

**AMHERST SCHOOL DISTRICT
CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES PHILOSOPHY**

WHEREAS, students who participate in such co-curricular activities as student government, sports, intramurals, clubs, band, chorus, speech, debate, drama, and academic honor societies tend to have higher grades, better school attendance, lower dropout rates and fewer discipline problems generally; and

WHEREAS, students who participate in co-curricular activities learn self-discipline, work ethic and teamwork, build self-confidence, forge new friendships, develop skills to handle competitive situations, express greater satisfaction with their school experience, and are more likely to aspire to higher education; and

WHEREAS, student participation in co-curricular activities is often a better predictor of success in college and careers than high grades or scores on college entrance tests; and

WHEREAS, student participation in co-curricular activities is often accompanied by more parental involvement than for other students; and

WHEREAS, students who participate in co-curricular activities have less opportunity to be unsupervised during the hours after school and are less likely to engage in high risk behaviors (smoking, drinking, drugs, sex, etc.);

THEREFORE, the Amherst School District recognizes co-curricular activities as inherently educational and an integral part of the schools' programs wherein young people learn skills and lifelong lessons in support of those learned in the classroom.

Guiding principles undergirding co-curricular activities include the following:

Co-curricular activities support the school mission statement.

All students will be afforded the opportunity to participate in co-curricular activities.

The value of participation, enjoyment, skill-building, and belonging to a group shall be emphasized and supported by appropriately-sized teams, clubs and activities.

Students are to be led by well qualified advisors and coaches --- adults who support the district's co-curricular philosophy and code of ethics, are adept at working with the age group, and are themselves highly skilled in the co-curricular activity. Coaching and advisor vacancies will be advertised in the schools as well as in the local newspapers.

Co-curricular activities supported by the district will take place at times which do not interfere with students' regular classroom instruction. Support may include coach and club advisor stipends, uniforms, supplies, awards, league and entrance fees, officials, and in-state transportation.

**STANDARDS FOR PARTICIPATION
IN CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES****PHILOSOPHY**

The Amherst Middle School community believes that co-curricular activities are an integral part of the middle school experience. Activities which encourage participation and accommodate students' interests can enhance academic success, build self-confidence, and promote self-discipline and work ethic.

Students must be in good academic standing and model good citizenship in order to participate in our co-curricular program.

**RULES AND EXPECTATIONS GOVERNING
CO-CURRICULAR PARTICIPATION**

To be eligible to participate in the Amherst Middle School co-curricular program, a student must be on good behavior and passing all subjects on the report card immediately prior to and during the season or session. A student failing to meet or sustain this requirement is subject to probation from the activity or sport. Future participation will be determined through an evaluation of weekly progress reports teachers will complete and forward to the co-curricular director. During this evaluation period a student must demonstrate progressive improvement in the area(s) of difficulty. A student who shows little or no improvement over a two-week period may become ineligible for continued participation in the co-curricular activity. We further recognize that participation in co-curricular activities can occasionally result in falling grades, regardless of the student's normal level of academic performance. Students who experience falling, but not necessarily failing, grades will be identified and supported by the student's teacher and coach or club advisor.

Any student who fails to conform to school/activity/team rules and expectations may become ineligible to participate in co-curricular activities. Violation of these rules and expectations can be cause for disciplinary action by the administration, coach or advisor.

In addition, any student suspended from school (internal or external) more than once while a sport or activity is in session will lose eligibility to participate in that activity or sport for the remainder of the season or session. Any student disciplined for lesser infractions may face team or activity sanctions at the discretion of the coach or advisor, after discussion with the co-curricular director.

Any violation of school board policies or State laws regarding Drug-Free School Zones (RSA 193-B), Safe School Zones (RSA 193-D) or violation for gross misconduct or neglect or refusal to conform to the reasonable rules of the school (RSA 193:13) shall result in disciplinary action, including removal from the co-curricular activity.

All decisions regarding co-curricular participation for students who do not meet the criteria rest with the school administration after consultation with faculty and the coach or advisor. Consideration for future participation will be determined individually and rests on the remediation of the poor academic performance or inappropriate school behavior.

CODE OF ETHICS

The responsibility of the coach/advisor of any co-curricular activity is to support the intellectual, physical, ethical and social development of all participants. The co-curricular program is designed to promote a student's interest in school and enhance academic achievement. Participation in co-curricular activities should be encouraged and viewed as an opportunity to explore one's interests, unique gifts and passions. The following statements reflect our beliefs regarding the role of any coach, advisor, supervisor or mentor associated with the co-curricular program.

1. The coach/advisor must realize that he or she has a tremendous influence on the participants of an activity or sport. Therefore, it is essential that a coach/advisor exemplify and instill in the student desirable ideals of character and citizenship. The value of winning should never be placed above all else.
2. A coach/advisor shall model sportsmanship and fair play, abiding by the rules of the contest in letter and spirit. Through their actions coaches/advisors convey a respect for the integrity and judgement of the officials, referees and judges.
3. A coach/advisor shall respect the integrity and diversity of values of the individual participants and their families.
4. A coach/advisor must encourage the highest standards of conduct and academic achievement among all participants.
5. A coach/advisor shall demonstrate a willingness to pursue mastery of knowledge, skills and techniques appropriate for the level of participation.
6. A coach/advisor shall promote good health habits and sound training rules. Coaches/advisors shall take an active role in the prevention of drug, alcohol and tobacco use.
7. Coaches and advisors of co-curricular programs must work cooperatively to ensure an effective and harmonious total school program.

ADOPTION: September 1999

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