine a medically appropriate treatment plan.

AUSTINTOWN LOCAL SCHOOLS ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT

CONCUSSION PROTOCOL-RETURN TO LEARN/PLAY

POST CONCUSSIVE CARE

Student-athletes diagnosed with a concussion will be instructed to maximize symptom-limited physical and cognitive rest during the acute phase following injury. If taking medication for potential relief of symptoms, the use of Ibuprofen should be avoided and instead substituted with acetaminophen.

Some “RED FLAG” symptoms following a concussion/head-injury that warrant immediate medical attention include:

Repetitive vomiting, seizures, slurred speech, increasing confusion, increasing irritability, unequal pupil size, extreme drowsiness, unusual behavior, numbness in extremities and/or loss of consciousness.

In conjunction with the Team Physician, the Certified Athletic Trainer will document communication of appropriate recommendations, restrictions, limitations, and necessary adaptations to the student-athlete. The Certified athletic Trainer will also document communication of identified recommendations, restrictions, limitations, and necessary adaptations to the appropriate athletic department support staff (Coaches, Strength and Conditioning Staff, Equipment Staff).

RETURN TO SCHOOL/LEARN

Return to School (RTS) (physically attending classes) and Return to Learn (RTL) (engaging cognitively in the education process) recommendations should be made within the context of a multi-disciplinary team. RTS/RTL multi-disciplinary team members may include: Certified Athletic Trainers, Team Physicians, Psychologists, Academic Advisors and Educators.

Cognitive rest, when prescribed following a concussion, means avoiding academic-related activity that causes an increase in symptoms. This can include no classroom activity on the same day as the concussion. The gradual return to cognitive activity is based on the return of concussion symptoms following cognitive exposure. An individual plan will be developed that will consider the following.

- A. Once the student-athlete can tolerate light cognitive activity, he/she should begin the RTS/RTL process in a stepwise manner coordinated by medial and academic teams.
- B. If concussion symptoms worsen with academic challenges, the student-athlete will be reevaluated by the Certified Athletic Trainer, the Team Physician will be notified and further academic adjustments may be implemented. If concussion symptoms continue to worsen or if the athletic trainer has a concern, the student-athlete will be reevaluated by the team physician.

CONCUSSION PROTOCOL-RETURN TO LEARN/PLAY

C. Academic adjustments/accommodations may include:

- Taking more frequent breaks
- Resting in quiet areas
- Reducing exposure to screens
- Use of a hat/sunglasses indoors
- Seat closer to the center of the classroom
- Delay in test taking or completion of major projects
- Extra time to complete test/exams

Although healing may be prolonged with some concussions, the expectation is for a full recovery that no longer would require academic adjustments, accommodations or modifications.

RETURN TO PLAY PROGRESSION

The Return to Play (RTP) progression is based in part on accurate symptom reporting. A Team Physician and/or Certified Athletic Trainer will make the determination of “baseline symptoms” utilizing the preseason baseline assessment conducted through SWAY.

As soon as a student-athlete is determined to have a concussion, they will immediately be considered to be in concussion protocol. Once a student-athlete is placed into concussion protocol, they will need to progress in a step-wise fashion through the stages of the RTP protocol. In order to progress to the next stage, the student-athlete will need to complete the previous stage without an increase in their concussion symptoms during or following the activity. If symptoms worsen during any one of the stages, the athlete will need to wait twenty-four (24) hours before attempting that stage again. Only one stage is able to be completed per twenty-four (24) period.

RTP Protocol

Stage 1 – Symptom-limited physical and cognitive rest

Stage 2 – Light cardiovascular activity without resistance, suggested 25 minutes at 65-70% max HR

Stage 3 – Moderate sport-specific cardiovascular activity, suggested 25 minutes at 70-75% of max HR

Stage 4 – Non-contact practice/training with team, may start progressive resistance training

Stage 5 – Full-contact practice/training with team (unrestricted)

Stage 6 – Full Clearance

Some student-athletes may have minimal concussive symptomology with minimal symptom duration and no modifying factors. In scenarios of this nature, the Team Physician may consider modifying the RTP protocol if the student-athlete participates in a sport/activity which presents minimal risk for contact or head injury beyond that of normal activities of daily living.

CONCUSSION PROTOCOL-RETURN TO LEARN/PLAY

Modifying Factors which may prolong recovery

Atypical or prolonged recovery pattern from concussion, migraines, ADHD or other learning disability, vestibular and/or oculomotor disturbance, sleep dysfunction, depression, anxiety, and/or other behavioral or mental illness

Important components of management after the initial period of symptom-limited physical and cognitive rest may include associated rehabilitative therapies such as cognitive, vestibular, ocular, physical and psychological therapy and consideration of assessment of other cause of prolonged symptoms. Implementation of these therapies may begin while the student-athlete is symptomatic but will not be considered a part of the return to play progression.

If the student-athlete experiences prolonged symptoms or if severity of symptoms increases the Team Physician and/or Certified Athletic Trainer may consider additional evaluation through referral to another qualified provider.

Final clearance from the concussion protocol will be determined in consideration of multiple factors including: baseline symptoms at rest and will progressive activity, normalized concussive testing, physical examination and successful completed of graded exercise program.

The final return to play decision will be made by the team physician or another qualified physician and must be documented.

AUSTINTOWN LOCAL SCHOOLS ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT

SPORTS MEDICINE TEAM

The Austintown Local School's Athletic Department's Sport Medicine team consists of a board approved athletic trainer and team physician. Every possible effort is made to have athletic trainer coverage at all practices and competitions that occur on campus. While the athletic trainer may not physically be at a practice/competition venue, the trainer will be on campus and on-call to attend to all injuries. The team physician will be in attendance at all home competitions that are deemed "high-risk" and select away competitions based on availability. Additionally, the team physician will conduct a weekly training table at the school where they will be on site in the athletic training room to evaluate any injuries that the athletic trainer has identified.

For the 2025-26 school year the Athletic Department's Sport Medicine team will consist of Athletic Trainer Colin Reidy while the Team Physician is Dr. Anthony Berdis of Youngstown Orthopaedic Associates.

Colin Reidy – Athletic Trainer

Hired at the beginning of the 2023-24 school year Mr. Reidy returns to Austintown Local School district for his third year. The East Palestine graduate earned his Bachelor's degree in Sport and Exercise Psychology from West Virginia University before completing his Master's Degree in Athletic Training at Youngstown State University. Mr. Reidy grew up playing multiple sports, but focused on basketball and during the 2022-23 season worked on the athletic training staff for the YSU men's basketball team as they won their first regular season conference title in program history. His offices are located in the fitness center during the fall and spring seasons and in the gymnasium during the winter season.

Dr. Anthony Berdis – Team Physician

Dr. Berdis also returns to the Austintown Schools this school year after first beginning to work with the district during the 2021-22 school year. Dr. Berdis is a 2006 graduate of Austintown Fitch and a current Austintown resident. He completed his bachelor's degree at Youngstown State University and received his Doctorate of Osteopathic Medicine from Ohio University. His postgraduate training includes a residency at Aultman Hospital in Canton, Ohio and competed a fellowship with Beacon Orthopaedics in Cincinnati, Ohio where he worked with Major League Baseball's Cincinnati Reds. Dr. Berdis can see patients during the week at the Youngstown Orthopaedic Associates Poland Office located at 8591 Crossroads Drive.

