**Caro Community Schools Athletic Handbook**

**2017-2018**

**INTRODUCTION**

Caro's athletic program is an extension of its educational program and adheres to the philosophy and objectives prescribed by the Caro Board of Education. This handbook attempts to define the responsibilities of the athletes and parents who participate in the athletic program.

This handbook covers all Varsity and Junior Varsity level sports as well as any ninth grade and Middle School athletic teams.

**Forward**

The purpose of this student athletic handbook is to explain the philosophies, objectives, regulations, and procedures of the Caro Community Schools student athletic program. In establishing these guidelines, the following factors are considered:

1. Safeguarding the health of participants in the athletic program;

2. Providing opportunities for student participation;

3. Establishing standards that cultivate healthy interpersonal relationships among participants.

4. Maintaining the highest quality of student activity;

5. Promoting a healthy school/community relationship;

6. Promoting congenial relationships with other schools.

**PHILOSOPHY**

Interscholastic sports at Caro High School and Caro Middle School are an integral part of the extra-curricular activities program. They offer young people a wide variety of opportunities to participate in interscholastic competition and, like all other extra-curricular activities, must fulfill their proper role in the total educational program. Athletics should provide a foundation for sound citizenship through the practice of good sportsmanship and should develop sound social traits including: emotional control, cooperation, honesty, and dependability.

Research indicates that students involved in co-curricular activities have a greater chance for success during adulthood. We hope the information provided within this handbook makes both your child’s and your experience with the Caro Community Schools Athletic Program more enjoyable.

We believe that the Caro Community Schools Athletic Program helps develop the character traits that promote a successful life after high school.

All students should have an equal opportunity to compete for positions on athletic teams, and it is the aim of the school to encourage all who are interested and eligible to try out for interscholastic sports. In order for the athletic program to be successful, it must have the support of the community, parents, and students. To merit this support, the athlete should foster respect by being a good citizen in both school and the community.

Philosophy of participation will vary at the different grade levels. However, in accordance with board policy 7210 to create a more manageable team size and create a better experience for all individuals cutting may take place. Team selection will be based primarily upon a student athletes abilities.

The primary function of athletic programs at the middle school level is to provide instruction in fundamental movement skills and basic sports drills.

The primary function of athletic programs for the JV and freshmen levels will be competitive in nature with an emphasis on player development. Varsity levels is to be competitive and victorious.

**ATHLETIC GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

Our main goal is to develop student athletes into more effective citizens in a democratic society.

1) Learn TEAMWORK. We must all work together in a democratic society and to do this, we must develop self-discipline, respect for authority and the spirit of hard work and sacrifice. Just as in a family or occupation, we must learn to place the team and its objectives higher than personal desires.

2) Learn to be SUCCESSFUL. We live in a very competitive society. We do not always win, but when we continually strive to do so, we will be successful. We can learn to accept defeat only by striving to win through dedication and by developing a desire to excel and overcome defeats.

3) Learn SPORTSMANSHIP. When we do our best and can honestly tell ourselves so, success and defeat can be accepted like a true sports person. We need to develop desirable social traits, including emotional control, honesty, cooperation, and dependability.

4) Learn to IMPROVE. The desire to improve is essential to good citizenship. As athletes, we must establish goals and must constantly try to reach these goals, trying to better ourselves in the skills involved and in those characteristics set forth as being desirable.

5) Learn to ENJOY. To be successful, we must enjoy what we are doing. Achieving goals and contributing will cause enjoyment through participation.

6) Learn to DEVELOP DESIRABLE PERSONAL HABITS. To be an alert and active contributing citizen, it is important to be physically fit and mentally alert. Physical fitness, exercise, and good health habits will develop this alertness.

**GOVERNING BODIES**

The athletic program at Caro High School and Caro Middle School follows the rules, regulations, and policies as set forth by the following governing bodies:

Caro Board of Education

Michigan High School Athletic Association

Tri-Valley Conference

Caro High School Athletic Council

Caro High School Athletic Appeals Committee

**The Athletic Council shall serve as an advisory council to the Athletic Director and principals of buildings that sponsor athletics. Members of the Athletic Council will consist of the following:**

1. Athletic Director (non-voting member)

2. Building Principal or his/her designee (non-voting member)

3. Three members of the Varsity Coaching Staff. Varsity Head coaches will be required to participate on a rotating basis.

