

Freeman Public School

Activities Handbook



Rules and Regulations 2024-2025 Edition

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Introduction

Student participation in extracurricular activities has been linked to improved attendance, higher academic achievement, and greater student self-confidence and self-esteem. Freeman Public Schools provides students with the opportunity to participate in a comprehensive activities program that includes athletics, fine arts, and select clubs or organizations associated with academic areas.

Although the school district believes strongly in the value of student activities, participation in the activities program is a privilege, not a right. Students must obey the rules set out in this handbook and any additional rules created by their coach or activity sponsor. This handbook is advisory and does not create a “contract” with parents, students, or staff. The administration reserves the right to make decisions and make rule revisions at any time to implement the educational program and to assure the well-being of all students. The administration is responsible for interpreting the rules contained in the handbook. If a situation or circumstance arises that is not specifically covered in this handbook, the administration will make a decision based upon all applicable school district policies, and state and federal statutes and regulations.

Please read this handbook carefully. Students and their parents are responsible for complying with all of the rules and procedures detailed in this booklet.

Parents must sign the Acknowledgement of Conduct Code, Permission to Participate/Acknowledgement of Risk, and Adult Code of Conduct to participate form at the end of this handbook or the online form before their student will be permitted to participate in the activity programs of the district. Students must sign the Acknowledgement of Conduct Code form at the end of this handbook or the online form before participating in the activity programs of the district.

The provisions in this handbook are subject to change at the sole discretion of the Board of Education. From time to time, you may receive updated information concerning changes in the handbook. These updates should be kept within the handbook so that it is up to date. If you have any questions regarding this handbook, please contact the Superintendent for assistance.

NONDISCRIMINATION IN EDUCATION PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES

The school district does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, or age in its programs and activities and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups. The school district prohibits sex discrimination in any education program or activity in any education program or activity that it operates.

Students who believe that they have been the subject of unlawful discrimination or harassment due to their disability, or that have other related concerns or questions, should contact the Section 504 Coordinator: Trisha Alexander at 402-988-2525, trisha.alexander@freemanschools.net, or in person at school.

Students who believe that they have been the subject of unlawful discrimination or harassment on the basis of sex, or that have other related concerns or questions, should contact the following Title IX Coordinator: Andrew Havelka at 402-988-2525, andrew.havelka@freemanschools.net, or in person at school. The School District's specific Notice of Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Sex may be accessed at the following link: <https://www.freemanpublicschools.org>

Students who believe that they have been the subject of unlawful discrimination or harassment due to their race, color, or national origin, or that have other related concerns or questions, should contact the following Title VI Coordinator: Andrew Havelka at 402-988-2525, andrew.havelka@freemanschools.net, or in person at school.

Students who believe that they have been the subject of any other unlawful discrimination or harassment should contact the principal at 402-988-2525 or in person at school. Students may report discrimination or harassment to any staff member who will then forward it on to the appropriate coordinator or administrator. The staff member will follow school district policies to respond to the report.

For additional prohibited discrimination and related information, please review school district Policy 3053 – Nondiscrimination.

**SECTION ONE:
GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE ACTIVITIES PROGRAM**

Activities/Athletic Director: Greg Veerhusen
Assistant Activities/Athletic Director: Kristin Kroeker

SPONSORS

CHEERLEADERS/SPIRIT CLUB
INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC
VOCAL MUSIC
COMPETITIVE SPEECH
YEARBOOK
STUDENT COUNCIL
ONE ACT PLAY PRODUCTION
NATIONAL HONOR SOCIETY
JR-SR PROM
SENIOR CLASS
JUNIOR CLASS
SOPHOMORE CLASS
FRESHMAN CLASS
EIGHTH GRADE CLASS
SEVENTH GRADE CLASS
QUIZ BOWL HS
QUIZ BOWL JH
FBLA
FFA

Timary Vetrovsky, Karli Busboom
Lisa Delhay
Rick Brening
Brett Sales, Lisa Delhay
Jen Kastanek
Jenifer Alberts, Sammie Garton
Brett Sales, Aimee Parde
Brett Sales
Trisha Alexander
Ashley Schlake, Jim McLaughlin
JD Dalrymple, Jen Kastanek
Tony Jensen, Travis Andreasen
Karli Busboom, Jeremy Hollman
Sandy Renken, Dayna Anderson
Marshall Payer, Ross Rumsey
Jeremy Hollman
Ashley Schlake
Ross Rumsey
Tony Jensen, Sophia Lentfer

FREEMAN COACHING STAFF

Fall Sports

CROSS COUNTRY

Jim McLaughlin Head Coach

FOOTBALL

Travis Andreasen Head Coach
Tony Jensen Asst. Coach
Marshall Payer Asst. Coach

Bob Floth JH Head Coach
Matt Nieveen JH Asst. Coach
Ross Rumsey JH Asst. Coach

SOFTBALL

Autumn Koester Head Coach
Ashley Schlake Asst. Coach
Cassie Muir Asst. Coach

VOLLEYBALL

Lexi Holland Head Coach
Jen Kastanek Asst. Coach

Kristin Kroeker JH Head Coach
Sophia Lentfer JH Asst. Coach
Becky Weyer JH Asst. Coach

Winter Sports

BOYS BASKETBALL

Jim McLaughlin Head Coach
Lucas Laflin Asst. Coach
Ryan Busboom Asst. Coach

JD Dalrymple JH Head Coach
Ross Rumsey JH Asst. Coach
Marshall Payer JH Asst. Coach

GIRLS BASKETBALL

Travis Andreasen Head Coach
Shelby Watson Asst. Coach
Sadie Conn Asst. Coach

Autumn Koester JH Head Coach
Marshall Payer JH Asst. Coach

SWIMMING-Coop w/ Beatrice

**GIRLS WRESTLING-Coop
w/Beatrice**

BOYS WRESTLING

Matt Nieveen Head Coach
Chandler Brandert Asst. Coach

Spring Sports

TRACK

Marshall Payer Head Coach
Asst. Coach
Dayna Anderson Asst. Coach
Marshall Payer Asst. Coach
Lindsey Israelson Asst. Coach
Sarah Smith Asst. Coach

Ross Rumsey JH Co-Head
JH Co-Head
Jen Kastanek JH Coach

*Freeman Public Schools follows state/national guidelines in hiring and retaining highly qualified staff to provide services to students. If parents have any questions or requests regarding Freeman staff, please contact the office and documentation will be provided.

Senior High Sports Seasons (Nebraska School Activities Association)

All interscholastic sports are divided into three seasons - fall, winter, and spring. The division of sports, the date of the first organized practice, and the closing of the season shall be as follows. No individual may participate simultaneously in more than one sport per season.

<i>FALL</i>	<i>OPENING PRACTICE</i>	<i>CLOSE OF SEASON</i>	
Football	August 12	State Finals	Nov. 25
Softball	August 12	State Tournament	Oct. 16-18
Volleyball	August 12	State Tournament	Nov. 6-9
Cross Country	August 12	State Meet	Oct. 25
<i>WINTER</i>			
Boys Wrestling	November 18	State Meet	Feb. 20-22
Girls Wrestling	November 18	State Meet	Feb. 18-19
Girls Basketball	November 18	State Tournament	Mar. 5-8
Boys Basketball	November 18	State Tournament	Mar. 12-15
Swimming	November 18	State Meet	Feb. 27-28, Mar. 1
<i>SPRING</i>			
Boys & Girls Track	March 3	State Meet	May 23-24

Academic Eligibility

To be eligible to participate in the school's activity programs, each student must (1) meet Nebraska State Activities Association (NSAA) requirements concerning scholastic eligibility (see Section Three of this Handbook), (2) meet the requirements of board policy including all rules applicable to the activity, and (3) have not less than a 70% grade in two or more classes for a period of one week to remain eligible to participate in any portion of the activities program. Participants must attend practices and participate in all conditioning during any period of ineligibility.

