

AHSTW COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

Proudly serving the communities of Avoca, Hancock, Shelby, Tennant, and Walnut

AHSTW Community School District Activities Handbook



2026-2027

PREFACE

This handbook has been prepared to provide a source of information for parents and students that may be interested in participating in AHSTW CSD's interscholastic activity programs.

Please note that it is difficult to list all the details about the various activity programs covered by the handbook and that each coach will use his/her discretion in handling the many situations, which arise in fulfilling his/her coaching assignment. We will also share that coaches will develop and provide sport specific handbooks for each season.

This handbook does however contain general information that pertains to all activities that AHSTW CSD sponsors.

Welcome:

AHSTW Schools is proud that the foundation of our activities is educationally based. Without the education component activities would not be possible at the middle and high school levels. Our activities should help the overall development of our students and offer an extension of the core academics, along with skills in the area of leadership and communication.

It is the belief at AHSTW that participation in activities will lead to increased engagement in our overall school system and we are excited that you are interested in participating in one or more of our wonderful activities, including opportunities in athletics, E-sports, speech and drama, band, choir, FFA, FBLA, FCCLA, Skills USA, and many more.

Welcome and we can't wait to begin working with you!

AHSTW Community School District

AHSTW CSD's Mission

We cultivate a vibrant learning community that prepares students to thrive in a dynamic world.

AHSTW CSD's Vision

Every student is inspired to learn & empowered to excel.

AHSTW Values

P.R.I.D.E

Positive:

A belief that each member acts with good intent as each engages with others at school, in competition, and in the community and that our actions have a tremendous impact on other's lives.

Respect:

We accept personal differences, honors each other time, as we work to understand the perspective of others across our school district, conference, and statewide associations to create a safe environment for all.

Integrity:

We believe it is important to do the right thing even when no one is watching. Our goal is to model positive traits, build trust with others and strive to do what is right for all in our community.

Dependability:

Very simply put, "You can count on me!" We commit to each other that we will be prepared for the day and strive to follow through in our responsibilities for our peers, teachers, coaches, parents and community.

Excellence:

AHSTW CSD will attain Excellence by demonstrating positivity and respectfulness, while acting with integrity and being dependable for others, as there will be no other option!

Non-Discrimination Policy Statement:

Pursuant to Title IX and other applicable state and federal laws, it is the policy of the AHSTW County Community School District not to discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, religion, creed, age (for employment), marital status (for programs), sexual orientation, gender identity and socioeconomic status (for programs) in its educational programs and activities and its employment practices, including applicants for employment.

The district has grievance procedures for processing and resolving discrimination complaints, including formal and informal Title IX sex discrimination and sexual harassment complaints, and will respond to complaints accordingly. Discrimination employment grievances that do not fall under Title IX should be directed to Dr. Noelle Hinrickson, AHSTW CSD Equity Coordinator, 768 S. Maple Street, Avoca, Iowa 51521, 712-343-6364, noelle.hinrickson@ahstwschools.org. Grievances related to this policy for employment matters that fall under Title IX and grievances for any program/student matters should be directed to Dr. Noelle Hinrickson, Title IX and Equity Coordinator, 768 S. Maple Street, Avoca, Iowa 51521, 712-343-6364, noelle.hinrickson@ahstwschools.org. If you have any questions related to this policy, please contact Dr. Noelle Hinrickson, Title IX inquires may also be referred to the U.S. Department of Education, attn. Assistant Secretary, Office for Civil Rights, 400 Maryland Avenue SW, Washington, DC 20202, 800-421-3481, OCR@ed.gov.

AHSTW Community School District is a member of the following statewide organizations:

- Iowa High School Athletic Association
- Iowa Girls' High School Athletic Union
- Iowa High School Speech Association
- Iowa High School Music Association
- FBLA: Future Business Leaders of America
- Skills USA
- FCCLA
- FFA
- The purpose of these organizations is to promote, develop, direct, protect, and regulate amateur interscholastic athletic, music and speech activity relationships between member schools and to stimulate fair play, friendly rivalry, and good sportsmanship among contestants, schools, and communities throughout the state.

Western Iowa Conference:

- AHSTW Community School District is a proud member of the Western Iowa Conference, which supports not only athletics, but also opportunities in the area of academics and the fine arts.
- The Western Iowa Conference is comprised of nine-member school districts in southwest Iowa.
 - o Member Schools are: AHSTW, Logan-Magnolia, Missouri Valley, Red Oak, Riverside, Shenandoah, Tri-Center, Treynor and Underwood.

AHSTW Community School District Participation Goals:

- AHSTW Community School District strives to promote ALL sports and encourages student-athletes to take part in each event they have interest in. In fact, we hope all students participate in an activity during each sport season and become four-sport athletes representing AHSTW CSD.

School Attendance:

- Students whose schedule runs a full 9 periods must arrive by 11:30 a.m. in order to attend or participate in an extra or co-curricular event that evening. Students with an early-release schedule must arrive by 9:45 a.m. If the absence is not pre-approved or is not an excusable absence, the student will not be allowed to attend evening, or if the absence is on Friday, weekend events.
- Appointments scheduled on activity days must be pre-approved a day in advance. **Any student who leaves school early without pre-approval will not be allowed to participate in, or attend any, extra-curricular event that evening. If the student leaves early on Friday, he/she will not be allowed to participate in, or attend any, event on Saturday.** This attendance provision applies to student participation in all extra and co-curricular activities sponsored by the school.
- **Students are reminded that participating in extracurricular events is a privilege and good attendance is required of those students who choose to participate in events.**