4. A Community Member - to be determined by Athletic Director and Building Principal.

**All athletic discipline appeals will originate with the Athletic Appeals Committee. Meetings will be called by the Athletic Director whenever a student wishes to appeal a decision. Members of the Athletic Appeals Committee will consist of the following:**

1. Assistant Principal (facilitator – non-voting member)
2. Athletic Director (non-voting member)
3. Two members of the Varsity Coaching Staff, chosen by the Athletic Director, who are not actively coaching the athlete during the appeal process.
4. One community member chosen by the Assistant Principal or Athletic Director.

**PARENT/COACH COMMUNICATION**

Both parenting and coaching are extremely challenging vocations. By establishing an understanding of each position, we are better able to accept the actions of each other, providing greater benefit to children. As parents, when your children become involved in our program, you have a right to understand what expectations are placed on your child. This begins with clear communication from the coach of your child’s program.

**Communication you should expect from your son/daughter’s Coach . . .**

1) **Team Rules:** Parents appreciate knowing not only the philosophy of the Coach but also team policies, including consequences that the coach established to supplement the code of conduct, rules, and regulations.

2) **Team Itinerary:** Locations and times of all practices and contests.

3) **Team Expectations**: What the coach expects for your child and other players on the squad (i.e. fees, special equipment, off-season conditioning.)

4) **Injury:** Procedure should your child be injured during participation.

5) **Discipline**: The coach will inform parents within 24 hours of all discipline that results in the loss of contest participation or removal from team.

**Communication Coaches expect from parents . . .**

1) Concerns, expressed directly to the Coach.

2) Notification of any schedule conflicts well in advance.

3) Specific concerns regarding a Coach’s philosophy and/or expectations.

As your children become involved in the Caro Athletic Program, they will experience some of the most rewarding moments of their lives. It is important to understand that there may also be times when things do not go the way you or your child wishes. At these times, discussion with the Coach is encouraged.

There are situations that may require a conference between the coach and the parent. These are to be encouraged. It is important that both parties involved have a clear understanding of the other’s position.

**Appropriate concerns to discuss with Coaches . . .**

1) The treatment of your child, mentally and physically.

2) Ways to help your child improve.

3) Concerns about your child’s behavior.

It can be very difficult to accept your child’s not playing as much as you may hope. **Coaches are professionals.** They make judgment decisions based on what they believe to be best for all students involved.

**Issues not appropriate to discuss with coaches…**

While there are certain things that can and should be discussed with your child’s Coach, there are other things which must be left to the discretion of the Coach.

1) Playing time.

2) Strategy.

3) Play calling.

4) Other student-athletes.

**CONFLICT RESOLUTION PROCESS**

* All complaints **MUST** be heard at the lowest possible level **BEFORE** intervention by a higher authority can occur.
* A 24 hour “cooling off” period must be granted before any complaints are initiated.
* Complaints must be made within 10 days of the incident. For the sake of all parties, the entire process must be concluded within 30 days of the incident.

**This system works very well and we are committed to abide by it.**

**Step 1: Start with the Source -** The player will speak directly to the coach. A cooling off period will be granted for all parties before the resolution is sought. This meeting should be done in private, away from practice sites and game arenas, and should be conducted face to face. Students who do not feel comfortable speaking solely to the coach may request a parent to be present; however, the meeting should be conducted by the athlete.

**Step 2: Move to Program Head -** This step is necessary only if the issue is in regards to a subordinate or assistant (i.e. an assistant, JV coach, etc.). If going to the source does not resolve the problem, then the head of the program should be notified and he/she should attempt to facilitate a solution. If the “source” is the head of the program, move to step three.

**Step 3: Contact Athletic Director -** If an agreeable solution is not reached then the athletic director will conduct a meeting between the parties in an attempt to find resolution.

**Step 4: Contact Principal -** If an agreeable solution is still not reached, then the principal will conduct a meeting between the parties in an attempt to find resolution.