AUSTINTOWN LOCAL SCHOOLS ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT

SPORTS PERFORMANCE TEAM

The Austintown Local Schools Athletic Department's Sport Performance (Strength & Conditioning) team consists of board approved coaches who have earned professional certifications in the field of strength and conditioning which is a requirement for these coaches. Every possible effort is made to have each athletic team in grades 7-12 train on campus with our coaches. Additional oversight and supervision comes from approved interns from the Youngstown State University Exercise Science Department.

For the 2025-26 school year the Athletic Department's Sport Performance team will consist of John Wallace as the Director of Strength and Conditioning and Myron Anderson as the Assistant Strength and Conditioning Coach. Both coaches will work collaboratively with the Sports Medicine team to provide rehabilitation for injuries and provide corrective exercises for the prevention of injuries. The strength and conditioning offices are located in the Fitness Center.

John Wallace – Director of Strength and Conditioning

Mr. Wallace is entering his fourth year as the Director of Strength and Conditioning. Hired prior to the start of the 2022-23 school year, Mr. Wallace was the Director of Performance at Spire Institute and Academy in Geneva, OH for ten years before coming to the Austintown Local School District. He gained experience as a Graduate Assistant Strength Coach at Cleveland State University for two years working with all of the department's sixteen athletic teams. He earned both a Bachelor's and Master's Degree in Exercise Science from Cleveland State and was a member of the men's soccer team as an undergraduate. He holds Certified Strength and Conditioning Specialist (C.S.C.S.) and Registered Strength and Conditioning Coach (R.S.C.C.) certifications from the National Strength and Conditioning Association and Strength and Conditioning Coach Certified (S.C.C.C.) from the Collegiate Strength and Conditioning Coaches Association.

Myron Anderson – Assistant Strength and Conditioning Coach

The 2025-26 school year will be the fourth as the Assistant Strength and Conditioning Coach for Mr. Anderson and the third year overall in the Austintown Local School District. Before being promoted to his current position, Mr. Anderson served as an intern under the previous Director of Strength and Conditioning. He is also a Certified Strength and Conditioning Specialist (C.S.C.S.) and holds a Master's Degree in Exercise Science from Ashland University. As an undergraduate at Youngstown State University, Mr. Anderson was a member of the men's track & field team while earning his Bachelor's degree in Exercise Science.

AUSTINTOWN LOCAL SCHOOLS ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT

PROTOCOLS FOR AN INJURED STUDENT-ATHLETE

The Austintown Fitch Athletic Department's Sports Medicine Team takes pride in providing comprehensive care and treatment to student-athletes. It is the goal of the Sports Medicine Team to create an environment that allows for quick, effective evaluation of an injured student-athlete, leading to a prompt diagnosis and quality treatment program. While we hope to keep our student-athlete safe and healthy, unfortunately, injuries are a part of the game. In those instances, the Sport Medicine Team wants to offer the fastest return to play possible and minimize any additional stress throughout the process.

If a student-athlete is injured, they should follow the following protocol:

1. An injury, no matter how minor it may seem, needs to be reported immediately to the athletic trainer who will then notify the student-athlete's coaching staff.
2. The athletic trainer will evaluate and treat the student-athlete at the first available opportunity, often on the field or court. In rare instances where this is not applicable, evaluation will begin when the student-athlete is back on campus.
3. In the event of a minor injury, the student-athlete will receive preventive rehabilitative care from the athletic trainer and strength and conditioning staff, scheduled as frequently as prescribed, and will keep the specific coaching staffs notified through daily updates.
4. In most cases small injuries can be addressed after several days of rest and immobilization. For convenience to the student-athlete, a weekly training table will occur on Tuesday afternoon at 5:00 PM. The team physician will be available in the athletic training room to evaluate any injured student-athletes.
5. If more immediate treatment is necessary, Youngstown Orthopaedic Associates offers an Urgent Care facility that is open Monday-Friday 11:00 AM-7:00 PM and on Saturday, from 9:00 AM-2:00 PM. On site is a provider specifically trained in the care of orthopaedic injuries. X-Ray capabilities as well as casting, splinting and other services are instantly available. All providers have direct access to Dr. Berdis so he can be immediately notified of any clinical findings and offer treatment recommendations as necessary. Additionally, he has the ability to instantly access and interpret all X-Rays via mobile device.
6. In the event that a student-athlete requires formal evaluation, Dr. Berdis is available in his office to see patients twice weekly. He and his staff will work diligently to offer expedient scheduling that that this can be accomplished as effortlessly and quickly as possible.

Youngstown Orthopaedic Associates Urgent Care facility is located at 1499 Boardman Canfield Road, Youngstown, Ohio 44512 and can be contacted at 330-758-0577.

Dr. Berdis' office is located at 8591 Crossroads Drive, Youngstown Ohio, 44514 and can be contacted at 330-758-0577

AUSTINTOWN LOCAL SCHOOLS ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT

TEAM SELECTIONS

While our ultimate goal is to promote the best student-athlete experience possible at all levels, it may be necessary in some sports to “cut” students to select a team. This may occur due to any number of reasons, but usually the nature and limitations specific to some sports.

Every coach has the ultimate responsibility and authority for selecting his/her team. The criteria for selecting the team are developed by the coach. A copy of the written criteria will be distributed to the student-athletes prior to tryouts and to our parents at the preseason meeting. Ideally, the criteria used for selecting a team should be objective in nature. Examples of such objective criteria may include: ball handling, shooting, passing and rebounding in basketball; fielding, throwing and hitting in baseball/softball. These objective benchmarks should be documented for each candidate in similar settings. Subjective criteria should also be taken into consideration. Though more difficult to assess: attitude, enthusiasm, hustle, determination, sportsmanship and coachability are important criteria. Consequently, a coach would be negligent to ignore these in their evaluation of potential team members.

It is also important to remind potential team members and parents that there are no guarantees. Players from the previous year’s team, for example, do not automatically make the upcoming team. Nor does being an upperclassman (junior or senior) ensure that a student-athlete will play if they make the squad.

Both parents and potential team members should expect that every candidate is treated fairly and given every opportunity and consideration. Coaches will be sensitive to feelings of disappointment and will handle the task as positively as possible and will make themselves available to answer student-athletes questions. While there seems to be no correct method for announcing a team, coaches will do everything in their power to be as professional as possible in this process.

While being cut is disappointing for many student-athletes and even for their parents, the possibility of not making a team will have been made clear at the pre-season parent meeting. Anyone cut from a team is welcome to try out again next season or to try out for another sport. When parents and student-athletes understand and support the coach’s decision, this difficult process becomes a more professional experience for all.

When scheduling tryout and determining when to make the final selection of team members, coaches should be aware of when grading periods end. This is more of an issue for winter sports, than fall or spring sports. It is recommended that before final selections are made, the academic status of each potential team member should be determined.

DUAL-SPORT PARTICIPATION GUIDELINES

All students are encouraged to participate in as many extra-curricular activities as they desire. Some may wish to participate in multiple sports simultaneously within a single season at the high school or middle school level. While such situation will automatically create conflicts, every effort, on the part of the student-athlete and his/her coaches, will be made to accommodate the student's wishes. Below are the guidelines that will be followed:

- * The student will inform coaches of his/her desires prior to the start of the seasons in question.
- * The student and his/her coaches will work out a plan regarding practices/competitions to accommodate the requirements of dual sport participation. As a part of said plan, the student shall declare which sport shall be primary when conflicts arise regarding competitions. All participants in the formulation of the Dual-Sport Participation Plan will sign said plan and a copy will be sent to the student's parent(s)/guardian(s).
- * Any conflicts arising from the Dual Sport Participation Plan will be brought to the attention of the athletic director who will act as a mediator.
- * When conflicts arise as a result of membership/participation in non-athletic extracurricular activities, students are required to inform their coaches in advance.