The school district will notify a participant and his or her parents whenever the participant is declared academically ineligible.

Students may not participate in any activity, performance or practice while serving a short-term suspension, long-term suspension, or expulsion from school.

Weekly Eligibility list

Freeman students in Grades 7-12 are required to maintain minimum academic standards. On the second Friday of each semester, the counselor will run an unofficial "warning list." This warning list will let students and parents know that they are in danger of failing. (below 70%)

On the third Friday (or last day of the school week) of each semester, and every Friday there-after, an official "warning list" will be run about noon, students/parents will be notified that they are on the list. They will then have the weekend to take care of any academic issues they may have & submit assignments. If the student is still failing, (below 70%) on the first school day of the week when the final list is run at 2:00pm, they will be ineligible for that week for all extra curricular activities until the new list is run the first day of the next week. This includes all dances, field trips, or conferences. The student will still be expected to practice and fulfill obligations of the team or activity they are a part of, but may not compete until they are off the list. Once this process begins, it will continue weekly until the completion of the current semester.

Any student on the list or failing a class at the end of first semester will be ineligible until the next semester begins.

- Teachers are asked to keep grades updated weekly to allow for accurate lists.
- **8am Deadline** - students must submit any late work to be graded by 8:00am to be considered to raise a grade. Students are encouraged to communicate with teachers via email or Canvas prior to this deadline.
- Teachers will do their best to get assignments graded, but late assignments will not take precedence.

Activities affected by the eligibility rule are:

1. All interscholastic contests, including but not limited to, NSAA activities, FFA, FBLA, speech contests, and similar organizations or events.
2. Music competition, performances, and clinics.
3. Other activities deemed appropriate by the administration.

Incomplete/Late work

If a student fails to turn in an assignment at the due date, the student will be assigned a ZERO (0%) mark in the gradebook for that assignment. The student will have five attendance days from the assignment due date to turn in the late work at a percentage deduction to raise the zero to whatever grade is earned. Once the student completes and turns in the late assignment, the teacher will score the work and change the 0% to a grade commensurate with the work and remove the 0% from PowerSchool. The students' work will be scored and then the following deductions will take place: 5% per attendance day late deducted from grade, after 5 attendance days a 0% remains in the gradebook if the work is not completed and handed in. Any assignments handed in after 5 days will be graded at the discretion of the teacher.

Activities on Wednesday and Sunday Night

According to the Nebraska School Activities Association, no athletic contests may be scheduled on Sundays. In addition, the school wishes to keep Wednesday nights free of activities.

WEDNESDAY EXCEPTION: When a varsity athletic team is required to play in conference, district, or tournament competition.

SUNDAY EXCEPTION: When a team is required to play a varsity-level contest on Monday, coaches may schedule varsity practices on Sunday afternoon. For all such practices, permission must first be granted through the Activities Director.

Attendance at Practices and Contests

Participants in the activities program are expected to attend and be on time at all practices and meetings scheduled by the coach or sponsor. Participants may be excused for absences resulting from a participant's illness, a death in the family, a doctor's appointment, a court appearance, or other absences that are arranged in advance. The coach, sponsor, or director of an activity may require a participant who has an excused absence to complete an alternate assignment or sit out of an upcoming event for missing a practice, meeting, event, performance, or contest. Each activity will set their own guidelines. A participant who is unable to attend a scheduled practice, meeting, or game must contact the coach or sponsor in advance. Students who are absent from school due to illness are not required to provide the coach or sponsor with additional notification of the student's absence from practice.

A student is not allowed to practice or participate if he/she is not in attendance for a full school day. Students must report to school before the beginning of the second period. A school-sponsored activity is an exception as are doctor and dental appointments, college visits, and other reasons that have been previously approved by the administration. A team member is not allowed to practice or participate if he/she leaves school at any time during the day due to illness.

If a participant misses a scheduled practice, contest or performance, the coach or sponsor may impose consequences up to and including possible suspension of the participant from the activity for the remainder of the season or length of the activity.

Admission Prices/Season Activity Passes

Admission for Freeman varsity contests will be \$6.00 for adults and \$5.00 for students and senior citizens (age 65+). Students in grades 7-12 are admitted to Freeman events free after paying for their activity fee. Admission for Freeman non-varsity contests (JH, JV, 9/10, etc.) will be \$5.00 for adults. Season passes are good for all home athletic events except holiday, conference and NSAA sponsored tournaments. Season passes offer significant discounts to regular admission prices.

Season Pass Pricing:

Adult- 18-64	\$75
Senior 65 +	\$55
Student	\$55(non participant)
Family	\$150

* Family is considered immediate family members living at home. College students are considered adults.

Closings

Unless the administration determines that it is permissible for the activity to continue as scheduled, all activities will be canceled or postponed in the event that school has been called off for inclement weather or any other reason as determined by the administration. Unless the administration determines that it is permissible for the activity to continue as scheduled.

Communication Process - Student Athlete/Coach

Normal communication between athlete and coach should be smooth and effortless, this is a normal part of any activity. There may be cases outside of the normal practice/game situation. This is an outline of that process. As a standard procedure we should always have two adults present when meeting with an athlete privately.

Every team should have a peer support system in place, leadership council, or captains that the athlete can then utilize as a support system to work through any potential issues. Peer leadership on our teams is paramount to success now and in the future for our student athletes. Our student/athlete leaders should be comfortable communicating issues to our Coaches & Administration freely.

The following steps will be followed if needed

1. Student athletes consult peer leadership to discuss or resolve issues/concerns.
 2. Student athlete requests meeting with coaches to discuss/resolve issue/concern
IF A STUDENT ATHLETE IS NOT COMFORTABLE ADDRESSING THE COACHES DIRECTLY.
 3. Student athletes and team/peer leadership teams will meet with coaches to discuss/resolve issues/concerns.
 4. Student athletes, team leadership & coaching staff will meet with AD to discuss/resolve issues /concerns.
- OR
5. Student athletes may meet with AD to discuss concerns, then meet with coaching staff & AD to resolve issues.

If parents feel the need to be involved any involvement with the team/peer leadership will cease. Unless an extreme case, parental involvement should not begin until after steps 4 or 5

Chain of Communication

If there is a issue that a student or parent wish to discuss, as outlined in the student/sponsor communication process, communication will occur as follows:

- Student - Sponsor/coach

- Student & Peer Leadership - Sponsor/coach
- Student - Sponsor/coach - Athletic Director
- Student and parent - Sponsor/coach - Athletic Director

Complaint Procedure

To reduce conflicts in the school's activities program, students and/or their parents should use the district's formal complaint procedure to manage conflicts about the program. (Board Policy 2006) The complaint procedure is printed in the school's student handbook and may be found on the district's web site: [Freeman Policies](#)

Concussion Awareness

The Nebraska Unicameral has found that concussions are one of the "most commonly reported injuries in children and adolescents who participate in sports and recreational activities and that the risk of catastrophic injury or death is significant when a concussion or brain injury is not properly evaluated and managed."