**Step 5: Notify the Superintendent -** At this point in the process, individuals who still believe their disputes have not been resolved adequately can submit a written narrative of their complaint to the school Superintendent. A copy of this will be given to all concerned parties, who will be afforded the option of a written rebuttal. After the superintendent has reviewed the documents he can conduct a meeting in a final attempt to resolve the dispute.

**Step 6: Request non-partisan School Board mediation -** This final step is appropriate only in extreme circumstances and shall follow the same process laid down for the superintendent.

**MICHIGAN HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION**

**ELIGIBILITY RULES FOR SENIOR HIGH STUDENTS**

To be eligible to represent your school in interscholastic athletics:

**ENROLLMENT** - You must have been enrolled in a high school or junior high/middle school not later than the fourth Friday after Labor Day to be eligible for the 1st or 2nd Trimester or the fourth Friday of February to be eligible for the 2nd or 3rd Trimester.

**AGE - HIGH SCHOOL -** You must be under nineteen (19) years of age, except for a student whose nineteenth (19th) birthday occurs on or after September 1 of a current school year is eligible for the balance of that school year.

**PHYSICAL EXAMINATION -** You must have passed a satisfactory physical examination for the current school year. Record of this examination must be on file in the high school. Only the most current physical form from MHSAA will be valid. **A physician’s statement for the current school year is interpreted as any physical examination given on or after April 15 of the previous school year.**

**TRIMESTERS OF COMPETITION** - You must not have competed for more than four (4) first and four (4) second and four (4) third trimester seasons in a sport in a four (4) year high school. No semester limits for 7th and 8th graders.

**SEMESTERS OF ENROLLMENT** - You must not have been enrolled in grades nine to twelve (9-12) inclusive, for more than eight (8) semesters or twelve (12) trimesters. The seventh and eighth (7th & 8th) semesters or the 10th, 11th, and 12th trimesters must be consecutive. Enrollment in a school beyond the fourth Friday after Labor Day (first trimester) or fourth Friday of February (second or third trimester), or competing in one or more interscholastic athletic contests, shall be considered as enrollment for a semester under this rule. No semester limit for 7th and 8th graders.

**TRANSFERS** - A student enrolled in grades 9 through 12 who transfers from one high school or junior high/middle school to another high school is ineligible to participate in an interscholastic athletic contest or scrimmage for 1 full semester in the school to which the student transfers, **UNLESS** the student qualifies under one or more of the MHSAA exceptions as listed in the MHSAA Handbook in Section 9 - Transfers. **All transfers must contact the Athletic Director immediately for a ruling.**

**AWARDS** - A student may accept for participation in athletics, a symbolic or merchandise award which does not have a fair market value or cost in excess of Twenty five ($25.00) dollars. Awards for athletic participation in the form of cash, merchandise certificates, or any other type of negotiable documents are never allowed. Refer to MHSAA Handbook in Section 11.

**AMATEUR STATUS** - Eligibility for interscholastic athletics at MHSAA member schools is limited to amateurs, meaning those student athletes who have not received gifts of material or money and have not received other valuable considerations, including special considerations for loans, because of athletic performance or potential. Treatment of or privileges received by athletes or their families that are not provided or available to all students violate the principles of amateurism in interscholastic athletics. Gifts or loans to family members, based on the student’s athletic performance or potential, are treated as gifts or loans to the student and violate that student’s amateur status.

**LIMITED TEAM MEMBERSHIP** - A student who, after practicing with (including tryouts) or participating in an athletic contest or scrimmage as a member of a high school athletic team, participates in any athletic competition not sponsored by his/her school in the same sport during the same season, shall become ineligible for a minimum of the next three (3) days of competition and maximum of the remainder of that season in that school year. A student shall not compete at any time in any MHSAA Tournament sport in any of the following events: (1) Any event which is or purports to be an “All-Star” contest, regardless of the method of selection; (2) “All-Star” fund raising events or similar exhibitions if they involve contestants other than the students and faculty of that student’s school; (3) Any event which is or purports to be a national high school championship, or the qualification thereto. Participation in such a contest by a high school student shall cause that student to become ineligible for all interscholastic athletics for a maximum period of one year of school enrollment from the date of the athlete’s last violation of this regulation.

**PREVIOUS TRIMESTER RECORD -** A student must have successfully completed 4 of 5 High School classes or 5 of 6 Middle School classes in the previous trimester to be eligible for the next trimester.