Academic Eligibility –

- AHSTW Community School District strives for high expectations among our students in their academic learning with the overall character. Academic integrity is an important part of demonstrating positive character, pride and integrity. With the said the following academic expectations and requirements are established to define the expectations relating to continued eligibility
 - Students who start 9th grade begin with complete eligibility, including students who participated at the 9-12 grade levels during eighth grade. Once an established student, one must be enrolled in a minimum of 5 classes each semester to participate in extracurricular activities by state rule.
 - Academic eligibility will be determined by two semester check periods (every six weeks) and each semester grading period
 - When grades are posted every six weeks, a 14-calendar day “Academic Alert” period begins for students who have an “F” in one or more classes. Students remain eligible during the Academic Alert period, unless stated otherwise in the handbook of the specific activity in which the student is currently participating.
 - During Academic Alert, the student has the responsibility and opportunity to improve failing grades to avoid becoming ineligible by working with the specific teacher of the class which he/she is failing. A student failing more than one class must improve failing grades in each of those classes.
 - “Academic Alert Study Sessions” -- It is the student’s responsibility to meet with the teacher(s) of any class(es) in which the student has a failing grade in order to establish a plan to improve his/her grade. These Study Sessions will be held with the teacher of the course at a date and time agreed upon by the teacher and student. The Study Sessions might take place before school, after school, during lunch, during seminar periods, or virtually. It is teacher discretion as to the number of Study Sessions needed, and this should be determined on an individual student basis depending on the student’s academic need.
 - If a student is still failing at the end of the Academic Alert period and has been meeting regularly with the teacher, the teacher has the discretion of allowing the student to remain eligible for participation in extracurricular activities, as long as the student continues to meet with the teacher.
 - If the student does not meet with the teacher or follow through with the established Study Session plan during the 14 days of Academic Alert and still has a failing grade, the student is ineligible for two weeks.

- This local policy applies to the six week check periods. By state rule, **semester F**'s result in ineligibility for 20 consecutive calendar days of current extracurricular activity or at the beginning of the next extracurricular activity in which the student is participating. For more information on this policy see [Iowa Scholarship Rules](#).
 - Extracurricular ACTIVITIES: (SEMESTER 1) A student who receives a Semester F for the Semester 1 grade will be ineligible for 20 consecutive calendar days current or next activity. *If a student does not participate in an activity during this period of ineligibility, the student will be ineligible for 20 consecutive calendar days at the start of his or her next athletic activity.
 - Extracurricular ACTIVITIES (SEMESTER 2): If a student receives a Semester F at the end of the 2nd semester and is a participant in baseball or softball, the student is ineligible for 20 consecutive calendar days during the baseball/softball season. *If a student does not participate in an activity during this period of ineligibility, the student will be ineligible for 20 consecutive calendar days at the start of his or her next athletic activity.
- Incompletes: Incompletes on the grade card must be made up within 2 weeks of the last day of the six week check period or semester unless other arrangements have been made with the building principal. When this period of time ends, the class work not made up will be changed to a zero and thus the final average grade for the course will be given. If the class in question becomes an F, the ineligibility policy above will be implemented.
- Suspension: During the period of time that a student is suspended, either in school or out of school, the student shall be excluded from all school activities as a participant and attendee for the duration of the suspension.
- Concurrent / Online courses: All concurrent enrollment and online courses also fall under AHSTW eligibility policies. Eligibility will be determined once AHSTW CSD has received all grades from the IWCC Registrar's office.
- Second Semester Senior Year eligibility: For High School courses a student's eligibility will be determined 24 hours after senior grades.

Grading Periods:

- Grading periods will be detailed in the High School Handbook for AHSTW CSD. This includes the timing of grading periods.

Transfer Eligibility:

- Iowa Code - 281-36.8(3): A student in grades nine through twelve who transfers from a school in another state or country, or from one member or associate member school to another member school or associate members school shall be ineligible to compete in inter-scholastic athletics for a period of 140 calendar days, as defined in 281-Chapter 12, exclusive of summer enrollment.
 - The period of ineligibility applies only to varsity level competitions.
 - In ruling upon the eligibility of transfer students, the executive board will consider the factors motivating student changes in residency, which it may consider from both direct and circumstantial evidence. Unless otherwise provided in these rules a student intending to establish residency must show that the student is physically present in the district for the purpose of making a home and not solely for athletic purposes.
 - Any student who participated in the name of a member or associate member school during the summer following eighth grade is ineligible to participate in the name of another member or associate member school in the first 140 days of ninth grade unless a change of residence has occurred after the student began participating in the summer.
- Any student who transfers to AHSTW High School will be ineligible for participation until records are reviewed from the previous school attended. Additionally, if the student transfers in from another Iowa school or district and has not completed a period of ineligibility for a violation of a Good Conduct Rule

in the previous school, the student shall be ineligible if the administration determines that there is general knowledge in our district of the fact of the student's misconduct or violation in the previous district.

Sportsmanship:

- Sportsmanship is the foundation of every great athletic experience. At all levels of play – but especially in high school sports — it is the most important value that athletes, coaches, parents and spectators can uphold. Sportsmanship isn't just about playing fair or following the rules; it's about demonstrating respect, integrity, humility and teamwork, regardless of the final score. When student-athletes are taught these values early, they carry them into adulthood – not only as athletes, but as responsible and respectful individuals in everyday life.
- Coaches Responsibility:
 - o The most important people for modeling sportsmanship are our coaching staffs.
 - o Methods to demonstrate sportsmanship is to:
 - Demonstrate all components of AHSTW P.R.I.D.E
 - Be a Role Model.
 - Remain in control of emotions during frustrating situations.
 - Promote Positivity
 - Shake Hands with members of opposing teams and coaches
- Students/Athletes Responsibility:
 - o Our student/athletes are second in importance when demonstrating sportsmanship as Little Eyes are watching.
 - o Methods to demonstrate sportsmanship is to:
 - Be the Role Model
 - Remain in control of emotions during frustrating situations.
 - Respect the decisions of game officials.
 - Our officials are here to provide us opportunities to participate safely.
 - Promote Positivity
 - Shake Hands with members of opposing teams and coaches.

Physical Examinations: IA Code 281-36.1(280)

- All students shall have a physical examination from a license health care provider and submitted documentation to the school district prior to the first day of practice. A student will be unable to begin practicing or competing with the physical being turned in to either the coach, athletic director, or building office for documentation.
- Physical forms can be picked up in the middle school / high school office.

Concussion Management for Iowa Schools:

- AHSTW Community School District will follow the guidelines for concussion protocol provided by the Iowa High School Athletic Association and the Iowa Girls High School Athletic Union. Decisions made in regard to student participation will include Parents, Student/Athlete, Coaches, and Medical Professional.
- Symptoms of a concussion may include, but are not limited to:
 - o Headache/Sick to stomach
 - o Dizziness/balance issues
 - o Sensitivity to light and noise
 - o Trouble with concentration

- Neck pain
- Mentally “foggy” [slowed processing]
- Drowsy
- Sleeping too much or too little
- Emotional by feeling more: nervous, sad, angry, irritable.
- A return to participation will be developed in collaboration with medical professionals and our local team members.