NOTE: This policy does not pertain to an outside AAU, Club, or Travel Team.

AUSTINTOWN LOCAL SCHOOLS ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT

EQUIPMENT ISSUE AND RETURN

Students-athletes who are issued equipment/uniforms for the purpose of interscholastic participation will have that equipment recorded by the designated coach of each program. From that moment on, responsibility for the care, safeguarding and return of any issued equipment is the responsibility of the student. Should the student fail to return any issued equipment at the conclusion of participation in any sport, the student is financially responsible for the replacement of any missing equipment. Should such a situation arise, the student in question shall be reported to the athletic director and will have a fee placed on their account which if not resolved, will may result in:

- Being unable to participate on another sport team within the district until fees are paid
- Being unable to purchase tickets for attending Prom until fees are paid
- Not receiving diploma upon graduation until fees are paid

Students who wish to borrow equipment/uniforms for the purpose of Senior Pictures or All-Star games shall contact their respective head coach with their request. Student will return any issued equipment within a reasonable period of time to their respective head coach or the athletic director or face the consequences outlined above. It is preferred that student request such equipment/uniforms at least one week prior to Senior Pictures or All-Star games.

AUSTINTOWN LOCAL SCHOOLS ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT

ATTENDANCE GUIDELINES

Students-athletes are expected to attend school in order to participate in all practices and competitions. Consequently, students must adhere to each of the following guidelines:

- A student must arrive at school no later than 9:30 AM
- A student must be present at the time of dismissal from school
- The above guidelines apply in reference to the final weekday when practice/competitions are scheduled over the weekend.
- Student who receive advanced administrative approval may not be subject to the above guidelines (i.e. field trips, funerals, college visits, etc.)

Coaches are responsible for monitoring student attendance and enforcing the attendance guidelines. Students who are found in violation of these guidelines are not permitted to participate in practices or competitions. However they may attend practices and competitions.

STUDENTS UNDER SUSPENSION

Student-athletes who are under suspension, either in-school or out-of-school, are not permitted to participate nor attend either practices or competitions. Coaches are responsible for monitoring these situations and enforcing this policy.

STUDENT-ATHLETE TARDINESS

Student-Athletes who are frequently tardy will be subject to further discipline by the athletic department.

Weekly Tardy 2-Strike Policy

If a student-athlete accumulates two unexcused (non administrative-approved) tardies during a given week (Monday-Friday), it will result in the student-athlete:

- 1) not starting a contest if they were slated to
- 2) the student will be suspended for the first quarter/set/match or a determined number of minutes equivalent to a 4 quarter game based on the student-athlete's sport

*Tardies will reset to zero every week

Four unexcused tardies in a week will result in suspension for 2 quarters or in cases with multiple competitions during the week – suspension for the first quarters (or equivalent described as above) for the next scheduled two games.

If a student-athlete accumulates 10 unexcused tardies over the course of a 9-week grading period they will be suspended for an entire game.

This policy will reset to zero each 9-week grading period for each student-athlete.

School penalties, such as in-school suspension and Saturday School will still apply in addition to these penalties.

AUSTINTOWN LOCAL SCHOOLS ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT

TRAVEL

All student-athletes, student trainers, managers and statisticians must travel to and from all scheduled scrimmages and contests in transportation provided by the athletic department.

*The only exception is when a parent(s) makes previous written arrangements for an exception to this policy with the head coach.

All student-athletes must adhere to all transportation guidelines as established by the Board of Education.

A student-athlete who misses a scheduled trip to an away competition will not be permitted to participate in that contest unless there are extenuating circumstances that are communicated before the trip.

In the event a bus/van is not available or the group is too small to warrant the use of a van consideration may be given to using personal vehicle under the following conditions:

- Under no circumstances will student-athletes be allowed to drive another student-athlete (car pool).
- A liability waiver will be signed by the parent/guardian of all student-athletes who are traveling. This form is available in the Athletic Office
- Driving will be limited to an instructor, coach, staff member, parent or a representative from the Austintown Local School District.

AUSTINTOWN LOCAL SCHOOLS ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT

EARNING A VARSITY LETTER

Due to the diversity of interscholastic sports, it is impossible to establish standard requirements which would govern awarding a varsity letter. Consequently, it is up to each varsity head coach to determine the requirement for his/her sport.

In establishing sport specific requirement for earning a varsity letter, head coaches will consider the following:

1. Earning a varsity letter is a considerable achievement
2. Award winners must be considered as the top performer at his/her position or in his/her event.
3. Award winner should have participated in a majority of the contests.
4. Award winners, where applicable, should have participated in at least half of the competitions (quarters/innings) per individual contest.
5. The head coach and coaching staff members should consider the award winner's contribution to the team as significant.
6. The requirements for earning a varsity letter should be applied consistently from one student-athlete to another.
7. Student trainers, manager and statisticians should not be excluded from receiving awards. However, varsity letters should not be awarded until the second year of an individual's participation.

AUSTINTOWN LOCAL SCHOOLS ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT

POSTSEASON AWARDS

Athletic Department Awards:

1. Participation Certificates will be awarded to any student-athlete in grades 9-12 who do not earn a varsity letter in a particular sport.
2. First Year Varsity Letters are awarded to those student-athletes in grades 9-12 who have satisfied requirements which have been established by the coaching staff in a particular sports.
3. Second Year Framed Letters are awarded to those student-athletes in grades 9-12 who have earned a varsity letter for the second time in a particular sport
4. Third Year Award Plaques are awarded to those student-athletes in grades 9-12 who have earned a varsity letter for the third time in a particular sport.
5. Four Year Award Plaques are awarded to those student-athletes in grades 9-12 who have earned a varsity letter for the fourth time in a particular sport.
6. First Team All Conference Awards are awarded to student-athletes based upon the criteria established by the All American Conference.

Suggested sport specific awards pertain to the varsity level and can be purchased by the specific athletic booster club.

AUSTINTOWN LOCAL SCHOOLS ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT

ATHLETIC DISCIPLINE

The Student-Athlete Pledge will serve as a code of conduct for student participating in interscholastic sports. Any violation of these behavioral expectations will result in disciplinary action by the coaches, administration or Board of Education.

This code is enforced during the entire school year, 24 hours a day, seven days a week while a student-athlete is enrolled in high school or middle school. The code is also in effect and enforced during school-supervised interscholastic activities and events occurring over the summer break.

The following infractions will also result in disciplinary action:

- Theft or willful destruction of school property
- Chronic violation of school rules and regulations
- Hazing. This is an act, which can be physical, mental or psychological, that subjects another person, voluntarily or involuntarily, to anything that may abuse, mistreat, degrade, humiliate, harass or intimidate. This act may also, in any fashion, compromise their inherent dignity as a person. Hazing can also be a form of initiation in to a particular club or activity.

It is imperative that both student-athletes and parents understand that participant in interscholastic activities, within the Austintown Local School District, will adhere to the following Hierarchy of Jurisdiction when infractions of any kind occur:

- Ohio High School Athletic Association
- Student & Parent Athletic Handbook
- Student Handbook

Student-athletes may be disciplined under multiple levels of the above hierarchy.