**The above minimum standards are set by the Michigan High School Athletic Association (MSHAA).**

**ACADEMIC & CITIZENSHIP ELIGIBILITY RULES FOR**

**HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETES**

The following rules have been established by the Board of Education for athletes participating in the Caro Community Schools athletic program.

I. **ENROLLMENT**

A. Student Athletes must be enrolled as full-time students of Caro Community Schools.

II. **Academic Checks**

A. Each student must be passing/meeting IEP requirements in all classes he/she is enrolled in to be eligible for participation.

B. Grade checks will be conducted each week and will start with second week of the trimester. Grades will be pulled on Mondays. Students will be given a four offense policy for athletics (See Below). A student will only be allowed to receive no more than 2 offense in a week. Once a student has received 2 strikes in a week they will not be issued another 2 strikes during a trimester. A student will receive an offense for each class they have that their grade is below 60%. Students will be given a letter of standing each week for any offense they receive. The letter of standing will need to be signed by parent/guardian before they are allowed to return to participating in athletics.

Offense 1: Warning

Offense 2: Miss one contest

Offense 3: 1 week

Offense 4: Removed from athletic team

C. If an athlete fails a class the previous trimester, he/she will be deemed ineligible for the first week of contests in the following trimester. No probation will be granted to the athlete for a previous trimester failing grade. If an athlete fails more than one class, he/she will be ineligible for the following trimester. An ineligible athlete is required to attend all practices, unless attending after-school study table. He/she will not be allowed to dress for the contest.

D. **Scrimmages do not constitute a contest.**

**PLAYER RESPONSIBILITY**

Student athletes should understand that the athletic program is an important part of their overall education. Athletics offers many opportunities for the total development of each individual and all students have the opportunity to be part of the total athletic program. Once students decide to participate, they must understand that they are accepting the privileges and benefits of participation and must meet certain specific obligations and responsibilities. They have committed themselves to the total athletic program. Student athletes should also plan their activity time so that they can give sufficient time to their studies and their sport to ensure acceptable performance in both areas.

Equally important to the development of skills needed to compete in an individual sport is the development of positive social attitudes and interpersonal relations. Students who serve on interscholastic athletic teams represent themselves, their families, their team, their school, and their community. Since the community as a whole provides the support necessary to operate the athletic program, student athletes should conduct themselves in a manner consistent with the requirements of this handbook and which reflects their status as representatives of the school district.

During the competition, student athletes should exhibit control of all aspects of their behavior while serving as a representative of their high school or middle school athletic team.

In addition to the above, athletes will be responsible for the following specific obligations:

1) All equipment will be issued by the coach and a record will be kept. Athletes will be responsible for equipment issued to them.

2) Athletes must maintain their equipment in a reasonable and clean condition. The coach will be responsible for establishing a procedure to be followed for the cleaning of uniforms.

3) All equipment must be returned to the coach at the end of a sports season. Athletes are required to pay for all lost equipment (fair market value), and will be restricted from participation in any other sports-related activity or practice session until their obligation has been cleared by the coach or Athletic Director.

4) Athletes are financially responsible for all school equipment issued to them. Awards will not be given for a sport until all obligations have been taken care of.

5) Athletes are required to return signed statements from themselves and their parent/guardian indicating that they have received, read, and agreed to abide by the school's athletic policies including the coaches’ specific team rules.

6) Out of Town Travel

Players are required to travel to and from all out-of-town events as a team when school transportation is offered during the week. Exceptions must be requested by the parents directly to the coach/AD and the parents must provide the coach with a signed statement. Under no circumstances will a player be transported to or from an athletic contest in a vehicle driven by himself/herself or another high school student during the week when school transportation is offered. When school transportation is not offered for student athletes, parents will be responsible for arranging transportation for their student athletes. Coaches are not allowed to be involved in the coordination of transportation for athletic competitions that are offered on the weekends. Coaches and athletic administration are only allowed to state the following, “We play at X location at X time student athletes need to be there at X time. By board approved resolution in October of 2011, weekend transportation shall not be provided during the regular season, it should be very clear that the district will not be providing transportation to events, tournaments, invitational activities, etc. that occur on weekends. This means that if an event ran from Friday evening through Saturday or Sunday, we would not provide transportation. The district will provide weekend transportation for the teams that make the **second** round of the post season tournament and beyond. Overnight trips must be approved by the superintendent and teams may be limited to one way transportation. Transportation is not provided to individuals. Therefore, if an individual earns the right to compete at the state level, we would not provide transportation, but if a team was going we would.