Transportation:

- Eligible students are expected to ride in school-designated vehicles to and from activities. Any exceptions must be cleared with the coach or sponsor in advance. Students are also expected to ride school-designated vehicles home unless they have their coach or sponsor's permission to ride home with their parent(s), guardian(s) or designated adult.
- Under no circumstances will a student be released to another student. An ineligible student shall not miss any part of the regular school day to travel with the team or group performing. Ineligible students shall not “suit up” during such a period.
- Family / Guardian will be required to provide transportation for their student-athlete in the event an 8th grade student is elevated to the high school level of participation.

Dual Sports:

Dual participation in the same season is challenging for a student/athlete due to the following reasons:

- Time demand
- Physical demand – susceptibility to injury
- Conflicts between practices and contests
- Difficulty of coaches agreeing on expectations
- Potential impact on academic performance

In certain circumstances some may feel that this would work for them. If a student is interested in dual participation they must adhere to the following guidelines:

- Meet with the Activities Director
- Must have an agreement between coaches of both programs on how they will honor the request while taking in the above challenges and complete the Dual Sport Participation Form.
- The Dual Sport Participation form will ask the student/athlete to choose a primary sport. The primary sport will take precedence in the event a scheduling conflict occurs.
 - State Tournament or Post-Season events do take precedence over regular season practices or games.
- The new 8th grade eligibility rule will allow an 8th grade athlete to participate at the JH level in one sport and at the varsity level in another sport during Fall, Winter, or Spring seasons.
 - Examples are as follows, but not limited to:
 - Varsity XC and JH Volleyball/JH Football
 - Varsity Wrestling and JH Basketball or vice versa
 - Varsity Golf and JH Track
- The varsity level of competition will take precedence over a JH competition.

Carryover Sports Guidelines:

- In the event a student-athlete competes in two sports seasons that overlap, such as Spring [track/golf] and Summer [baseball/softball] the following guidance will be implemented to ensure that students, athletes and coaches have clear expectations on the commitments and timelines.

- Concluding sport has priority. Athletes are not to be discouraged from attending practice of the upcoming sport after completion of concluding sport practice. Conversely, athletes are not to be penalized for completing their commitment to the concluding sport.
 - Appropriate restrictions at the beginning of an activity may be requested by the concluding sport coach for the dual sport athletes.
 - i.e. – No sliding practice for students yet to compete at District or State Track.
 - Student athletes should also be allotted recovery time before attendance is expected at the second practice.
- These guidelines are NOT intended to put the athlete in the middle of any controversy. In fact, all athletes that may be involved in the two sports should be identified prior to the beginning of the new season and parameters set at that time to make it easier for students to participate in the events they are passionate about.
 - Students in multiple activities will be expected to make every effort to be at all practices and competitions whenever possible. However, our coaches will collaboratively create a sharing plan taking the student/athletes health into consideration.

Change of Level / 8th Grade Participation Process:

- AHSTW CSD believes that the ‘advancement’ of an athlete has serious implications for the overall participation and involvement within levels our extra-curricular activities programs. It is important to note that the following concepts are of high importance to AHSTW Community School District along with the Board of Education and are carefully considered when making a change of level decision:
 - Student safety
 - Treatment of student athletes by peers, teammates, and coaches
 - Emotional maturity
 - In addition to the physical ability to participate the student/athlete must understand the game at a level greater than peers.
- AHSTW Community School District will implement a change of level process to lead our decision-making in the event a student/athlete is prepared and capable of participating on teams of higher levels of competition.
 - The Change of Level form is included as an addendum to this document.
- Legislation and Description:
 - **Emergency Rule:** Iowa school districts, due to the passage of legislation and proposed emergency rules approved by the Iowa Department of Education, are able to locally determine if an eighth-grade student’s able to participate at levels higher levels of competition.
 - The rules state that “once an eighth-grade student is approved to participate at a higher level the same student shall not also participate in the same sports season for an eighth-grade team.”
 - **State Rule and Explanation:**
 - The student will be rostered on the team of first participation.
 - If a junior high season is different from the high school team [i.e. split season], the eighth-grade student may only participate on the junior high team or the high school team, not both. [per IHSA and IGHSU interpretation.]

- 1st half JH split season: A student participating in a JH Season during the first half of the varsity season cannot be elevated at the conclusion of the JH season.
- 2nd half JH split season: A student participating at the JVR, JV, Varsity level in the first half of the season will be unable to play with peers when the JH season begins and will remain with the JVR, JV or Varsity team.
- Softball and Baseball players are no longer able to fluctuate between JH, JV, Varsity Levels.

- Points to consider when proposing a level change:

- Guiding Question: Is participating at the varsity level in the best developmental and athletic interest of both the student and team?
 - Will a student be able to be challenged and continue to see success at the level selected?
- Describe the rationale as to why an 8th grade student should be elevated to a higher level of competition.
 - Is the student/athlete an impact player at the high school level?
- Does the individual student have the ability to participate at the varsity level against athletes across our schedule, not only with student/athletes on our current teams?
- What impact will a level change of a student/athlete or student/athlete[s] have on AHSTW CSD programs? [participation, team win/loss %, etc....]
- What happens if the fit isn't right after the level change occurs?
 - The student will not be able to return to lower-level competition and emergency rule. [Per IHSAA and IGHS AU]
- Is the student/athlete able to handle reduced playing time?

- Eligibility:

- A student is not guaranteed a roster spot on a high school team if the district adopts a policy allowing eighth grade participation at higher levels of competition.
- Student/Athletes are allowed only two years or four semesters of competition at the 7th and 8th grade level. If a student repeats one of those two grades an application must be sent to the IHSAA or IGHS AU for approval of additional semesters of participation.
- Each student shall have their eighth-grade year in addition to a maximum of eight consecutive semesters upon entering ninth grade for the first time, including those who participated during eighth grade to complete his/her eligibility.
- A student/athlete must observe the 140-calendar day eligibility rule once an 8th grade student has established participation at the varsity level in any sport. For example, an 8th grade student playing varsity baseball in the summer of 2026 must observe the 140-day eligibility rule if the student moves to a different school district without a change of residence for purposes outside of education.
- 6th grade students are not eligible to play JH sports outside of the current rule, which allows JH baseball and softball players to play JH in the summer after their 6th grade year has been completed.