Freeman Public Schools will:

1. Require all coaches and trainers to complete one of the following on-line courses on how to recognize the symptoms of a concussion or brain injury and how to seek proper medical treatment for a concussion or brain injury:
 - Heads UP Concussions in Youth Sports
 - Concussion in Sports—What You Need to Know
 - Sports Safety International
 - ConcussionWise
 - ACTive™Athletic Concussion Training for Coaches; and
2. On an annual basis provide concussion and brain injury information to students and their parents or guardians prior to such students initiating practice or competition. This information will include:
 - a. The signs and symptoms of a concussion;
 - b. The risks posed by sustaining a concussion; and
 - c. The actions a student should take in response to sustaining a concussion, including the notification of his or her coaches.

A student who participates on a school athletic team must be removed from a practice or game when he/she is reasonably suspected of having sustained a concussion or brain injury in such practice or game after observation by a coach or a licensed health care professional who is professionally affiliated with or contracted by the school. The student will not be permitted to participate in any school supervised team athletic activities involving physical exertion, including practices or games, until the student:

1. has been evaluated by a licensed healthcare professional;
2. has received written and signed clearance to resume participation in athletic activities from the licensed healthcare professional; and
3. has submitted the written and signed clearance to resume participation in athletic activities to the school accompanied by written permission to resume participation from the student's parent or guardian.

If a student is reasonably suspected after observation of having sustained a concussion or brain injury and is removed from an athletic activity, the parent or guardian of the student will be notified by the school of:

1. the date and approximate time of the injury suffered by the student,
2. the signs and symptoms of a concussion or brain injury that were observed, and
3. any actions taken to treat the student.

The school district will not provide for the presence of a licensed health care professional at any practice or game.

Written and Signed Clearance For Return to Play (RTP)

Any Freeman athlete having been removed from participation for the purpose of presenting with signs or symptoms or "reasonably suspected" of having sustained a concussion must have, before RTP or participation is allowed by a coach a) written and signed clearance from an appropriate licensed health care professional, and b) written and signed clearance from the athlete's parents.

*A licensed health care professional means a physician or licensed practitioner under the direct supervision of a physician (ie. – PA-C or APRN, a neuropsychologist, an athletic trainer, or a qualified individual able to a) provide health care services where doing so falls within one's scope of practice in Nebraska AND b) is trained in the evaluation and management of traumatic brain injury among a pediatric population).

School officials shall deem the signature of an individual who represents that he/she is a licensed health care professional on a written clearance to resume participation that is provided to the school to be conclusive and reliable evidence that the individual who signed the clearance is a licensed healthcare professional. The school will not take any additional or independent steps to verify the individual's qualifications.

Cooperative Activities

Activities in which Freeman is involved in a cooperative sponsorship agreement will be subject to all rules set in place by the member schools of the cooperative agreement. Freeman will not provide transportation to practice or events that Freeman does not provide an activity sponsor for.

Dances

School dances are part of the district's extracurricular activity program. Students who wish to participate in school dances must comply with the activity code of conduct. Students may be prohibited from participating in school dances as a consequence for violating school rules or these activity rules.

Junior High/Middle School Dances

Junior high/middle school (6-8) dances are restricted to students currently enrolled in the junior high school and will be sponsored by junior high teachers and parents. Any organization wishing to sponsor a junior high dance must obtain permission from the principal regarding date and times. Each dance must be sponsored by at least two faculty members and one additional adult couple. Once admitted to the dance, students must remain until the close of the dance. Students who leave the dance will not be readmitted. Students who are academically ineligible will not be allowed to attend school dances.

High School Dances

All high school dances are restricted to Freeman High School students and their guests. Any organization wishing to sponsor a dance must obtain permission from the principal regarding date and times. Each dance must be sponsored by at least two faculty members and one additional adult couple. Once admitted to the dance, students must remain until the close of the dance. Students who leave the dance will not be readmitted. Students who are academically ineligible will not be allowed to attend school dances.

Guests at any Freeman Dance must have completed the dance permission form and have this on file prior to the day of the dance.

The **Homecoming** dance is open to students and guests of Freeman High School. Guests must follow all rules that the students must follow. Each student is responsible for his/her guest's conduct. Appropriate attire is required for these dances.

The **Junior/Senior Prom** is open to students and guests of the Freeman High School junior and senior classes. Guests must follow all rules that the students must follow. Each student is responsible for his/her guest's conduct. Appropriate attire is required for these dances.

Electronic Communication

The school board supports the use of technology by coaches, extracurricular sponsors, and other staff members to communicate with students for legitimate educational, extracurricular, and other school-related purposes. However, electronic communication between students and teachers, sponsors, and coaches shall be appropriate at all times and shall not violate any law, district policies, or the Regulations and Standards for Professional Practices Criteria, commonly known as Rule 27 of the Nebraska Department of Education ("Rule 27"). Please see the Social Media Policy For School District Employees for further explanation.

Equipment

Each participant in the athletic portion of the activities program will be issued a locker to store his/her personal belongings and school equipment that has been checked out. Students should secure their athletic lockers with combination locks.

School-owned clothing or equipment that is checked out to individual students remains the property of the school. The clothing or equipment is not to be used or worn by the student except for the intended use. Each piece of equipment or clothing is to be returned to the instructor or coach when the season or the use for such clothing or equipment is over. Each participant is responsible for all equipment checked out to him/her. Students will be assessed the replacement cost for school equipment that has been checked out to him/her and is lost or stolen.

Extracurricular Drug Testing

The school district supports and values student participation in extracurricular activities, but such participation in school district extracurricular activities is a privilege and not a right. Students in all extracurricular activities in grades 7-12 shall be subject to mandatory and random testing for the presence of alcohol or illegal drugs. (Board policy 5021) May be accessed in full on the district website: [Freeman Policy 5021](#)

Fundraising

All school-sponsored fundraising activities must be approved by a member of the school district administration. Fundraising for any activity must comply with the district's policies, including applicable provisions specifically pertaining to Booster Clubs and PTOs for non-school-sponsored fundraising.

Individual Training Rules and Rules of Conduct

Head coaches or sponsors may develop additional training rules or rules of conduct for their activity. Students are responsible for knowing these rules and complying with them.

Initiations and Hazing

Initiations and hazing by members of classes, clubs, athletic teams, or any other organization affiliated with the district are prohibited except as otherwise permitted by this policy. Any student engaging in hazing or non-approved initiations is subject to discipline as permitted by policy and law.

Initiations are defined as any ritualistic expectations, requirements, or activities placed upon new members of a school organization for the purpose of admission into the organization, even if those activities do not rise to the level of "hazing" as defined below. Initiations are prohibited except by permission of the superintendent.

Hazing is defined as any activity by which a person intentionally or recklessly endangers the physical or mental health or safety of an individual for the purpose of initiation into, admission

into, affiliation with, or continued membership in any school organization. Hazing activities include, but are not limited to, whipping, beating, branding, an act of sexual penetration, an exposure of the genitals of the body done with the intent to affront or alarm any person, a lewd fondling or caressing of the body of another person, forced and prolonged calisthenics, prolonged exposure to the elements, forced consumption of any food, liquor, beverage, drug, or harmful substance not generally intended for human consumption, prolonged sleep deprivation, or any brutal treatment or the performance of any unlawful act that endangers the physical or mental health or safety of any person.

Injuries

Participants who suffer any type of injury while involved in extracurricular activities must notify the coach or sponsor immediately. The coach or sponsor will then evaluate the injury and, if necessary, notify the participant's parents or seek immediate medical treatment.

If at any time during participation a doctor removes an athlete from participation because of an illness or injury, the athlete must have a written release from a doctor before participating again. The written release must be given to the coach or sponsor of the activity.

Note: The release requirement will be satisfied if the initial doctor's order specifies the duration of the student's restriction from participation and/or competition. Also see Concussion Awareness above.