7) Team buses will depart from and return to the high school for each event.

8) An athlete who has been cut from one team may go out for another team prior to the start of contests. After the start of contests, Athletic Director approval is needed.

9) An athlete that does not attend the try-out period cannot be added to any team after the initial cuts have been made. Unless prior arrangements have been Ok’d by the Principal or Athletic Director.

10) An athlete who has made the cut on one team may not quit and go out for another team in the same season.

11) An athlete may move from one non-cutting sport to another with the consent of both coaches and prior to the start of contests. After the start of contests, Athletic Director approval is needed.

12) Any MHSAA tournaments that are held at Caro Community School in any sport and any level the student athletes that participated on the team during the regular season will be required to volunteer their time with the hosting responsibilities as part of fulfilling duties of being a member of that. If their team is participating in the MHSAA tournament they will not be required to help with the hosting duties if they are on the varsity team. If a student athlete does not help with hosting responsibilities that student athlete will not be consider as finishing the season not in good standing and will not receive any recognition for being on that team.

13) If a student athlete misses school to attend a contest in his or her sport they are responsible for making up the work and collecting any notes they have missed.

14) During the season, anytime a participant fails to attend practice/event due to an unexcused absence, the student’s return to the line-up will be determined by the amount of time necessary to recover lost skills and conditioning according to the coach.

**INJURY POLICY/CONCUSSION**

**RETURN TO PARTICIPATION FOLLOWING ILLNESS OR INJURY**

Athletes who are out of school for three (3) or more days because of injury may not attend practice session or participate in competition without written permission from a physician. A student must have a doctor's permission to return to practice or competition if he/she has sustained any injury which requires a visit to a physician.

Injury Reporting: Students absent from practice due to extended illness or any athlete who sustains an injury while participating for Caro Community School or on his/her own time needs to report the injury to the head trainer.

Release to practice/compete following an injury: Any athlete who has sustained an injury must be released to return to competition or practice by the head trainer ~~team physician~~ and/or his/her M.D. or D.O. Release by the M.D. or D.O. must be delivered in writing to the athletic office. If the head trainer feels the athlete may be at risk of further injury, return to play may be withheld pending consultation of physician.

Concussions: Any Athlete suspected of having a concussion is required to complete a MHSAA Post-Concussion Consent Form before returning to practice/events. The clearance from the doctor must be unconditional.

Communicable Diseases: Any Athlete with a suspected communicable disease (example- skin lesions, head lice, pink eye, etc…) is required to obtain a release from an authorized health care provider before returning to practice/events.

Athletic Trainer’s Role: The head trainer is responsible for injury prevention, care, treatment and rehabilitation.

Athlete’s Responsibility: It is the responsibility of the athlete to follow the instructions of his/her physician, as well as the head trainer’s recommendations and directions with regard to an injury; it is his/her own responsibility to follow up with treatment as directed by the team trainer.

It is important to recognize that blows to the head can cause a variety of injuries other than concussions (e.g., neck injuries, more serious brain injuries). Please be sure to see your doctor as soon as possible for any other medical concerns. **Please be advised that your son/daughter will not be allowed to return to play until he/she has no symptoms and have been cleared in writing by an authorized health care provider (M.D. or D. O.) for this type of injury.**

**PARENT RESPONSIBILITY**

**Parental Standards & Expectations**

When the coaching staff, the athletes, and the parents are working together for the good of the team, a season is successful. Please help us provide the best possible environment for our athletes to have a quality experience. Everyone must play his/her role. The coaches need to coach, the players need to work hard and sacrifice for the good of the team, and parents need to support their children with attendance and encouragement. As models to our student athletes, the following behaviors should be practiced by parents:

1. Encourage good sportsmanship by demonstrating positive support for all players, coaches and officials at every game.
2. Place the emotional and physical well-being of the participants ahead of any personal desires to win.
3. Provide support for coaches and officials working with the participants to provide a positive, enjoyable experience for all.
4. Promote tobacco, alcohol, drug, and violence free sports environment for the participants and agree to assist by refraining from their use at all events.
5. Refrain from comments and actions that are intended to intimidate, bait, anger, or embarrass others.
6. Maintain a position as a spectator and refrain from “coaching from the stands”.
7. Support the participants in the appropriately designated areas for spectators.
8. Remember that the game is for the students and not for adults.
9. Make youth sports fun for the participants.
10. Expect that your child treat other players, coaches, fans and officials with respect regardless of race, sex, creed or ability.
11. Keep all comments from the stands positive, including those directed towards individuals other than your own child.
12. Promise to help your child enjoy the extra-curricular experience within your personal constraints by being a respectful fan, providing transportation or whatever you are capable of doing.
13. It is always recommended that each team have a parent be a liaison between the head coach of each team and the parents. This team parent would help coordinate for tickets, concessions, food for games and any other communication the coach feels that all parents need to know.

At Caro Community Schools we have an expectation to offer as many interscholastic opportunities as possible and to provide the proper equipment, coaches, officials and transportation, this all requires proper funding.  We are asking that each parent/guardian having a son/daughter that participates in athletics to volunteer their time in the concession stand, ticket booth, or help with other game operations. Your volunteering in these areas will assist us financially.  It is important that all of us are doing what we can to maintain and promote our programs.

In return for volunteering your time, we hope to keep “Pay to Play” out of school district.  In addition, we will provide you with a punch card good for 10 punches.  To receive the punch card you will need to volunteer for 3 events during the sport season your son/daughter participates in athletics.

**“Sportsmanship’’—A Challenge for Us All**

You, as a Parent/Fan, are expected to:

1. Remember that the game is for the players. They are here because they want to play and enjoy the experience. Your good sportsmanship will enhance this educational experience.

2. Refrain from distracting the players during play.

3. Recognize and appreciate skill in performance regardless of affiliation. Applause for an opponent’s good performance is a demonstration of generosity and good will.

4. Treat the officials with respect before, during, and after the contest. We cannot play the game without officials as they are an integral part of the game, and they should be considered impartial arbitrators.

5. Display good conduct. Even though you paid for your admittance, the management has the authority to remove any spectator who does not conduct himself/herself respectfully. Abusive language is prohibited.

6. Remember that your view of the game could be quite different from that of the official.

7. Recognize the fact that, as a parent spectator, you represent the school as do the athletes.

8. Noise makers are prohibited.

**Adult Fan Behavior Guidelines**

If a fan is acting in an unsportsmanlike manner, he/she will be approached and be advised of the inappropriate behavior by a staff member or the game management, with a follow up letter sent by the Athletic Director.

A second offense will result in a suspension of two home contests and any other athletic event during the suspension time period. A third offense will result in a suspension from all athletic contests for the remainder of the school year. This process may be accelerated if the administration deems it necessary.

**Student Athlete Code of Conduct and Consequences**

Participation in athletics is a privilege; therefore, athletes will be subject to some rules and regulations which may not apply to the general student. Athletes are subject to discipline under the athletic code as well as under the student code of conduct. These rules apply to all students involved in athletics, whether in or out of season and including the summer months.

**Athlete Expectations:**

1. Athletes are expected to attend all practices and scheduled competitive events. Enforcement will be in accordance with the team requirements set forth by the coach for that sport.
2. Athletes must attend all scheduled classes on contest AND practice days (unless s/he has left early with athletic team) in order to participate in that day’s competition or practice. Exceptions including Doctor’s appointments, court appearances, etc. **must be cleared prior** to the competition/practice through the Principal or Athletic Director. Illness or “tiredness” is not an acceptable exception under the intent of this provision. **A student who has violated this rule will be suspended from the next competition date.** Please refer to the High School Student Handbook for the detailed school attendance policy.
3. The team bus will not stop for food if the location of the contest is 90 minutes or less from Caro. Coaches may gain permission from the athletic director to alter this on special occasions.
4. Student-Athletes are not permitted to order any team apparel for their team. The head coach or team parent should be in charge of placing these orders. Any orders that are billed to the school will need to have A.D. or Principal signature. Designs for use on apparel should be approved by the A.D. prior to placing the order.
5. Any athlete causing reckless or deliberate destruction of school property (home or away) will be immediately suspended from athletics and reported to the school and/or law enforcement officials for further disciplinary or legal action.
6. An athlete who is suspended from school for any reason will not be allowed to participate with the team or to participate in any athletic contests during the suspension period as defined by the administrator having jurisdiction in the case.
7. Any and all violations resulting in removal from the team will be reported to the Principal through the Athletic Director within twenty-four (24) hours.