- Change of Level Process:

- Step 1: The Head Coach of a sport will complete the Change of Level Request form and share the form with AHSTW CSD's Athletic Director three weeks prior to the sport season.

- Step 2: AHSTW CSD's athletic director will discuss the request from the head coach and schedule a meeting with the coach, parent, student/athlete, and athletic director.
- Step 3: Hold parent meeting.
- Step 4: Eighth grade student must have the Supplemental Physical Form, provided by the IGHSAU and IHSAA completed by a medical doctor to attest that the student is physically able to participate at the high school level.
- Step 5: Finalize the decision while understanding the parent has the final decision on whether to accept the invitation or not.

- Participation:

- AHSTW CSD will allow a change of level for eighth grade student/athletes to participate at the high school level of competition in the certain sports. The following lists describe which sports will and will not participate.
 - Sports in which a Change of Level for 8th grade students WILL be allowed:

• Cross Country	Track	Golf
• Basketball	Wrestling	Volleyball
 - Sports in which a Change of Level for 8th grade students WILL NOT be allowed:
 - Football Soccer
 - Both of the above sports are collision sports and based on research could lead to increased opportunity to receive concussions and head trauma.
 - Baseball & Softball will continue current practice, as they are summer sports.
 - If baseball and softball begin JH programs, then the 8th grade eligibility rules will be applied as you are unable to play at different levels in the same season.
 - In the event that multiple student-athletes are being considered for advancement, AHSTW Community School District has established a foundational expectation that at least 80% of the activities participants are from grades 9-12 before such requests will be considered. At which point each student will be evaluated individually.

- Academic Requirements:

- If a student participates at the next higher level, all academic standards of that level will be followed.

- Fine Arts & Speech & Drama

- 8th grade participation is allowed in these areas.

Joining a Team After the Season Begins

- This policy ensures that students adhere to eligibility requirements, serve suspensions appropriately, and maintain good academic and behavioral standing while participating in school activities. Students should not join an activity after practices have started solely to serve a suspension and avoid a penalty at a later time.

- Depending on the student/athletes eligibility status, students may join an activity after the season starts:
 - An eligible student may join at any point in the season if he/she:
 - Maintains good standing with academic eligibility policies
 - Maintain good standing with the Code of Conduct policies
 - Receives coach approval
 - An ineligible student may join if he/she:
 - Starts before the first official practice date.
 - By meeting the deadline, the student can serve his/her penalty in that activity.
 - In the event the student/athlete does not complete the season the student's ineligibility period will carry over to the student/athletes next activity.
 - Students who fail to meet the deadline may still participate in the activity, but the ineligibility penalty will carry over to the student/athletes next activity.
 - Starts after competitions begin but has administrative approval
 - Students can join an activity during the season if they are not in good standing (due to grades or conduct), but only with coach and administrative approval.
 - However, any suspension days related to grades or conduct will not be counted during this period, and they will have to miss the appropriate days of the next full season they participate in.

In-Season Strength Training Guidelines

- Strength training is vital to improve the success of an athletic program. Strength training decreases the chance of injuries, increases the confidence of our athletes, and enhances athletic performance
 - Before the start of a season, each coach will meet with the strength and conditioning staff and activities director and fill out a calendar of specific strength training times, making sure all their athletes get two lifts per week.
 - Each coach will be responsible for creating opportunities for their athletes to participate in in-season workouts, these workouts can be part of a practice schedule or P.E. during the course of the school year.

In-Season Sport Absences:

- By participating in a team activity, you are making a commitment to all other team participants and your attendance at all practices and games are essential to team growth and development. With that said, absences deemed to be unexcused shall be addressed by the coach and may include a loss of playing time during an upcoming event or events.
 - Excused Absences:
 - Medical Appointments
 - Illness
 - Bereavement
 - Coaches and Sponsors will collaborate when two in-season opportunities overlap.
 - In-season sport and other in-season contest

- FFA, FBLA / Skills Iowa, FCCLA
- Fine Arts
- Qualifying events will take precedent over regular season events.
 - Academic Considerations: ACT Testing, College Visits, etc.
- Unexcused Absences:
 - Family Vacations
 - Missed Practice with no communication
 - Attendance to Out-of-Season sport activity, Non-School Club or AAU, or camps.

Out-of-Season Absences:

- AHSTW CSD's coaches design out-of-season opportunities within the guidelines of both the Iowa High School Athletic Association and Iowa Girl's High School Athletic Union. Each of these opportunities are designed to provide an opportunity for both an individual student/athlete's and team's development. Please note that attendance during these opportunities is optional and will not be considered once an in-season sport begins.
- However, coaches will continue to work together to design out-of-season activities, when allowed by state rule, to promote continued development while being responsive to student-athletes overuse and fatigue.
- In-season sports do take priority over out-of-season sports and follow the same guidelines as detailed in the Carry-over section of the handbook.

Non-School Team Participation [ex. Club, AAU Sport, Out-of-Season]

- A student choosing to play on a non-school team and who are members of a high school team will be allowed to participate in both programs provided they comply with the following guidelines:
 - High school games will take priority over non-school or out-of-season games.
 - High school practices will take priority over non-school or out-of-season practices.
 - With the coach's approval, non-school games may be played in lieu of high school practices.
- Failure to comply with these guidelines MAY result in the reduction of the student athlete's playing time or dismissal from the high school team and subsequent ineligibility by the Iowa High School Athletic Association and the Iowa Girls High School Athletic Union by-laws. It is expected that players, families and coaches will be in close and frequent communication regarding club sport practice and competition schedules to avoid conflict and allow players to participate in both activities.

Extra-Curricular Conduct Policy (ECCP):

Students of the AHSTW Community School District are encouraged to participate in extracurricular and other voluntary activities so that they might gain from the positive educational benefits of participation in these activities. Among the benefits of participation is the development of constructive attitudes for future citizenship including the principles of fair play and sportsmanship, respect for others, rules, authority, for one's own health and well-being, and the development of leadership, group pride, teamwork, self-discipline, and the values of self-sacrifice.