AUSTINTOWN LOCAL SCHOOLS ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT

OHSAA – UNSPORTING BEHAVIOR WITH SPECTATORS

The Ohio High School Athletic Association Board of control adopted the following policies on December 9, 2004.

No member of any school-sponsored interscholastic athletics squad shall leave the “playing area” in which a contest is being conducted and enter the spectator area of the facility to engage in any type of conflict – verbal or physical. If a student-athlete leaves the “playing area” and enters the spectator area of a facility to so engage a person, the minimum penalties shall be:

- The student-athlete’s privileges to participate in interscholastic athletics shall be revoked and the student-athlete shall be ineligible for the remainder of the school year.
- The school shall be immediately placed on probation pending an investigation (and report) into the incident, its cause, the what actions were taken by the school to diffuse the situation and what “safeguards have been implemented by the school to prevent futures incidents.

SPECTATOR EJECTION POLICY

Per the Board of Education in conjunction with the All American Conference any fan that is ejected from a contest is not able to attend the next two contests in the same sport, regardless of the contests being home or away. This applies to any preseason, regular season or tournament contests.

AUSTINTOWN LOCAL SCHOOLS ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT

SUBSTANCE USE/TOBACCO POLICY

This policy pertains to the possession or use of tobacco, alcohol, illegal drugs, prescription and non-prescription drugs and/or performance enhancing drugs. Disciplinary action shall be based upon evidence and a police report or staff/administrative referral.

SELLING/PURCHASING/DISTRIBUTING OF ILEGAL SUBSTANCES

First Offense Dismissal from the team(s) for one full year from the date of infraction.

Second Offense Forfeit remaining eligibility to participate in all Austintown Athletics for the rest of their school career.

USE OF ILLEGAL SUBSTANCE/ALCOHOL

First Offense

1. Student-athlete shall be denied participation from 10% of the scheduled events during the season when the infraction occurred. Percentage of denial of privilege is calculated on the number of events within the sport/activity and may carry over into the next season of the same sport/activity or a different sport/activity.
2. Student may participate in schedule practice session during the denial of participation period; at the discretion of the athletic director and coach

Second Offense

The student will be denied participation in all athletic participation for one calendar year from the date of infraction. The student must participate and complete a professional education program to correct the abuse problem before reinstatement to any athletic team. Any cost of the program incurred is the responsibility of the student.

SUBSTANCE USE/TOBACCO POLICY

STUDENT IS IN ATTENDANCE BUT NOT USING

Student-athletes hosting or attending a party or gathering where alcohol or other illegal controlled substances are being unlawfully consumed shall be considered in violation. A student-athlete is required to leave party or gathering immediately. Any violation involving law enforcement and having pending legal action will have disciplinary action determined by administration.

First Offense	Written warning
Second Offense	One game suspension
Third Offense	Dismissal from team

TOBACCO USE

The possession or use of tobacco in any form, as well as look-alikes, is a violation of the athletic policy and subject to the consequences.

First Offense	Written warning
Second Offense	One game suspension
Third Offense	Dismissal from team

SELF REFERRAL POLICY

This self-referral option is only available to student on the first infraction.

If a student or parent comes to the coach principal or athletic director seeking help because of a drug alcohol or tobacco problem, the student will not be found in violation provided they follow the recommendations of a school-approved counseling agency. Any cost of the program incurred is the responsibility of the student. Self-referrals which result in no removal from participation are still considered first violations in the event of a subsequent second violation. Self-referral can only occur one time for a student.

AUSTINTOWN LOCAL SCHOOLS ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT

CONDUCT ON DISTRICT PROPERTY

All persons on district ground are expected to abide by all applicable laws, local ordinances, board policies and district building regulations.

No person on district property may assault, strike, threaten, menace or use improper indecent or obscene language toward a teach, instructor, other District employee or student. This prohibition is extended to all athletic officials, coaches and student-athletes in the district and all visiting teams.

No person is permitted to bring deadly weapons or dangerous ordnances into a school safety zone.

No person may disrupt, disturb or interfere with the teaching of any class of students or any other activity conducted in a school building or upon the campus or grounds.

Whoever is in violation of this policy and building regulations will be asked to leave the property by whoever is in charge. Should that person refuse, law enforcement officials will be called. If the offender should be a student the person in charge should report the student to the appropriate principal. The administration cooperates in any prosecution pursuant to the criminal laws of the State and local ordinances.

AUSTINTOWN LOCAL SCHOOLS ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT

DRUG/ALCOHOL TESTING FOR STUDENT-ATHLETES

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The Board recognizes that participation in school athletics and driving to school is an integral part of the entire educational experience provided to its students. To that end, the Board has adopted a mandatory drug testing policy for high school students participating in athletics and/or students who wish to obtain a parking permit. The purpose of this program is to:

1. Provide a safe and healthy environment for all students.
2. Undermine the effects of peer pressure by providing a legitimate reason for students to refuse to use alcohol and illegal drugs; and
3. Encourage students who use illegal drugs to participate in a treatment program.

The testing program is academically non-punitive. It is designed to create a safe and healthy environment for students and assist them in getting help when needed.

Eligible students are expected to hold themselves to good standards of conduct. Students participating in athletics and/or driving at school carry a responsibility to themselves, their fellow students, their parents and their school to set positive examples of conduct which includes avoidance of the use of controlled substances.

Eligible students and their parent/guardian are required to consent to participation in the District's drug testing program. The consent shall include permission for random testing during the athletic season and/or while driving and parking at school, and for reasonable suspicion testing as warranted. Any refusal to consent to the program results in ineligibility for all athletics and/or obtaining a parking permit for one school year. The following terms, conditions, expectations and consequences are in full effect beginning the 2024-2025 school year.

STUDENT TESTING REQUIREMENTS

All high school students who wish to participate in the District's athletic program or obtain a parking permit are subject to drug testing. The testing may occur prior to participation in any athletic activity, at the beginning of each season or upon submission or parking registration. In addition, random testing of up to 100 percent of eligible students will occur during participation of the athletic season(s) and/or while the student parks at school. A student may be tested more than once per season/year. Drug testing may also occur when a District administrator, coach or other district personnel have a reasonable suspicion that a student is using a controlled substance.

Any student who was not previously tested by the District during the current twelve (12) month period may be tested at the time they join an athletic program. Any student purchasing a parking permit who was not previously tested by the District may be tested at the next collection date after the purchase is made.

AUSTINTOWN LOCAL SCHOOLS ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT

DRUG/ALCOHOL TESTING FOR STUDENT-ATHLETES

INFORMED CONSENT

Eligible students and their parent/guardian shall be provided a copy of Board policy, Administrative Guidelines and the Parent/Guardian Consent to Participate in the District's Drug Testing Program. These documents shall be distributed by the Principal, Athletic Director, and/or designated school official. Each eligible student and his/her parent(s)/guardian(s) must read, sign and date these documents as a condition of eligibility to participate in athletics and/or to obtain a parking permit. Refusal to consent to drug testing results in eligibility for all athletic activities and denial of a parking permit.

DRUG TESTING FREQUENCY

At the beginning of each year or athletic season, while students are parking on school property, or when a student moves into the District, all students covered by this policy may be subject to testing for illegal/illicit or banned substances, as specified in these guidelines. Following initial testing, up to 100% of eligible students will be randomly tested during the athletic season that the eligible student participates or while the student parks on school property. Any eligible student who refuses to submit to drug testing will be treated as if the student tested positive.