**Prohibited Behaviors and Consequences:**

All Offenses are cumulative throughout a student’s Middle School or High School Career.

Students accusing other specific student athletes of violating the following rules shall submit the accusation to the Athletic Director in writing within ten (10) school days of the alleged violation. Such reports shall refer to the specific portion of the rules alleged to have been violated. The violation will be investigated by the Athletic Director. If, after investigation, the athlete has violated the standards specified, action will be taken by the Athletic Director.

Suspected student athlete violations discovered by administration through normal means will be investigated by the Athletic Director. If, after investigation, the athlete has violated the standards specified, action will be taken by the Athletic Director.

**Level 1 Prohibited Behaviors:**

**Suspension:** Principal or Assistant Principal assigned in-school or out-of-school suspensions.

**Misconduct:** Student athletes will abstain from any conduct that shall bring discredit to the athlete, team, or school (i.e. excessive display of temper, loss of self-control, use of profanity, unsportsmanlike conduct, disrupting a public event, etc.)

**Level 1 Consequences:**

**1st Offense:** One-Game Suspension

**2nd Offense:** Two-Game Suspension

**3rd Offense:** Suspension for 35% of the season

Further Offenses result in suspension up to Permanent Suspension from Caro Athletic programs.

**Level 2 Prohibited Behaviors:**

**Association with Alcohol:** A student athlete shall not remain in a place where s/he knows or can be reasonably presumed to know that alcoholic beverages are being served to or consumed by persons under the legal age.

**Association with Controlled Substances:** A student athlete shall not remain in a place where s/he knows or can be reasonably presumed to know that any provision of the Michigan Controlled Substances Law is being violated.

**Level 2 Consequences:**

**1st Offense:** One game Suspension; possible loss of representative status, as determined by the AD/Administration

**2nd Offense:** 35% Season Suspension; possible loss of representative status, as determined by the AD/Administration

**Alternate Consequence:** If a student athlete self-reports the violation to the Athletic Director or the Principal in accordance with the self-reporting guidelines (listed below), and the student athlete completes a certified substance abuse treatment/educational program, the student athlete will serve a 20% Season Suspension.

**3rd Offense:** 70% Season Suspension; loss of representative status

**4th Offense:** Indefinite Suspension from Athletics at Caro (see indefinite suspension below); loss of representative

status

**Level 3 Prohibited Behaviors:**

**Tobacco Possession:** Student athletes will abstain from the use or possession of tobacco in any form.

**Alcohol Possession:** Student athletes will abstain from the use or possession of alcoholic beverages, or alcohol-related paraphernalia.

**Controlled Substance Possession:** Student athletes will abstain from the use or possession of controlled substance or look-alike paraphernalia

**Criminal Behavior:** Student athletes will abstain from complicity in any form of criminal activity.

**Level 3 Consequences:**

**1st Offense:** 35% Season Suspension; possible loss of representative status

**Alternate Consequence:** If a student athlete self-reports the violation to the Athletic Director or the Principal in accordance with the self-reporting guidelines (listed below), and the student athlete completes a certified substance abuse treatment/educational program, the student athlete will serve a 20% Season Suspension.

**2nd Offense:** 70% Season Suspension; loss of representative status

**3rd Offense:** Indefinite Suspension from Athletics at Caro (see indefinite suspension below); loss of representative status

**4th Offense:** Permanent Suspension from Athletics at Caro; loss of representative status

Suspensions lasting more than one game refer to proportions of the season, listed as a percentage. These percentages will be figured based on the total number of contest dates for that sport’s regular season (ex: Football has 9 regular season contest dates, 35% of the season = 3 contest dates) All fractions of contest dates will be rounded up at .5 or higher (ex: 3.5 contest dates = 4 contest dates, 3.4 contest dates = 3 contest dates).