Participation in extra-curricular and other voluntary school-sponsored activities is a privilege and not a right. Students who participate in extracurricular and other school-sponsored activities represent our school and their conduct is one factor by which our school is judged. To encourage a high standard of conduct on the part of students and to ensure the reputation, integrity, and high standing of our school system, students participating in extracurricular and other voluntary school-sponsored activities must meet certain standards. A failure to do so directly affects the reputation and character of the AHSTW school system.

AHSTW Community School District students in the 7th and 8th grades will be under the jurisdiction of this conduct policy. However, upon entering the 9th grade all students' prior good conduct records will be erased and students will begin high school with a clean record.

Section 1: Activities Covered by the AHSTW Community School District Extra-curricular Conduct Policy [ECCP]:

1. All athletic teams
2. Speech & Drama
3. School Plays
4. E-sports
5. Cheerleading
6. Vocal and Instrumental Music
 - a. Jazz Band / Swing Choir or any extra-curricular music combination
7. Color Guard / Dance Team
8. FFA, FBLA, Skills USA, FCCLA, Quiz Bowl
9. National Honor Society and Student Government [national guidelines will apply]
10. State Contests or any other activity where the student represents the school district and is not directly associated with a course grade.

The following opportunities are forfeited if a violation is determined, but they do not count as an event to fulfill the penalty.

1. Honorary/Elected Offices or Positions such as, but not limited to: Student Government and Homecoming / Prom Courts
2. A student may attend the following events, school dances and prom but will be excluded from participating in all public appearances associated with the event if the student is serving a ECCP consequence at the time the event occurs: Homecoming Court, Homecoming Parade, Grand March for Prom.
3. Speaking at graduation is an honor and with multiple extra-curricular conduct violations a student will be unable to speak at graduation ceremonies.

Direct extensions of the curriculum that are not extracurricular contests or competitions will not be subject to the ECCP (local concerts that are an extension of the classroom).

Students wanting to participate in school activities must meet the requirements set out by the school district for participation in the activity. Students who participate in student activities programs are also subject to the policies of the Iowa High School Athletic Association, Iowa Girls High School Athletic Union, Iowa High School Music Association, and the Iowa High School Speech Association.

All coaches/sponsors will review this ECCP with all participants at the beginning of each season/activity.

In addition to the ECCP school district coaches and sponsors have developed team or activity handbooks. Team handbooks describe the expectations of each team and activity, and our coaches and sponsors are able provide accountability for actions that may not be addressed through the ECCP. Such actionable behaviors may include but are not limited to attendance, treatment of peers while in the activity, positive participation during practice, and overall sportsmanship.

Section 2: Conduct Leading to Suspension/ineligibility

A student may lose eligibility for any of the following behaviors:

1. Student possession, use, or purchase of tobacco products, regardless of the student's age;
2. Students are prohibited from possessing or using any "look alike" substances or substitutes that appear to be tobacco, alcohol, or controlled substances in any form while in school buildings, on school grounds, in school vehicles, or at school events. Possession/use of devices such as "e-cigarettes" constitute "look alike" contraband and are a violation of this policy, regardless of the substance in the device.
3. Student possession, use, or purchase of alcoholic beverages, including beer and wine or participation with other students in such activities;
4. Student possession of a controlled substances and/or drug paraphernalia as defined by the Code of Iowa, without a legal prescription, and with knowledge, intent, and control thereof. Use or purchase of a controlled substance, as they are defined by the Code of Iowa, and without legal prescription;
5. Students in the presence where drugs or alcohol are being used or possessed illegally by minors even if they, themselves, are not actively drinking or using illegal drugs. It is the belief that students who represent AHSTW High School are looked up to and emulated by others, including younger children, and he or she should not appear to condone illegal, unhealthy, and/or dangerous activities or enable other students to engage in them
6. Illegal possession or use of weapons, look-alikes or other dangerous objects;
7. Engaging in any act that would be grounds for arrest in Iowa's criminal justice system or a finding that a student has committed a delinquent act by Iowa juvenile justice system, excluding minor traffic offenses regardless of whether the student was actually cited, arrested, convicted, or adjudicated for the act(s); (e.g. theft, vandalism of private, school or other public property, engaging or associating oneself with illegal activities)
 - a. Vandalism is defined as: intentional destruction or damage to property
 - b. Examples of vandalism include, but are not limited to the following: graffiti, breaking windows, keying objects or vehicles, egging, defacing property, and tire slashing.
8. Any conduct that is in violation of student-to-student harassment Policy 502.10;
9. False reporting of an alleged conduct violation [Honesty Provision will not apply]
10. School District will honor any extra-curricular conduct violation from other schools. Any student entering AHSTW under suspension will have to complete that suspension before participating for AHSTW High School.

For the purposes of this policy:

- *Having the odor of alcohol on one's breath is evidence of "use".*
- *"Possession" includes actual possession and constructive possession where the item is within reach of the student or in close proximity to the student and/or otherwise subject to the student's immediate control (e.g. alcohol placed in the trunk of a car by a student who is operating the car).*
- *Students suspended from school (both in-school and out-of-school) are not eligible to participate (practice or otherwise) or compete during the days they are suspended. A violation that warrants a suspension but will not be categorized as a code of conduct violation unless it meets the criteria listed above.*

Section 3: Enforcement

Suspected violations of the ECCP should be reported to the Athletic Director and / or Building Principal [Intermediate or High School]. If there is a clear violation of the ECCP, (student self-admits, notification provided by law enforcement, or notification provided by the parent of the student) the student will be informed of the violation, and appropriate consequences will be imposed.

If there is a suspected violation of the ECCP and that event is not reported by self-admitting, notification provided by law enforcement, or parent, the student will be interviewed by the principal and/or athletic director. The principal or athletic director will collect all relevant information and bring this information to the Extra-Curricular Conduct Committee. (*See Extra-Curricular Conduct Committee [ECCC] below*)

Students will be encouraged to present information in a straightforward and honest manner. The principal and/or athletic director will consider facts/information through the following avenues:

1. the student or the parent/legal guardian of the student self-report or admit to an offense (see “Reduction in Penalty” section);
2. the administration has been notified by law enforcement, juvenile court officer(s), or other law enforcement agency of conduct in violation of the ECCP (video/picture evidence can be used in determining if a violation has occurred). A student does not need to be formally charged by law enforcement in order to be considered in violation of the ECCP.
3. the conduct was witnessed by a school employee, or other students or otherwise verified by a school employee or more than one student.
 - a. with violations involving participation and/or presence at a party, if there is video/picture evidence of student(s) in violation of subsection “3 or 4” above under “Conduct leading to suspension” this can be used to determine if a violation of the ECCP has occurred.