DRUGS FOR WHICH STUDENTS MAY BE TESTED

THC, Cocaine, Alcohol, Amphetamines/Methamphetamines, Opiates, PCP, Ecstasy, Heroin, Barbiturates, Benzodiazepines, Methadone, Propoxyphene, Oxycodone, or any substance included in (21 U.S.C. 812 (c)), which an individual may not sell, offer to sell, possess, give, exchange, use, distribute, or purchase under State or Federal Law. This definition also includes all prescribed and over-the-counter drugs being used in any way other than for medical purposes in accordance with the directions for us provided for in the prescription or by the manufacturer.

INITIAL DRUG TEST

An initial drug test may be required to participate in athletics and/or to obtain a parking permit. The test may occur before participation begins. Students participating in activities that require a physical examination may submit a drug test completed as part of his/her physical examination.

RANDOM SELECTION GUIDELINES

Random selection of eligible students for additional testing is conducted throughout the duration of the participating season and/or during the time the student drives and parks on school property. Eligible students are randomly selected from a master list of identification numbers of all eligible students that is prepared by the Principal or Athletic Director and is maintained by the Board-approved testing vendor. Eligible students elected will be notified by the Principal or Athletic Director and directed to report to the collection site and provide a urine sample (or hair or saliva) for testing within the time parameters established by these guidelines.

Random testing will be unannounced. The testing vendor will select the day and time for testing and confirm with the Principal and/or Athletic Director. Every effort will be made to conduct testing during students' nonacademic time. Although testing will not be conducted during holidays or winter or spring break, the schedule will not follow any recognizable pattern.

Any student who refuses to submit to the drug testing will be treated as if the student tested positive.

AUSTINTOWN LOCAL SCHOOLS ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT

DRUG/ALCOHOL TESTING FOR STUDENT-ATHLETES

REASONABLE SUSPICION TESTING GUIDELINES

Reasonable suspicion testing occurs when the District has a reason to suspect a student-athlete or student driver may be in violation of this policy. A reasonable suspicion test may occur based on:

- A. Observed behavior, such as direct observation of drug, alcohol use or possession, or physical symptoms of drug or alcohol abuse;
- B. A pattern of abnormal conduct or erratic behavior;
- C. Arrest or conviction for drug related offense;
- D. Information provided either by a credible source or independently corroborated regarding a student's substance or alcohol use; or
- E. Evidence that the student being tested has tampered with a previous drug or alcohol test.

Any observation used to support reasonable suspicion testing is documented in writing by the Principal, Athletic Director, and/or designated school official and shall be maintained in the student's record.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Because the selection and reporting process for the student tested is confidential, the selection, collection, chain-of-custody documentation and reporting of results are accomplished using identification number codes. The Principal, Athletic Director and/or other designated school official shall establish a master list of student's names and unique code numbers. The list is maintained in a secure and locked location. The superintendent, High School Principal, Athletic Director and/or other designated school official are the only school personnel with access to the list. These code numbers are used to select the pool to be tested for random testing.

The testing vendor coordinates with the High School Principal, Athletic Director and/or other designated school official to schedule students for the collection of urine samples.

A testing vendor representative and designated school official shall be present at the collection site for the purpose of coordinating the identification of the student to be tested and the assignment of the code number master list. From that point on, the code number is utilized for specimen identification and reporting. The collection site master list is used to record prescription and over-the-counter medications that the student has identified as used in the five (5) days prior to the collection.

The collection site master list is then used by the designated school official to identify the test student's parents when positive, confirmed results or when inconclusive adulterated or suspect results are reported by identification number by the testing laboratory in accordance with this policy.

SELF-REFERRALS

Self-referrals can only happen before a test is done. A student may give a self-referral one time prior to a positive test result. In the event a student gives a self-referral prior to the administration of a test, counseling and additional testing are required, but no other punitive action is taken. Any student that self-refers may be tested monthly for the remainder of the his/her participation in school-sponsored athletics or while parking at school.

AUSTINTOWN LOCAL SCHOOLS ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT

DRUG/ALCOHOL TESTING FOR STUDENT-ATHLETES

Policy violations already reported, pending violations or the expectation of a pending violation with law enforcement will not be considered to be "self-referred."

COLLECTION SITE FOR URINE TESTING

The primary method of testing will be through the use of urine samples (a secondary method of hair and/or saliva may be used). If selected, the student will be notified to report to the collection site. Collections sites will be chosen based on adequate bathroom facilities and the ability to limit access to all persons except authorized monitors and students being tested during collection times. Facilities for female students being tested should have private stalls with closures. All testing areas will be secured during testing.

There should also be sufficient room to hold waiting students who must remain supervised at the collection site until collection is complete. Upon initially entering the collection site, the student being tested must remain until collection is complete.

COLLECTION PROCEDURES

Upon reporting to the collection site, the student being tested will remove all outer garments (coats, jackets, hats, scarves, sweaters, etc.) select a sealed sterile container, verify the assigned identification number by signing the collection site master list and disclose in writing all medications, both prescription and non-prescription taken in the past five (5) days. That information will be placed in a sealed envelope, which will be provided to the monitor. District employees shall not view lists of authorized medications. The envelope will be opened only in the event of a positive test result. In the event of a positive test for a prescription drug, the parent and student will be afforded twenty-four (24) hours to provide either a current copy of the prescription, or the label from a current prescription container identifying that the said prescription drug has indeed been prescribed for the participant and in what dosage.

One student shall enter a secure bathroom facility accompanied by a monitor of the same sex, wash his/her hands, empty pockets of pants and proceed to the urinal or toilet stall and open the sealed specimen container.

- A. Each male student produces a sample at a urinal. The student remains fully clothed with his back to the monitor. The monitor stands 6-10 feet behind the student and listens for normal sounds of urination.
- B. Each female student produces a sample in an enclosed stall. The monitor stands outside the stall where she can hear but not observe the student and listens for normal sounds of urination.

If unable to provide a sample, the student being tested must take the empty specimen container to the monitor pending a later attempt. The monitor maintains control of the specimen container until given to the student for the next attempt. The student being tested must remain in the secure area until able to produce a specimen or until excused by the testing vendor representative or designated school official. If the student leaves this area, it will be treated as a positive result and the student will be unable to participate in athletics or be issued a parking permit until the student is able to submit a test with a negative result or until the next testing cycle. Students will be given a reasonable amount of time to produce a sample.

AUSTINTOWN LOCAL SCHOOLS ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT

DRUG/ALCOHOL TESTING FOR STUDENT-ATHLETES

Students who are absent when scheduled or are otherwise unable to provide an acceptable sample when scheduled are not eligible to participate in athletics or obtain a parking permit until a retest can be scheduled and acceptable sample is obtained.

If a partial but insufficient sample is collected, the original container is held by the monitor who checks the temperature of the sample. The student being tested must remain in the secured holding area until able to produce an additional specimen in a second container. The monitor tests the temperature of the second sample. If the temperature of both samples is within the established testing parameters, the samples may be combined in the presence of the student being tested.

Because temperature of a freshly voided sample may be used as criteria for suspected tampering and dilution, it is imperative that the student being tested delivers the sample to the central processing area within four (4) minutes of collection. If delayed for any reason the student must verify the temperature on the indicator strip on the container with the monitor. If upon initial testing the urine temperature is outside the testing parameters, the sample is deemed invalid and the student being tested is required to provide another sample. If no sample can be provided that day, the student is not eligible to participate in athletics or obtain a parking permit until a rescheduled test is completed by the student.