Insurance

The school district does not provide medical or other insurance coverage for students who participate in athletic contests or other activities. It is the parents' responsibility to provide adequate insurance to cover any medical expenses that may be incurred while the student is participating in athletics or other activities.

The school district makes an accident insurance plan available for purchase by participants and their families through an authorized insurance agent. Information about policies which families may purchase will be available prior to each sports season and at fall registration.

Lettering Requirements

The following guidelines will be used in determining students' eligibility for lettering:

Athletics

- Basketball:** The athlete must participate in a minimum average of one quarter per varsity contest. A senior playing all four years but not earning a letter. The athlete must complete the season, and/or have the recommendation of the head coach. The Quarter qualification is voided if the team advances past the district tournament.
- Cheer:** The athlete must earn a minimum of 125 letter points throughout the year, finish the season in good standing, and/or have the coaches' recommendation.
- Cross Country:** The athlete must participate in at least 3 varsity meets, complete the season, and/or have the recommendation of the head coach.
- Football:** The athlete must participate in a minimum average of one quarter per varsity contest. A senior playing all four years but not earning a letter. The athlete must complete the season, and/or have the recommendation of the head coach.
- Softball:** The athlete must participate in a minimum of 25% of Varsity contests, complete the season in good standing, and/or have recommendation of the head coach.

- Swimming:** Criteria set by the Coop coaches.
- Track:** The athlete must score 10 points for the team throughout the season OR place at the district track meet. A senior who has competed for four years, completes the season, and/or has the head coach's recommendation.
- Volleyball:** The athlete must participate in an average minimum of one set per varsity match, complete the season, and/or have the recommendation of the head coach.
- Wrestling:** The athlete must accumulate 24 points in the following system:
 - 2pts for a varsity win, 1pt of a JV win (decision)
 - 3pts for a varsity win, 2pts for a JV win (Pinfall)
Athlete must complete the season and/or have the recommendation of the head coach.
- Student Managers:** The student manager must complete the season and have the recommendation of the head coach of the sport involved.

Activities

Instrumental/Vocal Music:

1. The student will successfully complete the entire school year in the music department in good standing
2. The student will attend and take part in ALL scheduled performances
3. In addition to participating in large groups, the student will participate in small group for concert/contest
4. Students must have the recommendation of the instructor

The director reserves the right to exercise discretion in awarding a letter based on the criteria.

Speech: Students earn a letter in speech by accumulating 20 total points.

Points are awarded as follows:

- 1 point per regular season meet attended
- 1 point for earning a spot on the team's ECNC roster and participating in the meet
- 1 point for earning a spot on the team's District roster and participating in the meet
- 5 points for qualifying for the State Speech Meet
- 1 point for a 7-18th place medal awarded at larger tournaments with honors and/or merit finals
- 1 point per 6th place medal
- 2 points per 5th place medal
- 3 points per 4th place medal
- 4 points per 3rd place medal
- 5 points per 2nd place medal
- 6 points per 1st place medal

Points are awarded equally for novice and varsity placings at tournaments.

Students will be penalized points toward lettering as follows:

- 3 points per unexcused meet absence (absences must be approved by the head coach)
- 2 points per unexcused practice absence
- 5 points for a week transpiring without an official practice in front of a coach (unless special circumstances such as extreme illness or a week-long absence are excused by the head speech coach)
- 10 points per instance of a student being caught deliberately cheating, plagiarizing, or otherwise intentionally breaking NSAA sanctioned speech rules.

Mascot

The official emblem for Freeman Public Schools is the Falcon. The mascot cannot be used for non-school-sponsored purposes unless approved by the superintendent.

Practices

The individual head coach or sponsor, in cooperation with the high school principal, will schedule all starting times of practices. Practices may be held Before or after school to accommodate facility usage and potential hazardous weather conditions. Athletes are expected to be on time at the field/court. Under normal conditions, athletes will be required to report to practice, dressed, no later than 15 minutes from the time of school dismissal.

In order that athletes and their parents may plan accordingly, and for the welfare of the athlete, the following maximum length of practices will be enforced. This shall be considered from the time the athlete is expected to report to the practice facility to the time the athlete leaves the practice facility. This shall include scouting reports, film reviews, chalk talks, conditioning, weight lifting, etc.

EXAMPLES: If the volleyball team is required to be on the floor and ready for practice at 3:45, practice shall end no later than 6:15. If the football team is required to be on the practice field at 4:00, the team should be off the field by no later than 6:30. If the I team has a film review at 3:45 and doesn't take the floor until 4:15, the team shall be off the floor by 6:15.

Practice time limits: Sr. High Athletics - 2:30 Jr. High Athletics - 2 hours

To be eligible to practice, a participant must satisfy the following requirements:

1. Submit to the coach or sponsor a signed physical form and Activities Handbook form that verifies that a physical examination has been completed and that the student and parent(s) understand the school's Code of Conduct
2. Furnish the high school office with proof of insurance.
3. Complete and return Activity Fee paperwork and payment
4. Complete Pre-Season meeting with Activity director (9-12 only)

Wednesdays

In order to provide students sufficient time away from school for family-related activities, the school will do its best not to schedule activities on Wednesday evenings or on Sundays. Practices will last no later than 6:00 p.m. on Wednesday nights. An exception to this guideline would be when a team, group of students, or an individual may be required to participate in an activity sponsored by the conference, district, or state on a Wednesday night.

Secret Organizations

Secret organizations are prohibited. School officials shall not allow any person or representative of any such organization to enter upon school grounds or school buildings for the purpose of rushing or soliciting students to participate in any secret fraternity, society, or association.

Student Manager, Helpers, or Activity Aids

Students wishing to serve as student volunteers for extracurricular activities must gain the permission of the activity coach or sponsor. Student volunteers must comply with all of the rules and procedures contained in this handbook.

Transportation

All participants are expected to ride to and from away activities by means of approved school transportation.

A participant may ride home with his or her parent/guardian only if the parent/guardian personally signs out the student with the sponsor at the activity. A participant may ride home with an adult who is not a parent/guardian if the participant's parent/guardian has personally contacted school administration and administration has approved this action prior to the activity. The adult transporting must personally sign the student out with the sponsor at the activity prior to leaving with the student. Parents are discouraged from requesting to take their children home after an away contest or performance. Travel to and from an event provides time for the students to further develop a strong team concept.

Weight Room

The weight room has been developed to help each athlete, student, or adult in the community maintain a level of physical fitness. No one may use the weight room or equipment without proper supervision. The school will develop a schedule for use of the weight room by athletes during the school year and during the summer months.

The weight room is a high demand area within the school facilities. The following guidelines will help determine the priorities in reference to use if more than one group desires to use the facility at the same time:

1. Physical education instruction
2. By the team sports, which are in season
3. Conditioning programs for athletes not currently out for a sport
4. Summer conditioning programs

SECTION TWO:

AVAILABLE ACTIVITIES

Athletic Teams

Basketball (boys & girls)
Cross County (boys & girls)
Football
Track (boys & girls)
Softball
Swimming (boys & girls) *Coop with Beatrice/Norris/Fairbury
Volleyball
Wrestling (boys)
Wrestling (girls) *Coop with Beatrice

Instrumental Music

The school district sponsors marching band, pep band, and jazz band in addition to concert band. Participants must be enrolled in band class in order to be eligible to participate in these groups. Pep Band will play at several varsity athletic events throughout the year. The Pep band schedule for varsity events will be on the Freeman rSchool calendar, and will be subject to having enough members to play.