Section 4: Extra-Curricular Conduct Committee

Whenever a student is alleged to have violated the ECCP, the athletic director or principal shall investigate the facts concerning such allegations. The student shall be given notice of the alleged violation and be provided an opportunity to respond. If the student denies the charges, an explanation of the evidence against him/her shall be given.

Once the athletic director or principal has met with the student, a neutral committee called the Extra-Curricular Conduct Committee (ECCC) will be established made up of school staff with the purpose being to review the information and determine if, by a preponderance of the evidence, a violation has occurred.

The review of facts by the ECCC is not required and will not be utilized if the student has been cited, arrested, convicted or adjudicated by law enforcement or juvenile court officer(s) or has otherwise admitted to the conduct. This provision is only necessary in situations where the violation is uncertain/unclear.

The Extra-Curricular Conduct Committee [ECCC] will be appointed by the principal and consist of:

1. Athletic Director
2. Four (4) staff members [Grades 7-12]
3. Instructional Coach or Alternate Level Principal
 - a. The principal will act as a mediator and a presenter of information for the committee.
 - b. The committee will vote to determine whether the offense was/was not a violation of the ECCP.

The purpose of the ECCC is to review the preponderance the facts and evidence and then determine by a preponderance of evidence whether there was a violation of ECCP. If it is determined a violation has occurred, the principal will notify the student and parents of the violation and inform them of the consequence.

The ECCC will consider, but is not limited to the following factors when assessing what consequences may be issued:

1. Preponderance of the evidence presented
2. Proximity to school grounds or activities
3. Degree of involvement
4. Admission to the violation when asked
5. Multiple offenses (1st, 2nd, 3rd offense)

The ECCC is responsible for determining if a student is in violation of the ECCP. Once a determination has been made the committee will determine consequences within guidelines of this policy.

Because it is impossible to foresee all possible scenarios, administration may choose to consult with legal counsel and law enforcement, to determine whether the ECCP will be imposed.

For purposes of this policy:

- Anonymous accusations will not be investigated or considered by the committee.
- The District will investigate reported allegations presented to the athletic director or HS Principal within 14 calendar days of the alleged event, unless provided by law enforcement.

Section 5: Consequences of Prohibited Conduct

1. First Offense: Suspended for an amount equivalent to 25% of the regular season schedule of which the student participates; and/or one (1) major performing arts activity.
 - a. For individuals who self-report to coach or administrator within 48 hours of the incident, the penalty will be reduced to 10% of the total regular season games, with a mandatory minimum of 1 event/activity.
 - b. The honesty provision will not be available once an investigation has been initiated by the athletic director or building principal. This includes being called into the office for inquiry.
2. Second Offense: Suspended for an amount equivalent to 50% of the regular season schedule of which the student participates; and/or two (2) major performing arts activities.
 - a. For individuals who self-report to coach or administrator within 48 hours of the incident, the penalty will be reduced to 33% of the total regular season games.
 - b. The honesty provision will not be available once an investigation has been initiated by the athletic director or building principal. This includes being called into the office for inquiry.
 - c. If the second offense has been more than eighteen (18) months from the previous offense, the ECCP will review the situation and has the authority to reduce the penalty equal to the consequences described in the first offense. However, the policy violation will continue to count as the second offense.
3. Third Offense: Suspended for one (1) calendar year.
 - a. If the third offense has been more than eighteen (18) months from the previous offense, the ECCP will review the situation and has the authority to reduce the penalty equal to the consequences described in the second offense. However, the policy violation will continue to count as the third offense.
4. Fourth Offense: A fourth violation of the ECCP will result in being suspended for the remainder of the student's high school career.
 - a. Four (4) total offenses, regardless of the length between offenses, is considered behavior no longer deserving of the privilege of representing the AHSTW School District through extra-curricular and/or school sponsored activities.

Section 6: Discipline Process

1. The student is ineligible (suspended) beginning with the first event following the determination of a violation. If the student is not currently involved in an activity that is in season, the student's period of ineligibility will begin at the beginning of the season of the first activity for the student.
2. Students involved in multiple activities will be ineligible for all such activities in the order in which they occur, if the competition seasons of the activities occur at the same time.
 - a. If the student is involved in more than one event/activity, the penalty will be calculated off the activity with the most events in the season. The penalty will then be applied to both/all activities which student is currently participating. An example of this would be if a student were in volleyball and marching band. If the student must miss 25% of the events, the 25% would be calculated against the number of volleyball contests, as there are more of those than marching band competitions. Once that number is determined, the actual events/contests to be missed will be the events that occur in order of their occurrence after the determination of violation has

happened regardless of the activity. Therefore, a person may miss one event in one activity and three events in another should the penalty be four events.