The labeled samples will be maintained under strict security by the collection monitors to maintain proper chain-of-custody and safeguard the rights of the student. Any and all adulterations of the specimen will be detected and considered the same as a test refusal or first time infraction. (The lab checks every sample for adulteration, such as additives drunk or added to urine to change the sample.

Adulterations and diluted samples are treated as first time offenses. They are not called positive, but have the same consequences. A retest will be required within 24 hours.

Any suspicion of tampering with the sample will be brought to the tester's attention. The sample will be screened or sent to the lab for immediate confirmation of tampering.

Students are not to flush toilets or urinals. In the event a student flushes the toilet he or she will be required to give a new sample immediately, or the sample will be considered invalid.

This collection procedure is subject to change because of procedural requirements by the testing agency. The Board reverses the right to change the collection procedure to coincide with the testing guidelines set forth by the testing agency. When using rapid screens, all non-negative screens will be sent out with a chain of custody form to a certified laboratory for confirmation.

Testing will be done by On Demand, only so long as this is the company the District selects. The District reserves the right to change the above-named company.

AUSTINTOWN LOCAL SCHOOLS ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT

DRUG/ALCOHOL TESTING FOR STUDENT-ATHLETES

NOTIFICATION CHAIN FOR INCONCLUSIVE, ADULTERATED OR SUSPECT RESULT

Any and all adulterations of the specimen will be detected and considered the same as a test refusal or first time infraction. Adulterations are treated as first time offenses. They are not called positives, but have the same consequences. A retest will be required within twenty-four (24) hours.

Anyone who suspects tampering with the sample shall notify the Principal, Athletic Director, and/or designated school official. The sample will be screened or sent to the lab for immediate confirmation of tampering.

When the Principal, Athletic Director, or designated school official receives notice of a result that is inconclusive, adulterated, or suspect, the Principal or designated school official will contact the parent/guardian of the student within twenty-four (24) hours of notification that a retest is required. The Principal, Athletic Director, and/or designated school official will collaborate with the testing vendor regarding a re-test and the Principal, Athletic Director, and/or designated school official will contact the student to schedule the retest.

POLICY VIOLATIONS

For the purpose of this policy, the following actions constitute a violation:

- A. Failure to report to collection site after notification
- B. Refusal to submit urine sample for testing.
- C. Tampering with the sample for testing or attempting to subvert the collection/identification process.
- D. Confirmed positive result for banned substance.
- E. Aiding and/or abetting another student in violating this policy.
- F. Refusal to submit to a re-test when required following an inconclusive, adulterated or suspect result.
- G. Failure of the student and/or the student's parent/guardian to sign the testing consent form(s) and return them to the Principal, Athletic Director or designated school official prior to testing.

A positive alcohol and/or drug violation will result in additional testing either through the Board-approved vendor or an assessment programmer through the District's drug testing program. The cost of this testing will be the responsibility of the student and/or the student's parent/guardian.

DUE PROCESS

After notification of a confirmed positive test result, the Principal, Athletic Director, and/or designated school official shall contact the student's parent/guardian by telephone and inform the parent/guardian of their right to a meeting with the Principal to explain the student's rights under this policy. Such notification shall also be sent via certified mail.

After notification of a positive test result, the student and his/her parent/guardian may, at their own expense, elect to have a portion of the original sample retested by an independent certified laboratory of their choice. The District will forward the sample in response to a written request.

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If the parent/guardian fails to contact the Principal within forty-eight (48) hours (excluding weekends) following receipt of said notice by telephone or certified mail to schedule a meeting to review the test results, the results are deemed conclusive for purpose of further action under this policy and the parent/guardian and the student are deemed to have waived their right to challenge the test result as it applies to challenges under this policy.

Any penalties authorized under this policy are in effect during the pendency of an appeal. The Principal issues a decision within forty-eight (48) hours (excluding weekends) of receipt of the appeal. Notice of the decision is given by phone if possible and then by certified mail.

Consequences for a second or third offense are not based on whether the banned substance detected is the same as that identified in the previous test(s).

Students who in any way aid or abet another student in violating this policy will be disciplined as if they were the principal offender.

COST OF ADDITIONAL TESTING

Once a student has had a positive test confirmed, any and all additional test or resulted costs are the responsibility of the student and his/her parent/guardian.

CONSEQUENCES OF POSITIVE RESULTS FOR STUDENT-ATHLETES

FIRST VIOLATION – The student will be denied participation in ten percent (10%) of games and/or competitions in which the school engages for the entire academic year, as well as, denied participation in practices during this time period. The student is also prohibited from being present with the team at games, competitions, or meets. These events shall be consecutive starting with the first schedule event after the confirmation of the violation. Any denial of participation occurring at the end of the season is carried over to the next sport in which the student participates until this consequence is fulfilled.

The student must also participate in an assessment and rehabilitation program. This assessment must be conducted by a certified chemical dependency counselor, an agency certified by the Ohio Department of Alcohol and Drug Addiction Services, or a licensed physician trained in chemical dependency. Within seven (7) days of notification of the violation, the student must set an appointment with a chemical dependency counselor and must participate in an assessment and rehabilitation program. Once that student has provided proof of a scheduled appointment, the student may petition for reinstatement of the privilege to participate. The parent/guardian and the student will meet with the Principal to determine reinstatement. The Principal may require the student provide periodic status updates regarding his or her progress in the rehabilitation program. The student and/or parent/guardian are responsible for all expense associated with the assessment and rehabilitation program and for providing the Principal or designated school official with the requested documentation. The student must participate in the assessment process and rehabilitation program through its completion. A student disciplined under this policy will follow additional guidelines established in the athletic Handbook and/or student code of conduct. The student will automatically be included in the next random testing sequence.

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SECOND VIOLATION – The student is denied participation in games, meets, and/or competitions for the remainder of the season. If more than half of the season is over, the student is denied participation in practices, games, meets and/or competitions for the first half of the next season/ activity the student participates in the following year. A student who commits a second violation of this policy is also prohibited from attending and participating in practices. The student is prohibited from being present with the team at games, competitions or meets. These events shall be consecutive starting with the first scheduled event after the confirmation of the violation. Any denial of participation occurring at the end of the season is carried over to the next sport in which the student participates until this consequence is fulfilled.

The student must also participate in an assessment and rehabilitation program. This assessment must be conducted by a certified chemical dependency counselor, an agency certified by the Ohio Department of Alcohol and Drug Addiction Services, or a licensed physician trained in chemical dependency. Within seven (7) days of notification of the violation, the student must set an appointment with a chemical dependency counselor and must participate in an assessment and rehabilitation program. Once that student has provided proof of a scheduled appointment, the student may petition for reinstatement of the privilege to participate. The parent/guardian and the student will meet with the Principal to determine reinstatement. The Principal may require the student provide periodic status updates regarding his or her progress in the rehabilitation program. The student and/or parent/guardian are responsible for all expense associated with the assessment and rehabilitation program and for providing the Principal or designated school official with the requested documentation. The student must participate in the assessment process and rehabilitation program through its completion. A student disciplined under this policy will follow additional guidelines established in the athletic Handbook and/or student code of conduct. The student will automatically be included in the next random testing sequence.

THIRD VIOLATION – The student is denied participation in all athletic activities for the remainder of the student's high school career.

Athletes who in any way aid or abet another athlete in violating this policy will be disciplined as if they were the primary offender.

Consequences for a second and third violation are not based on whether the banned substance detected is the same as that identified in the previous test(s).