Cheer Squad

Participants are selected by the sponsor(s) or judges appointed by the sponsor. Members of the cheer squad will attend all home and as many selected away athletic contests as possible. Cheer squad will also compete at the state cheer and dance competition.

Vocal Music

The school district sponsors vocal music groups that perform at various events, including contests and concerts. Participants must be enrolled in a vocal class in order to be eligible to participate. Groups and individuals will sing at several varsity athletic events throughout the year.

Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA)

FBLA is an integral part of the vocational business department and membership is limited to those students with at least one semester of work in the business education field. One of the primary objectives of FBLA is developing leadership and responsibility.

Future Farmers of America (FFA)

FFA is an integral part of the agricultural education department and all students of that department are urged to belong. The activities include training in leadership, opportunities for travel and recreation, and safety and community service activities. Students may participate in field trips, conventions, judging contests, and hands-on experience.

National Honor Society

The National Honor Society is a national organization that recognizes student character, scholarship, leadership, and service to the school.

Student members shall be selected from the junior and senior classes by the high school faculty. Ten percent of the Junior and Senior classes will be selected each year. The results of the selection will be announced at an honors convocation.

One Act Play Production

One Act Play Production is an opportunity for students to be involved in a competitive and entertaining situation. Freeman One Act will yearly perform a new One Act Production, they will compete at the Conference and State levels.

Quiz Bowl

Quiz Bowl will challenge students in an academic setting to answer questions in a team format.

Student Council

The purpose of student government is to arouse the spirit of loyalty toward the school, to promote good citizenship, to sponsor school activities, to extend the spirit of good fellowship throughout the student body, to foster a spirit of cooperation between the students and faculty, and to seek to develop a spirit of cooperation, good will, and better understanding with other schools. The organization, operation, and scope of the student government shall be administered by the Principal or designee.

Speech Team

Students compete in 12 different categories of competition. These include debate, current events speaking, and several theater-type acting events.

Striv Broadcasting

Students will apply their media and production skills to broadcast Freeman athletic events and activities.

Student Publications

The yearbook is published by the Yearbook class along with the help of its teacher. The annual is financed partially by funds raised from the sale of the books.

SECTION THREE: NEBRASKA STATE ACTIVITY ASSOCIATION RULES

Eligibility

In order to represent a high school in interscholastic athletic competition, a student must abide by eligibility rules of the Nebraska School Activities Association. Eligibility requirements are established by the NSAA in its Constitution and its Bylaws and Approved Rulings. These documents can be found online at <https://nsaahome.org/constitution-bylaws/>. A summary of the major rules is given below. Contact the principal, activities director or the activity sponsor or coach for an explanation of the complete rule.

1. Students must be a *bona fide* student of their member school and have not graduated from any high school.
2. After a student's initial enrollment in grade nine, he/she shall be ineligible after eight semesters of school membership beginning with his/her enrollment in grade nine.
3. Students are ineligible if nineteen years of age before August 1 of the current school year. (Students in grades 7 or 8 may participate on a high school team if he/she was 15 years of age prior to August 1 of the current school year.)
4. Students must be enrolled in some high school on or before the eleventh school day of the current semester.
5. Students must be continually enrolled in at least twenty credit hours per semester and regular in attendance, in accordance with the school's attendance policy at the school he/she wishes to represent in interscholastic competition.
6. Students must have been enrolled and received twenty hours of credit in school the immediate preceding semester.
7. **Guardianship does not fulfill the definition of a legal parent.** If a guardian has been appointed for a student, the student is eligible in the school district where his/her legal parent(s) have their domicile. Individual situations involving guardianship may be submitted to the Executive Director for review and a ruling.
8. A student entering grade nine for the first time after being promoted from grade eight of a two-year junior high, or a three-year middle school, or entering a high school for the first time after being promoted to grade ten from a three-year junior high school is eligible. After a student makes an initial choice of high schools, any subsequent transfer, unless there has been a change of domicile by his/her parents, shall render the student ineligible for ninety school days. If a student has participated on a high school team at any level as a seventh, eighth, or ninth grade student, he/she has established his/her eligibility at the high school where he/she participated. If the student elects to attend another high school upon entering ninth or tenth grade, he/she shall be ineligible for ninety school days.
9. **Student eligibility related to domicile can be attained in the following manners:**
 - a. If the change in domicile by the parents occurs during a school year, the student may remain at the school he/she is attending and be eligible until the end of the school year or transfer to a high school located in the school district where the parents established their domicile and be eligible.

- b. If the domicile is changed during the summer months and the student is in grade twelve and the student has attended the high school for two or more years, the student may remain at the high school he/she has been attending and retain eligibility.
 - c. If a student elects to remain at the same high school initially enrolled after being promoted from grade eight of a middle or junior high school, or grade nine of a junior high school, he/she is eligible at that school, or is eligible at a high school located within the school district in which the parents established their domicile.
 - d. **If the legal parents of a student change their domicile from one school district that has a high school to another school district that has a high school, the student shall be eligible immediately in the school district where the parents established their domicile.**
10. Nebraska transfer students whose name appears on the NSAA transfer list prior to May 1 shall be eligible immediately in the fall at the transfer high school. Those students whose name does not appear on the NSAA transfer list prior to May 1 shall be ineligible for ninety school days, with such transfers being subject to hardship waiver guidelines.
11. Nebraska transfer students must have signed and delivered all forms necessary to make such transfer to the school in which he/she intends to enroll for the 2023-24 school year prior to May 1, 2023; for the student to be eligible, the school to which the transfer is being made must have notified the NSAA office via an NSAA online transfer form, no later than May 1, 2023. The student would become ineligible for ninety school days the next fall if the student were to change his/her mind and decide not to transfer. If such student were to transfer to the new school, but later decides to return to his/her former district before 90 school days have elapsed, such student will be ineligible in the former district for 90 school days, with the ineligibility period commencing at the start of the fall semester. Those students who did not have their enrollment forms signed, delivered, and accepted prior to May 1, 2023, shall be ineligible for ninety school days, with such transfers being subject to hardship waiver guidelines.
12. Once the season of a sport begins, a student shall participate in practices and compete only in athletic contests/meets in that sport, which are scheduled by his/her school. Any other competition will render the student ineligible for a portion of, or all of, the season in that sport. The season of a sport begins with the first date of practice as permitted by NSAA rules.
13. During the season of a particular sport, athletes participating in that sport for a high school may attend, but may not physically take part, either as an individual or as a member of a team, in the sport activity in which instruction is being offered in the clinic, camp, or school. (*Refer to NSAA Bylaw 3.5.1.1 for exceptions in Swimming and Diving.)
14. A student shall not participate on an all-star team while a high school undergraduate.
15. A student must maintain his/her amateur status.

NSAA Sportsmanship Rules

Students must abide by the Nebraska School Activities Association Sportsmanship Rules. A complete copy of these rules can be found at [NSAA Sportsmanship Manual](#) Unsportsmanlike conduct shall include physical or verbal assault upon any participant, game official, or spectator, or any acts that may endanger the personal safety of

individuals involved, or acts which hinder the normal progress of a contest or lead to the restriction or discontinuance of a contest.

If a student, participant, patron, and/or staff member representing a member school acts in a manner constituting unsportsmanlike behavior during competition the member school and/ or individuals shall be subject to penalties. A student, participant, patron, and/or staff member may not be permitted to attend activities if involved in unsportsmanlike conduct.

SECTION FOUR: CODE OF CONDUCT

All students associated with Freeman Public Schools and participating in extracurricular or school sponsored activities (including all NSAA activities, Homecoming, & Prom) are required to avoid conduct that is detrimental to the integrity of, and public confidence in, the school. Rules promoting lawful, ethical, and responsible conduct serve the interests of all people associated with the school. Illegal and irresponsible conduct puts people at risk, will tarnish the reputation of the offender and everyone else associated with the school, and undermines the public support and respect of the school district.