3. Students with a violation who then commit another violation prior to completing the period of ineligibility from the previous violation will have both penalties added together and these periods of ineligibility will be served consecutively.
4. Students who are academically ineligible will serve the full period of ineligibility for a violation of the ECCP upon regaining academic eligibility.
5. The minimum penalty for any good conduct violation is one (1) event/performance regardless of the percentage of the punishment determined. It is important to note that the rules of rounding will be used to determine the number of events to be missed.
 - a. 25% of 15 regular season events = 3.75 events. In this instance, four [4] events will be required to fulfill the suspension.
 - b. 25% of 9 regular season events = 2.25 events. In this instance, two [2] events will be required to fulfill the suspension.
 - c. 25% of 1 contest = 1 contest. [e.g.: speech and drama]
6. The student must continue participating in practices for the duration of the ineligibility period and must finish the activity in good standing with the coach/sponsor of the activity. Failure to do so will result in the full penalty being applied to the next season/activity in which the student participates.
 - a. Should a student not finish his/her ineligibility before an activity is finished, the remaining amount of the ineligibility shall be carried over to the next season/activity in which the student participates and applied as described in the example below:
 - i. A student receiving a second offense will be suspended for 50% of the regular season schedule. With only two games remaining in the current eight-game season, the student will serve 25% of the suspension ($2 \div 8$) by sitting out those two games. The remaining 25% will carry over to the next season and be recalculated based on that season's regular schedule. If a team advances to the playoffs, the student will continue to be withheld from competition until the suspension has been completed.
 - ii. If the team advances to only the first playoff game, the student will be withheld from competition, increasing the completed portion of the suspension to 37.5% ($3 \div 8$). In that case, the remaining 12.5% of the suspension will carry over to the next season.
 - iii. The number of games for the carried-over portion will be recalculated (25% or 12.5% if using the above examples) using the next season's regular season schedule, with the student required to serve whichever is less: the recalculated percentage number of games or the remaining percentage number of games from the prior season.
7. When a student participates at more than one level of competition (e.g. - JV and varsity) the period of ineligibility is measured against the student's primary level of competition.
 - a. The period of ineligibility will be served at that level of competition and will include all other contests in the interim at any level of competition. If the student's primary level of competition plays an abbreviated schedule (e.g. - sometimes only a few games may be scheduled at the JV level in a sport which generally schedules several more games) the period of ineligibility will be measured against the fuller schedule of the lower-level competition.
8. In sports such as wrestling or volleyball where multi-team tournaments are held, such tournaments will count as two of the activities to be missed. In no situation will a student miss only part of a tournament to restore eligibility. Dual, triangular, and quad events will count as 1 event.
9. Students who participate in summer activities and violate school policies will face the same consequences as students violating the policy during the year. The ECCP applies 365 days a year and everywhere that students are located.

10. Students found in violation of the ECCP may not register for a new activity after the state mandated or district defined start date in order to avoid the penalty hereunder being applied at a later time to another activity.
11. An ineligibility period will include post-season competitions/events, if the determined number of events would include post-season play.
12. AHSTW Community School District will honor any extra-curricular conduct violation from other schools. Any student entering the district under suspension will have to complete that suspension before participating for AHSTW High School.

Section 7: Notice to Student

The principal and/or athletic director, upon receiving determination that a student has violated the ECCP, shall promptly deliver to the student's parent(s) or guardian(s) (or to the student if 18 years of age or older and not residing with a parent or guardian) a written Notice of Violation of the ECCP which shall contain the following:

1. The student's name and the names and addresses of the student's parent(s) or guardian(s).
2. A statement as to the time, place, and circumstances of the violation the student is determined to have committed.
3. A statement describing the consequence to be imposed upon the student for violating the ECCP and the effective date on which such consequence shall commence, if all events were to be held as scheduled.
 - a. If an event is postponed and not made up in a timely manner, the student's suspension will then continue until the required number of events have been met.
4. A statement outlining the review process of any decision of violation of the ECCP.

Review Process

When a student is found in violation of the ECCP the student may choose to have the violation reviewed by submitting a ["request for review"](#) form within three (3) school days of the decision of misconduct to the Superintendent of Schools.

The Superintendent will then have three [3] school days to review and make a written finding that determines:

1. if the evidence evaluated by the ECCC and/or HS Principal meets the level of Conduct Leading to Suspension/Ineligibility [Section 2].
2. if the consequence was within the guidelines of the ECCP and/or,
3. if the discipline process was followed properly

The student may appeal the Superintendent's decision to the Board. The request for review by the Board of Education must be made to the Superintendent within three (3) school days of receiving the Superintendent's decision. The review by the Board of Education will then be held at the next regular school board meeting or a special meeting held within 14 calendar days, whichever occurs first and can still be timely posted as required by Iowa's Open Meeting Law. The appeal to the School Board will be held in closed session unless requested by the family to be held in open session.

If a review is conducted by the School Board, the family will be afforded a hearing where both the family and administration will have the opportunity to present information and argument in support of their position. Decisions following a hearing by the School Board shall be considered the final decision.

If consequences are imposed by the administration, and this decision is reviewed, the suspension remains in effect during entire period of review and appeal.

Reduction in Penalty:

1. Evaluation and Treatment: A student who has a second violation of the alcohol or drug provision of the ECCP may elect to seek an evaluation and, if recommended, treatment from a recognized substance abuse facility at the student's, or student's family's expense. If the student seeks evaluation and agrees to waive confidentiality to allow the evaluating facility to report back to the superintendent or designee regarding recommendations for treatment or follow up care, the student's penalty for the second violation may be reduced to 25% of the total number of events (reduced from 50%). This reduction is not available for first or third violation(s).
2. Admission Prior to Determination (honesty provision): If a student comes forward to a coach, administrator, or activity sponsor to admit (self-report) a violation of the ECCP within 48 hours of the violation, the student's penalty may be reduced to 10% for the first violation and 33% for the second violation. The honesty provision may not be applied for a third offense.
3. All items in this section may not be combined for any single offense in reduction of the penalty.

Section 8: Requesting Assistance for Substance Abuse:

If a student, in good faith, suspects that he/she needs assistance in dealing with a personal substance abuse problem before it is known to the school (not as a result or is linked to a pending ECCP violation), he/she may request assistance from the school administration, guidance counselor, coach or sponsor of an activity, student advocate, or student assistance team without fear of penalty under the ECCP. The student must, at his or her own expense, enter and follow a prescribed program of assessment, evaluation or treatment provided by a non-school agency, and must make the athletic director aware of his or her participation in such a program by providing a written confirmation from the agency providing the service.

PARENTS -EXPECTATIONS

- AHSTW Community School District acknowledges that the actions of our mentors and spectators greatly influence the actions of our youth. With that said, we encourage all of our community members to model the following expectations for our communities' youth during competition as we directly influence the culture of our programs and the actions of our youth.
 - **CHEER FOR AHSTW CSD:**
 - We need you and we are all in this together!
 - **Embrace & Promote the process:**
 - We know there are going to be good days and bad days over the course of a season or school year. No matter how we doing it is important to keep showing up doing the work to improve.
 - **Demonstrate P.R.I.D.E.:**
 - We are better together, as a positive team. Let's stay positive during tough times, support each other, communicate and encourage each other throughout the season.
 - It is important to note that one person doesn't make a team, but one person's negativity can break a TEAM.