No student will be penalized academically for violating this policy. Moreover, information regarding test results will not be disclosed to criminal or juvenile authorities absent legal compulsion by a valid and binding subpoena or legal process, the athlete and his/her parents/ guardian will be notified at least forty-eight (48) hours before a response is made by the District, to the extent legally permitted. However, if the student is caught in the possession of or use of a banned substance, he/she will be subject to the discipline in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct.

DRUG/ALCOHOL TESTING FOR STUDENT-ATHLETES

CONSEQUENCES OF POSITIVE RESULTS FOR STUDENT DRIVERS

Students who elect to pursue a parking permit form the high school will be automatically entered into the random testing pool for the school year.

FIRST VIOLATION – Students testing positive for the first time will have his/her parking permit suspended for three (3) months of the school year and must participate in an assessment and meet the same requirements regarding reinstatement of his/her parking permit as described for the first offense for students in school-sponsored athletics. In order to be reissued a parking permit after the first offense, the student will be required to submit a negative sample at the next random testing.

SECOND VIOLATION – A second offense will result in the student being banned from parking in the high school parking lot for the remainder of the school year and the student is required to participate in assessment and meet the same requirements regarding reinstatement of his/her parking permit as described for the second offense for student-athletes. In order to be reissued a parking permit after the second offense, the student will be required to submit a negative sample at the next random testing.

THIRD VIOLATION – A third offense will result in the student being banned from parking at the high school for the remainder of his/her high school career. Violations are accumulative throughout the student's secondary school career at the high school. No student will be penalized academically for violating this policy.

Violations are accumulative throughout the student's secondary school career at the high school. No student will be penalized academically for violating this policy.

VENDOR REQUIREMENTS FOR DRUG TESTING

At minimum, the Vendor must be able to provide the following services:

INITIAL TESTING – At the beginning of the year for parking permits and prior to the beginning of the participating athletic season, all eligible students may be subject to urine drug testing. This testing will be accomplished on a date and time coordinated with the testing Vendor. A representative from the testing Vendor, the Principal, Athletic Director, or designated school official is responsible for seeing that all eligible students and their parent/guardian/custodian properly sign the Consent to Participate in the District's Drug Testing Program prior to testing.

Any eligible student moving into the District may be tested at the time they join a school-sponsored athletic team or request a parking permit.

RANDOM SELECTION OF ELIGIBLE STUDENTS AND SCHEDULE OF TESTING – The Principal, Athletic Director, and/or designated school official will prepare a list of eligible students. This list will be forwarded to the Vendor for the random selection of students for testing.

Once provided a list of eligible students, the Vendor must select the required number of students in a random and confidential manner. This system will utilize a computer-based system designed specially for the purpose of randomly selecting individuals for drug testing.

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On a monthly basis, the Vendor will arrange with the Principal, Athletic Director, and/or designated school official, a day and time to do the collection of specimens. However, testing will not be conducted during holiday or spring break. The schedule will not follow any recognizable pattern. The selected student names will be given to the Principal, Athletic Director, and/or designated school official, who will arrange for these eligible students to report to the collection area.

COLLECTION OF URINE SPECIMENS

The Vendor will oversee the collection of urine specimens as outlined in this Policy. Chain-of-custody forms will be provided by the Vendor that meets the criteria of this Policy and that of the testing laboratory. Eligible students will be given as much privacy as possible in obtaining the specimen.

TESTING OF URINE SPECIMENS

The Vendor will have all specimens tested for the specified illicit or banned substances by a qualified laboratory certified by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) following the guidelines of the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). Although not required, it is recommended that the testing laboratory have greater than 10-years' experience in toxicology testing and Chain-of-Custody procedures. All specimens must be initially tested using a highly accurate immuno-assay technique, with all presumptive positive results then confirmed by a Gas Chromatography/Mass Spectroscopy (GC/MS) confirmatory test (understanding that no current GC/MS test is available for LSD).

The following drug classes, substances, or their metabolites are considered illicit or banned for Austintown Local Schools students. Therefore, the testing laboratory must be able to test for the following drug classes, substances or their metabolites in collected urine specimens. The Principal, Athletic Director, and/or designated school official may specify certain additional classes or substances to be tested.

THC, Cocaine, Amphetamines/Methamphetamines, Opiates, PCP, Ecstasy, Heroin, Barbiturates, Benzodiazepines, Methadone, Propoxyphene, Oxycodone.

MEDICAL REVIEW OFFICE (MRO) SERVICES

The Vendor will provide MRO services by a licensed physician who is certified by the Medical Review Officer Certification Council (MROCC) or the American Association of Medical Review Officers as having proven by examination to have had the appropriate medical training to interpret and evaluate drug test result and thus qualified for certification as a Medical Review Officer. Additionally, the MRO must demonstrate a willingness to abide by this Policy as to the evaluation of positive drug test and reporting findings in a timely and confidential manner. All results will be kept on file for a period of seven (7) years.

REPORTING OF RANDOM URINE TEST RESULTS BY VENDOR

The MRO will certify all urine drug screens as negative or positive. Positive findings will be reported by telephone in confidential manner to the Principal, Athletic Director, and/or designated school official, and then to the student's parent/guardian.

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STATISTICAL REPORTING AND CONFIDENTIALITY OF URINE DRUG TEST RESULTS

The Vendor, testing laboratory, or MRO may not release any statistics on the rate of positive drug tests to any person, organization, news publication or media without expressed written consent of the Austintown Local Schools Board of Education. However, the Vendor will provide the Superintendent with an annual report showing the number of tests performed, rate of positive and negative tests, and what substances were found in the positive urine specimens.

PICK-UP PROCESS

The Vendor is responsible for seeing that specimens are delivered to or picked-up by the testing laboratory and the Chain-of-Custody form properly annotated.

FORM COMPLETION

The Vendor is responsible for seeing that proper drug testing custody and control forms are used that satisfy the needs of this Policy and the testing laboratory. A student number will be used for identification with the student's name only appearing on the copies that go to the donor, MRO, and or Principal, Athletic Director, and/or designated school official.

MEDICAL REVIEW OFFICER (MRO) RESPONSIBILITIES

The MRO will review all results of urine drug testing. Any urine specimen testing positive for illicit drugs, banned substances or adulteration will be handled in the following manner:

- A. the MRO determines if any discrepancies have occurred in the Chain-of-Custody
- B. Depending on the substances found in the urine, if necessary the parent/guardian/custodian will be contacted to determine if the student is on any prescribed medication from a physician.
- C. If the student is on medication, the parent/guardian/custodian will be asked to provide a copy of the prescription or a letter from the prescribing physician, to a document what medications the student is currently taking. Failure to provide such requested information will be considered a positive result.
- D. The MRO will then determine if any of the prescribed medications resulted in the positive drug screen.
For example, a drug screen positive for codeine may be ruled negative by the MRO when he receives a letter from the treating physician that the student has been prescribed Tylenol © with codeine as a pain medication following tooth extraction. Or, if the student has a positive drug screen for codeine and has no documented physician order for the medication (maybe a parent gave the student one of their pills), this would likely be ruled a positive drug test by the MRO.
- E. Drug screens positive for illicit drugs (marijuana, heroin, cocaine or alcohol, etc.) would automatically be considered positive by the MRO. The MRO may use quantitative results to determine if positive results on repeat test indicated recent use of illicit or banned substances or the natural decline of levels of the illicit or banned substance from the body. If the MRO feels the quantitative levels determined to be above the established cutoffs do not reflect current use natural decay, then a negative result may be reported.
- F. Finally, MRO, based on the information given, will certify the drug test results as positive or negative. Positives will be reported to the Principal, Athletic Director, and/or designated school official by phone.