Standard of Conduct.

Participation in school-sponsored or extracurricular activities is a privilege and not a right. Participants must follow board policy, this code, and all the training rules and rules of conduct of the coaches and/or activity sponsors. Students participating in school-sponsored or extracurricular activities are held to a high standard. Students are expected to conduct themselves in a way that is lawful, responsible, promotes the values upon which the school is based, and that brings credit to themselves and the school. Students who fail to live up to the required standard of conduct are guilty of detrimental conduct and subject to discipline under all school policies, the general student code of conduct, and these Activity Participation Rules.

Coach and Sponsor Rules.

Coaches and/or activity sponsors shall establish training rules or rules of conduct for participation in or attendance at the activity or event. General training rules or rules of conduct shall be established prior to the activity or event. This Code shall control in the event that there is a conflict with coach or sponsor rules.

Prohibited Conduct.

Students in school-sponsored and/or extracurricular activities may not engage in the following conduct:

1. Receipt of a criminal citation by law enforcement for any reason.
2. Conviction of a crime in adult court or the adjudication of a criminal charge in juvenile court.
3. Any behavior that is illegal under the laws of Nebraska or the United States of America regardless of whether it results in a criminal charge or conviction.
4. Any conduct that substantially interferes with the educational process or disrupts the activity or event.
5. Possession, consumption, use, distribution, or being under the influence of alcohol, illicit drugs, tobacco, controlled substances, or any lookalike or imitations thereof; or being in the presence of alcohol, illicit drugs, controlled substances, or any lookalike or imitations thereof that are being possessed, consumed, used, or distributed by any person under twenty-one (21) years of age without parental supervision. "Lookalike or imitations" means substances such as K2 and products like electronic nicotine delivery systems, vapor pens, etc. (Note: the term "under the influence" for school purposes has a less strict meaning than it does under criminal law; for school purposes, the term means any level of impairment and includes even the odor of alcohol on the breath or person of a student; also, it includes being impaired by reason of the use or abuse of any substance for the purpose of inducing a condition of intoxication, stupefaction, depression, giddiness, paralysis, inebriation, excitement, or irrational behavior, or in any manner changing, distorting, or disturbing the auditory, visual, mental, or nervous processes).
6. Engaging in initiations, defined as any ritualistic expectations, requirements, or activities placed upon new members of a school organization for the purpose of admission into the

- organization, even if those activities do not rise to the level of "hazing" as defined below. Initiations are prohibited except by permission of the superintendent.
7. Engaging in hazing as defined by state law and this policy. Hazing is defined as any activity by which a person intentionally or recklessly endangers the physical or mental health or safety of an individual for the purpose of initiation into, admission into, affiliation with, or continued membership in any school organization. Under state criminal law, hazing activities include, but are not limited to, whipping, beating, branding, an act of sexual penetration, an exposure of the genitals of the body done with the intent to affront or alarm any person, a lewd fondling or caressing of the body of another person, forced and prolonged calisthenics, prolonged exposure to the elements, forced consumption of any food, liquor, beverage, drug, or harmful substance not generally intended for human consumption, prolonged sleep deprivation, or any brutal treatment or the performance of any unlawful act that endangers the physical or mental health or safety of any person. For purposes of school rules, hazing also includes any activity expected of someone joining a group, team, or activity that humiliates, degrades or risks emotional and/or physical harm, regardless of the person's willingness to participate; personal servitude; restrictions on personal hygiene; yelling, swearing and insulting new members/rookies; being forced to wear embarrassing or humiliating attire in public; consumption of vile substances or smearing of such on one's skin; binge drinking and drinking games; sexual simulation and sexual assault.
 8. Bullying which shall include cyber-bullying, defined as the use of the internet, including but not limited to social networking sites such as Facebook, cell phones or other devices to send, post, or text message images and material intended to hurt or embarrass another person. This may include, but is not limited to; continuing to send email to someone who has said they want no further contact with the sender; sending or posting threats, sexual remarks, or pejorative labels (i.e., hate speech); ganging up on victims by making them the subject of ridicule in forums; posting false statements as fact intended to humiliate the victim; disclosure of personal data, such as the victim's real name, address, or school at websites or forums; posing as the identity of the victim for the purpose of publishing material in their name that defames or ridicules them; sending threatening and harassing text, instant messages, or emails to the victims; and posting or sending rumors or gossip to instigate others to dislike and gang up on the target.
 9. Using any Internet or social networking websites to make statements, post pictures, or take any other actions that are indecent, vulgar, lewd, slanderous, abusive, threatening, harassing, or terrorizing.
 10. Violating any school policy, handbook provision, or a coach's or activity sponsor's training rules or rules of conduct.
 11. Dressing or grooming in a manner which is (A) dangerous to the student's health and safety or a danger to the health and safety of others, (B) lewd, indecent, vulgar, or plainly offensive, (C) materially and substantially disruptive to the work and discipline of the school or an extracurricular activity, (D) interpreted to advocate the use of illegal drugs or other substances by a reasonable observer.
 12. Failing to report for an activity at the beginning of a season unless excused by the coach or activity sponsor.
 13. Failing to attend scheduled practices and meetings unless excused by the coach or activity sponsor.

Such conduct is prohibited during the school year, regardless of whether it occurs on-campus or off-campus. School year means the period commencing on the first day of fall sports practice through the last day of spring sports practice, events, or attendance at school for a given school year.

Reporting of Incident

Students shall report any violation of these rules to the coach, principal, or superintendent no later than 30 minutes after the beginning of the next school day after the violation has occurred. Failure to report an incident will constitute a violation of these rules and will be taken into consideration in making disciplinary determinations under this policy

Discipline.

Students who violate any provision of these Activity Participation Rules may be subject to discipline up to and including expulsion from extracurricular activities and school sponsored events (including but not limited to the graduation ceremony and related activities). These disciplinary consequences and this Activity Code of Conduct are in addition to and do not prejudice, diminish, impede, or reduce any discipline that is authorized by the Nebraska Student Discipline Act, NEB. REV. STAT. §§ 79-254 to 79-294, Board Policy, or the Student Handbook. Disciplinary action may include a probationary period and conditions that must be satisfied prior to or following reinstatement. Administrators and coaches will take the following into consideration when making disciplinary decisions:

1. Any prior or additional misconduct;
2. The nature and seriousness of the offense;
3. The motivation for the offense;
4. The amount of violence involved;
5. The student's demeanor and attitude regarding the violation;
6. The actual, threatened, or potential risk to the student and others due to the student's behavior;
7. Whether the student has compensated or will compensate the victim in the event of property damage or personal injury;
8. Whether the circumstances of the violation are likely to recur;
9. The student's willingness to participate in evaluations, counseling, or other programs;
10. Any mitigating factors;
11. Any other relevant factors.

A violation of the aforementioned rules will result in a suspension from all school contests and activities for 28 calendar days. The suspension begins at such time as the coach, sponsor, Principal, or Activity Director learns the student has violated the rule and continues from that date. At the conclusion of the suspension, the student may be reinstated provided he/she has met any and all additionally agreed upon conditions during that period.

A second conduct violation which occurs in the same school year will result in suspension from all contests and activities for the remainder of the school year.

Proof of violation shall be defined as follows:

1. Admission of a violation of rules to a coach, sponsor, Freeman School Administrator, or law enforcement officer.
2. Being observed in violation of Freeman training rules by any Freeman School employee.
3. Being observed or cited by a law enforcement officer.
4. Failure of a breathalyzer test or any similar test.