What can parents expect from our coaches/directors?

- Our coaches/sponsors care about AHSTW's athletes/performers as individuals and will make decisions based on what is best for the team.
- To prepare our teams and athletes/performers through hard work, life lessons and preparing them to handle adversity. At times they may be demanding but they will not be demeaning.
- Communication.
- Athletics/Fine Arts are emotional; there will be times you don't agree with decisions that are made, however trust that there is a valid reason for everything we do. We are constantly trying to follow our vision.
- It is all about teamwork! Everyone needs to be super team members, as we are all Vikings!
- Remember our coaches/directors are in their position because they have passion for doing what they do and their efforts are greatly appreciated.

How do I, as a parent, communicate the right way?

- * Coaches/Directors determine the strategy, player roles, and in some instances relating to team expectations who is allowed to continue as a team participant. Acceptance of a position in the program includes acceptance of this policy. It is a privilege, not a right, to be a member of an activity.
 - **Appropriate concerns to discuss with coaches/directors:**
 - Situations involving your child.
 - Ways to help your child improve.
 - Your child's attitude, work ethic, and eligibility.
 - Concerns about your child's behavior.
 - **Issues that are not appropriate to discuss with coaches or AD:**
 - Playing time or role of any other student-athlete/performer.
 - What position or role does any other student-athlete/performer play?
 - Team strategy, practice organization, or play calling.
 - Other student-athletes/performers process.

Addressing Concerns - The goal is to solve problems at the lowest level.

- **Level 1:** Student and Coach/Sponsor
 - **Level 2:** Student, Parent, and Coach/Sponsor
 - **Level 3:** Student, Parent and Coach/Sponsor and Activities Director
 - **Level 4:** Student, Parent and Coach/Sponsor, Activities Director, and Principal
- * If one these steps is skipped the parent and athlete/performer will be referred to proper step.
- * AHSTW CSD will also utilize The 24-Hour Rule for any in-season communication with the coaching staff. Contact with the coaching staff will not be allowed until 24 hours after an athletic event.
- o The only exception to this rule is reporting an injury, illness or emergency situation.

Addendum:

Addendum #1: Change of Level Form

AHSTW Community School District
Change of Level Form

This policy will pertain the advancement of student athletes to the next level of competition: 8th grade to the high school levels of competition. We believe that "advancement" of an athlete has serious implications for the overall participation and involvement levels in our interscholastic sports program. We also believe that the impact of such a move on a student/athlete's personal, mental, social, academic and athletic development should be considered very carefully.

Process/Steps:

1. Written request is made by the Varsity Head Coach the Activities Director.
 - a. *Athlete/parents will NOT be approached before the written request is made to the Athletic Director [AD].
2. The Activities Director will inform the appropriate coaches at the Junior High, Junior Varsity level and also the High School Principal of the request.
3. A conversation with the AD and Head Coach will take place. Criteria to be considered/discussed are as follows:
 - a. Will the student/athlete be an impact participant at the next level of competition?
 - i. Future potential as "all conference or "all-state performer".
 - b. Impact on lower-level team's chemistry and ability to be competitive after loss of recommended player.
 - c. Player's demonstrated physical skills/attributes demonstrated in interscholastic competition.
 - d. Physical maturity comparable to other varsity athletes.
 - e. Physical toughness or medical history.
 - f. Player's record of demonstrated leadership.
 - g. Evidence of mental and emotional readiness.
 - h. Understanding of the "upside" and "downside" of such a move
 - i. Friendships and peer relationships.
 - j. Increased pressure to perform
 - k. "Stardom"
 - l. Intensity of practices and commitment level
 - m. Number, performance levels, and anticipated reaction of athlete(s) whose playing time will be affected adversely by "advancement" of recommended athlete.
 - n. Extenuating circumstances if most of the criteria are met:
 - o. Injuries to varsity athletes
 - p. Academic preparedness and the potential for ineligibility issues at next level high school level
 - q. Filling tournament rosters, if 80% of the participants are from grades 9-12.
 - r. Interest of Individual vs. Interest of Team
 - s. Others may be considered
4. Notes:
 - a. An 8th grade student/athlete who is elevated to a higher level of participation is no longer able to participate on and 8th grade team in that season of competition, even in the event that seasons are held at a different time. [i.e. Split season]
 - b. In the event that multiple student-athletes are being considered for advancement, AHSTW Community School District has established a foundational expectation of at least 80% of the sports participants are from grades 9-12 before such requests will be considered.
5. The Activities Director will inform the parents and Athlete of the request and schedule a meeting with the Coach, AD, Athlete and parents. Parents will have the final say if the change of level is made.

AHSTW HIGH SCHOOL ACTIVITIES DEPARTMENT

INDIVIDUAL Change of Level of Participation for Sports:

Volleyball
Softball

Basketball
Wrestling

Baseball
Cross Country

Golf
Track

<u>Student Name:</u>	
<u>Grade:</u>	
<u>Current Level of Play:</u>	
<u>Requested Level of Play:</u>	

Parent-Meeting Discussion Points

- Overall well-being (Social, Emotional, Physical-What may happen if the athlete is moved up.
 - Treatment by friends, others, etc.
 - Understanding of the "upside" and downside of such a move
 - Friendships and peer relationships.
 - Increased pressure to perform.
 - Stardom
- Evidence that the athlete should be moved up. (Everything should be earned)
- Team impact and team chemistry at both levels
- Process of communicating the move
- Future participation (being moved up one year doesn't guarantee future playing time)

We approve/disapprove of the transfer of my son/daughter _____ to the high school level.

Person:	Signature:	Date:
Parent / Guardian:		
Parent / Guardian:		
Student / Athlete		
Head Coach		
Activities Director:		
Principal:		

AHSTW Community School District
768 South Maple Street, Avoca, Iowa 51521
School Phone: (712) 343-6364
District/Elementary Fax: (712) 343-2170
Secondary Fax: (712) 343-6915

Mr. Darin Jones, Superintendent
Mr. Davis Pattee, High School Principal
Mrs. Cristin Rold, Intermediate Principal
Mrs. Sarah Kock, Primary Principal
Mr. Ryan Smith, Technology Director
Mrs. Alisha Cook, School Business Official