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DRUG/ALCOHOL TESTING FOR STUDENT-ATHLETES

DEFINITIONS

ADULTERATION – Any attempt to alter the outcome of a test by adding a substance to the sample, attempting to switch the sample, or otherwise interfere with the detection of illicit or banned substances in the urine, including purposely over-hydrating oneself in an attempt to dilute the urine to decrease possible detection of illicit or banned substances.

ALCOHOL – Any intoxicating alcohol, liquor, wine, beer, mixed beverage, malt liquor, or malt beverages as defined in R.C. 4301.01. The term “alcoholic beverages” also means any liquid or substance, such as “near beer” intended for use as a beverage, used as a beverage, or capable of being used as a beverage,, which contains alcohol in any proportion or percentage. The term “alcoholic beverage” does not include a substance used for medical purposes in accordance with the directions for use provided in a prescription or by the manufacturer and in accordance with District policy and rules related to the use of prescriptions so long as the substance is authorized by a medical prescription from a licensed physician and kept in the original container, which container shall state the student’s name and directions for use.

ASSESSMENT AND FOLLOW-UP PROGRAM – A program operated by a certified chemical dependency counselor or any agency certified by the Ohio Department of Alcohol and Drug Addiction Services, or a licensed physician trained in chemical dependency.

ATHLETE – Any student participating in athletic programs and/or contest sponsored by Austintown Local Schools under the control and jurisdiction of the Ohio High School Athletic Association (OHSAA). Athletes include cheerleaders and danceline members.

BANNED SUBSTANCE – A substance defined by school policy as being banned from use by students in school-sponsored athletics or those obtaining a parking permit.

CHAIN OF CUSTODY – The methodology of tracking specified materials or substances for the purpose of maintaining control and accountability from initial collection to the final disposition for all such materials and providing for accountability at each stage of handling, testing, and storing specimens and reporting test results.

CONFIRMATION TEST, CONFIRMED TEST, OR CONFIRMED DRUG TEST – A second analytical procedure used to identify the presence of a specific drug or metabolite in a specimen, which test must be different in scientific principle from that of the initial test procedure and must be capable of providing requisite specificity, sensitivity and quantitative accuracy.

DESINGATED SCHOOL OFFICIAL – The individual designated by the District to oversee the drug testing program on behalf of the District.

FOCUSED SELECTION – A mechanism for selecting students for drug/alcohol testing in which each student in a particular group shall be selected for testing when selections are made. Examples may include males, females, freshmen, sophomores, juniors, and/or seniors.

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ILLEGAL/ILLICIT DUGS – Any substance, as included in schedules I, II, III, IV, or V of 21 U.S.C. 812 (c) which an individual may not sell, exchange, give, possess, use, distribute, or purchase under Ohio Revised Code Chapter 2952 or Federal law, and any harmful intoxicant as defined in Ohio Revised Code Chapter 2925.01, and anabolic steroids. This definition also includes nicotine and all prescription drug obtained without authorization, and all prescribed and over-the-counter drugs being used in any way other than for medical purposes in accordance with the directions for use provided in the prescription or by the manufacturer.

MOOD ALTERING CHEMICAL – Includes without limitation, narcotics, depressants, stimulants, hallucinogens, counterfeit drugs, marijuana, alcohol, and any common substance such as “white out”, glue, gasoline, etc., used for a mood-altering effect. Prescription drugs are also included, unless authorized by a medical prescription from a licensed physician and kept in the original container, which states the student’s name and directions for proper use.

PARKING PERMIT – A Permit given to students seeking permission to drive and park their personal vehicle on school property during the school day.

POSITIVE RESULT – The presence of alcohol, illegal drugs, or their metabolites.

QUALIFYING ACTIVITIES – School-sponsored athletics and/or students who wish to obtain a parking permit.

RANDOM SELECTION – A mechanism for selecting students for drug/alcohol testing in which each student has an equal chance of being selected for testing each time selection are made.

REASONABLE SUSPICION DRUG TESTING – A suspicion based on specific personal observations, including, but not limited to, appearance, speech, body odors, behavior, or other physical or observable traits of a student that creates a belief by the observer that a student is using or has been using drugs. Among other things, such facts and inferences may be based upon one or more of the following criteria:

- A. Observable phenomena, such as direct observation of drug and/or alcohol use or of the physical symptoms or manifestation of being under the influence of a a drug, including but not limited to appearance, speech, body odors, behavior, or other physical or observable traits of the student. In the context of performance enhancing drugs, reasonable suspicion includes unusual increase in size, strength, weight, or other athletic abilities;
- B. Evidence that a student tampered with a drug or alcohol test;
- C. Evidence that student used, possessed, sold, solicited, or transferred drugs while at school or while participating in any interscholastic athletic program/extracurricular activity;
- D. Inconclusive, adulterated, or suspect test results or drug test that report test acceptability criteria that have not been met.

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SEASON – A period of time defined by start dates as published by the school or sanctioning organization (e.g., OHSAA), and continuing until completion of the final event for the activity in the District. The season for cheerleaders and danceline shall be the same the season for the sport in which they cheer/dance.

SELF-REFERRAL – The decision by a student to seek assistance or counseling for suspected substance abuse. A self-referral is not to be used as a means of avoiding consequences of a violation of this policy. Policy violations already reported, pending violations or the expectation of a pending violation with law enforcement cannot be “self-referred.”

SPECIMEN – Any urine sample provided by a student for testing pursuant to this policy.

STUDENT – Any high school student enrolled in Austintown Local Schools, or any other school directly affiliated with Austintown Local Schools.

STUDENT DRIVER – Any student who drives or parks his/her personal vehicle on school property, including schools affiliated with Austintown Local Schools during the school day. Any students who drive or park on school property must register their vehicle with the high school office and have appropriate identification posted in their vehicle.

TEAM SELECTION – A mechanism for selecting a student for drug testing in which each student of a qualifying activity shall be selected for testing when selections are made.

TESTING YEAR – Twelve (12) month period.

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COLLEGE SIGNING CEREMONIES

The Austintown Athletic Department wants to celebrate the hard work, sacrifice and dedication of our senior student-athletes that commit to continue their academic and athletic careers at colleges and universities. With that, the athletic department will organize college signing ceremonies for senior student-athletes.

Due to the number of college signing ceremonies and concerns about missed class time due to large amount of students attending these ceremonies the following guidelines will be in place with regards to ceremonies.

- All signings will occur with members of a student's team during the spring (March-May).
- All signings will occur during the start of 8th period to reduce missed class times
- All signings will occur in the main gymnasium unless otherwise authorized by the athletic department
- Students must request a signing through their coach to ensure all students committing to colleges are recognized and coordinated appropriately
- Students must submit an action photo to the athletic department two weeks prior to the ceremony
- Student must submit a list of invitees (parents/family members, friends, current students) to the athletic department at least one week prior to the ceremony
- Students are permitted to have up to 5 people at the main table during their ceremony
- Students will be interviewed by the athletic communication specialist or athletic department designee
- Students are encouraged to take pictures by the video board backdrop at the conclusion of their ceremony

Exception

The only exceptions to these guidelines are if a student-athlete is receiving an athletic scholarship to an NCAA/NAIA Division I or II college or university in which case the ceremony may occur as an individual and on the designated signing date set forth by the NCAA or NAIA.