NOTE: The rules/consequences that apply to the Code of Conduct also apply to other situations where students fail to meet expectations of Freeman Public Schools. Code of Conduct violations include, but are not limited to such things as plagiarism, physical violence, bullying, cyber-bullying. The length of the suspension from activities shall be determined by the Principal/Activities Director and may range from a minimum of one contest to 28 calendar days.

If suspended from school-sponsored and/or extra-curricular activity competitions, the student must continue to participate in practices and conditioning during the suspension if required by the coach or activity sponsor. The failure to comply with the practice and conditioning requirement will make the student ineligible for reinstatement to the activity.

Evaluation, Counseling, and Treatment.

Apart from any other disciplinary procedures, students who violate any provision of these rules may be required to undergo a formal clinical evaluation at the discretion of Administration. Based upon the results of that evaluation, the student may be encouraged or required to participate in an education program, counseling, or other treatment deemed appropriate by the evaluating professional.

Discipline Procedures.

Prior to any disciplinary action under this activities code, the following procedures shall be followed:

As used in this "Discipline Procedures" section, "Investigator" means the Principal or activity director, or any teacher, school official, or school representative whom the Superintendent has authorized to perform the duties and responsibilities of "Investigator" as described below.

1. The Investigator shall make an investigation of alleged violation and provide an opportunity for the student to present his or her version of the facts surrounding the alleged violation.
2. The Investigator shall consider all information obtained as a result of the investigation, including information obtained from the student, and shall render a decision regarding disciplinary action. Within a reasonable period of time of the Investigator's decision, the student and his/her parent or guardian shall be given written notice of the disciplinary action taken by the Investigator.

Review of Investigator's Decision.

A student or the student's parents may, within five (5) school days of the notice of disciplinary action from the Investigator, notify the superintendent in writing of their request for a review of the coach or activity sponsor's determination. The superintendent or his or her designee shall review the situation and render a decision within three (3) school days from the date of the request for review. The superintendent's decision shall be in writing and shall be final.

Misrepresentations.

Any misrepresentation of fact by a student regarding any alleged violation of these rules shall be considered a separate violation of these rules, and the student shall be subject to additional disciplinary action.

Questions.

Any parent or student who has questions about board policy, this code, training rules, or rules of conduct of coaches or activity sponsors, or their interpretation or application shall consult with the activities director and/or the superintendent.

Assistance.

Students are encouraged to consult with their coach, an administrator, a counselor, or a teacher to obtain access to educational, counseling, and other programs and resources that may be available to help avoid misconduct that may result in discipline under this policy.

A Parent's Guide to Concussions

WHAT IS A CONCUSSION?

A concussion is a brain injury that results in a temporary disruption of normal brain function. A concussion occurs when the brain is violently rocked back and forth or twisted inside the skull as a result of a blow to the head or body. An athlete does not have to lose consciousness ("knocked-out") to suffer a concussion.

CONCUSSION FACTS

- It is estimated that more than 140,000 high school athletes across the United States suffer a concussion each year. (Data from NFHS Injury Surveillance System).
- Concussions occur most frequently in football, but girls' lacrosse, girls' soccer, boy's lacrosse, wrestling, and girls' basketball follow closely behind. All athletes are at risk.
- A concussion is a traumatic injury to the brain.
- Concussion symptoms may last from a few days to several months.
- Concussions can cause symptoms that interfere with school, work, and social life.
- Athletes who have symptoms from a concussion should not return to sports because they are still at risk for prolonging symptoms and further injury.
- A concussion may cause multiple symptoms. Many symptoms appear immediately after the injury, while others may develop over the next several days or weeks. The symptoms may be subtle and are often difficult to fully recognize.

WHAT ARE THE SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF A CONCUSSION?

Signs Observed by Parents or Guardians

- Appears dazed or stunned
- Is confused about assignment or position
- Forgets an instruction
- Is unsure of game, score, or opponent
- Moves clumsily
- Answers questions slowly
- Loses consciousness (even briefly)
- Shows behavior or personality changes
- Can't recall events prior to hit or fall
- Can't recall events after hit or fall

Symptoms Reported by Athlete

- Headache or "pressure" in head
- Nausea or vomiting
- Balance problems or dizziness
- Double or blurry vision
- Sensitivity to light or noise
- Feeling sluggish, hazy, foggy, or groggy
- Concentration or memory problems
- Confusion
- Does not "feel right"

WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I THINK MY CHILD HAS HAD A CONCUSSION?

An athlete who is suspected of having a concussion must be removed from play immediately, whether it is in a game or practice. Continuing to participate in physical activity after a concussion can lead to worsening concussion symptoms, increased risk of further injury, and even death. Parents and coaches are not expected to be able to “diagnose” a concussion, as that is the job of a medical professional. However, they must be aware of the signs and symptoms of a concussion and if they are suspicious, the child must stop playing:

WHEN IN DOUBT – SIT THEM OUT!

Every athlete who sustains a concussion needs to be evaluated by a health care professional who is familiar with sports concussions. Parents should call their child’s physician, explain what has happened, and follow the physician’s instructions. A child who is vomiting, has a severe headache, or has difficulty staying awake or answering simple questions should be taken to the parent’s doctor or emergency room immediately.

WHEN MAY AN ATHLETE RETURN TO PLAY FOLLOWING A CONCUSSION?

No athlete who has suffered a concussion should return to play or practice the same day. Previously, athletes were allowed to return to play if their symptoms resolved within 15 minutes of the injury. Studies have shown that the young brain does not recover quickly enough for an athlete to return to activity in such a short time.

Concerns about athletes who return to play too quickly have led state lawmakers in Oregon and Washington to pass laws stating that **no athlete shall return to play on the day he or she suffered a concussion and the athlete must be cleared by an appropriate health care professional before he or she are allowed to return to play in games or practices.** The laws also mandate that coaches receive education on recognizing the signs and symptoms of concussion.

Once an athlete is free of symptoms of a concussion and is cleared to return to play by a healthcare professional knowledgeable in the care of sports concussions, he or she should proceed with activity in a stepwise fashion to allow the brain to readjust to exertion. On average, the athlete will complete a new step each day. The return-to-play schedule should proceed as below following medical clearance:

Step 1: Light exercise, including walking or riding an exercise bike. No weight-lifting.

Step 2: Running in the gym or on the field. No helmet or other equipment.

Step 3: Non-contact training drills in full equipment. Weight training can begin.

Step 4: Full contact practice or training.

Step 5: Game play.

If symptoms occur at any step, the athlete should cease activity and be re-evaluated by a health care provider.

HOW CAN A CONCUSSION AFFECT SCHOOLWORK?

Following a concussion, many athletes will have difficulty in school. These problems may last from days to months and often involve difficulties with short and long-term memory, concentration, and organization.

In many cases, it is best to reduce the athlete’s class load after the injury. This may include staying home from school for a few days, followed by a lightened schedule for a few days or perhaps a longer period of time if needed. Decreasing the stress on the brain soon after a concussion may reduce symptoms and shorten the recovery period.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

- Both you and your child should learn to recognize the “Signs and Symptoms” of a concussion as listed above.
- Emphasize to administrators, coaches, teachers, and other parents your concerns and expectations about concussion and safe play.
- Teach your child to tell the coaching staff if he or she experiences such symptoms.

- Teach your child to tell the coaching staff if he or she suspects that a teammate has a concussion.
- Monitor sports equipment for safety, fit, and maintenance.
- Ask teachers to monitor any decrease in grades or changes in behavior that could indicate concussion.
- Report concussions that occurred during the school year to appropriate school staff. This will help in monitoring injured athletes as they move to the next season's sports.

OTHER FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

Why is it so important that an athlete not return to play until they have completely recovered from a concussion?

An athlete who has not fully recovered from an initial concussion is very vulnerable to recurrent, cumulative, and even catastrophic consequences of a second concussive injury. Such difficulties are prevented if the athlete is allowed time to recover from the concussion and return-to-play decisions are carefully made. No athlete should return to sport or other at-risk participation when symptoms of a concussion are present and recovery is ongoing.

Is a "CT scan" or MRI needed to diagnose a concussion?

Diagnostic testing which includes CT ("CAT") and MRI scans are rarely needed following a concussion. While these are helpful in identifying life-threatening brain injuries (e.g., skull fracture, bleeding, swelling), they are not normally used, even by athletes who have sustained severe concussions. A concussion is diagnosed based upon the athlete's story of the injury and the health care provider's physical examination.

What is the best treatment to help my child recover more quickly from a concussion?

The best treatment for a concussion is rest. There are no medications that can speed the recovery from a concussion. Exposure to loud noises, bright lights, computers, video games, television, and phones (including text messaging) may exacerbate the symptoms of a concussion. You should allow your child to rest as much as possible in the days following a concussion. As the symptoms decrease, you may allow increased use of computers, phone, video games, etc., but the access must be reduced if symptoms worsen.

How long do the symptoms of a concussion usually last?

The symptoms of a concussion will usually go away within one week of the initial injury. You should anticipate that your child will likely be out of sports for about two weeks following a concussion. However, in some cases, symptoms may last for several weeks or even months. Symptoms such as headache, memory problems, poor concentration, and mood changes can interfere with school, work, and social interactions. The potential for such long-term symptoms indicates the need for careful management of all concussions.

How many concussions can an athlete have before he or she should stop playing sports?

There is no "magic number" of concussions that determine when an athlete should give up playing contact or collision sports. The circumstances surrounding each individual injury, such as the way the injury happened and length of symptoms following the concussion are very important and must be considered when assessing the athlete's risk for further and potentially more serious concussions. The decision to "retire" from sports is a decision best reached following a complete evaluation by your child's primary care provider and consultation with a physician or neuropsychologist who specializes in treating sports concussion.

I've read recently that concussions may cause long-term brain damage in professional football players. Is this a risk for high school athletes who have had a concussion?

The issue of "chronic encephalopathy" in several former NFL players has received a great deal of media attention lately. Very little is known about what may be causing dramatic abnormalities in the brains of these unfortunate retired football players. At this time, we have very little knowledge of the long-term effects of concussions that happen during high school athletics.

In the cases of the retired NFL players, it appears that most had long careers in the NFL after playing in high school and college. In most cases, they played football for over 20 years and suffered

multiple concussions in addition to hundreds of other blows to their heads. Alcohol and steroid use may also be contributing factors in some cases. Obviously, the average high school athlete does not come close to suffering the total number or sheer force of head trauma seen by professional football players. However, the fact that we know very little about the long-term effects of concussions in young athletes is further reason to carefully manage each concussion.

Adapted from [A Parent's Guide to Concussion in Sports](#), National Federation of High School Associations.

Some of this information has been adapted from the CDC's "Heads Up: Concussion in High School Sports" materials by the NFHS's Sports Medicine Advisory Committee. Please go to www.cdc.gov/ncipc/tbi/Coaches_Tool_Kit.htm for more information.

AUTHORIZATION AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

WARNING: SERIOUS CATASTROPHIC AND PERHAPS FATAL INJURY MAY RESULT FROM ATHLETIC PARTICIPATION

Many forms of athletic competition result in violent physical contact among players, the use of equipment that may result in accidents, strenuous physical exertion, and numerous other exposures to risk of injury. Students and parents must assess the risks involved in such participation and make their choice to participate in spite of those risks. No amount of instruction, precaution, or supervision will eliminate these risks. Students have suffered accidents resulting in death, paraplegia, quadriplegia, and other very serious permanent physical impairment while playing sports. By granting permission for your student to participate in athletic competition, you, the parent or guardian, acknowledge that such risk exists. Students will be instructed in proper techniques to be used in athletic competition and in the proper utilization of all equipment worn or used in practice and competition. Students must adhere to that instruction and utilization and must refrain from improper uses and techniques.

I understand the statement above and I understand that by allowing my student to participate in athletic events, I assume the risk that he/she may be injured, perhaps severely.

Signature of Parent

Printed Name of Parent

Date

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF CODE OF CONDUCT

I understand that as a student representing the school district in activities, I am obligated to comply with the athletic handbook, including the code of conduct. **This means that I may not possess, use, or be at parties in the presence of alcohol, illicit drugs, or controlled substances at any time during the school term.** I understand that if I violate the code of conduct or other rules in this handbook, I may be suspended from participation in all co-curricular activities and/or school sponsored activities or events.

Signature of Student

Printed Name of Student

Date

I understand that my student is obligated by this handbook, including the statements above.

Signature of Parent

Printed Name of Parent

Date

Freeman Public Schools Adult Code of Conduct

Extra-Curricular programs play an important role in promoting the physical, social, and emotional development of our children. It is essential for parents/guardians to encourage athletes to embrace the values of good sportsmanship. In order to do this, adults involved or attending athletic events should be models of good sportsmanship and should lead by example by demonstrating fairness, respect and self-control.

I therefore pledge to be responsible for my words and actions while attending a Freeman Public School event and my behavior will follow the Code of Conduct:

I/we will encourage good sportsmanship by demonstrating positive support for all players, cheerleaders, coaches and officials at every game, meet, practice or other event.

I/we will place the emotional and physical well-being of my athlete ahead of my personal desire to win.

I/we will support coaches and officials working with my athlete(s), in order to encourage a positive and enjoyable experience for all.

I/we will demand a sports environment free from drugs, tobacco, and alcohol and will refrain from use at all athletic activities.

I/we remember that the activity is for the athletes- not ADULTS.

I/we will do my best to make the activity fun for the athletes.

I/we will ask my athlete to treat other players, cheerleaders, coaches, fans, parents and officials with respect regardless of race, creed, sex or ability.

I/we agree not to deliberately incite or participate in "unsportsmanlike" conduct at any athletic event.

I/we agree not to use abusive or profane language at any time at any athletic event.

I/we agree not to criticize, belittle, antagonize, berate, or otherwise incite the opposing team, its players, coaches, cheerleaders or fans by word of mouth or gestures.

I/we agree not to criticize, belittle, antagonize, berate, or otherwise incite the opposing team, its players, coaches, cheerleaders or fans by the use of social media (Facebook, Snapchat, Twitter-etc.).

I/we agree to accept decisions of the game officials, judges, as being fair and called to the best of their ability.

I/we agree to follow the proper chain of communication when having a complaint or voicing my opinion regarding a concern within the Freeman athletic/activities program. The communication process between student athletes and sponsor/coach and complaint procedures are all outlined above in this activities handbook.

I/we agree to take responsibility for any actions that violate this code of conduct by a guest or relative attending a Freeman activity event.

I/we understand that any act of disrespect from a parent/fan directed towards game officials/judges, players or coaches, fans from either team or creating a disturbance either in the stands or on the playing field may result in an ejection from the contest and suspension for a longer period of time from Freeman activities.

I/we understand by signing this we have read this Code of Conduct and understand what it means to be a good role model for Freeman athletes.

Printed Name(s) _____ Date _____

Signatures