If a violation occurs prior to the end of the season, the suspension will commence in the current season, including post-season contests, and continue into the next season. The remaining proportion of the suspension will be computed based on the next sport’s regular season.

The minimum suspension length is one game, regardless of the proportion of the season represented.

Student Athletes who have more than one Level 2 or Level 3 violation cannot receive a suspension that is shorter than a previously served suspension (ex: A student has a Level 3 violation, serves Offense 1 –20% season suspension. Later, that student has a Level 2 violation, the student would receive a 35% season suspension. And so on…).

**Self-Reporting Guidelines:**

* The student athlete involved must report his/her violation of the athletic handbook to the Athletic Director or the building Principal by 9:00 am on the first school day following the incident.
* For incidents occurring outside of the school year (i.e. summer), the student athlete has one (1) week to report the incident to the building Principal or Athletic Director from the start of their first practice.
* A student may only use self-reporting to reduce a Level 2 or Level 3 consequence one time during his/her high school career.

**Indefinite Suspension:** A student athlete who has received an indefinite suspension must be suspended no fewer than 365 days from the date of the suspension. At that time, a student may apply for reinstatement to the athletic program. The student must submit his/her request for reinstatement in writing, citing the various steps the student has taken to alter his/her behavior and regain the trust of the school. Upon receipt of this written request, the Athletic Director and building Principal will form a committee, which should include at minimum themselves, the coach for the team the student would like to be reinstated to, and a teacher from the building in which the student is enrolled. This committee will hold a hearing at which the student may present evidence showing his/her readiness to return to the athletic program. The student may have additional representation at this hearing, including parents and/or legal representation.

**Administrative Discretion:** The normal penalties are listed above. However, the Athletic Director, Principal, and/or Asst. Principal reserve the right and discretion to deviate from the normal step process depending upon the nature and severity of the violation.

**Elastic Clause:** The administration reserves the right to establish fair and reasonable rules and regulations for circumstances that may arise and require actions that are not covered in this handbook. In all cases, rules, regulations, and possible consequences shall be as consistent as possible with previously established rules, regulations, and consequences for similar incidents. Matters omitted from this handbook should not be interpreted as limitation to the scope of the school’s responsibility and, therefore, authority in dealing with any type of infraction that may not be in the best interest of the safety and welfare of the students or the athletic department.

**APPEALS PROCEDURE**

Each student athlete is expected to live within the rules and regulations spelled out in this handbook and those provided to students and their families by coaches of individual sports. Likewise, it is expected that all student athletes will be treated in an equal and just manner. Should a student believe that he/she is the subject of harassment, discrimination, unwarranted treatment, unfair suspension, or unjustified dismissal and wishes to make an appeal, the following process must be followed:

**Step 1**

A written request must be made to the Athletic Director including a statement of the athlete's position for a hearing with the Athletic Appeals Committee. The student athlete has a maximum of five (5) school days to appeal any decision made by the Athletic Director. At that time:

a) The Athletic Director will schedule a mutually convenient time for the hearing within a maximum of five (5) school days from receipt of the request.

b) The student may be accompanied by his/her parent(s) or other adults of the athlete's choice including legal counsel, if desired.

c) The student shall be given the opportunity to present his/her version of the facts and their implications. The athlete will be permitted to offer testimony from witnesses and other appropriate evidence.

d) The student and his/her representative(s) shall be informed of the evidence offered against the athlete.

e) The Athletic Appeals Committee may verbally inform the athlete of the decision at the conclusion of the hearing. The Athletic Appeals Committee shall render a written decision and copies shall be sent to the Athletic Director, the coach, and the student. The recommendation shall be decided by a simple majority vote and the action must be completed within five (5) school days following the meeting.

**Step 2**

If Step 1 does not settle the grievance to the athlete's satisfaction, he/she may request further review by the High School Principal. Further appeals may be made for review by the Superintendent of Schools and ultimately by the Board of Education. All time lines and procedures outlined in Step 1 will be followed at subsequent levels. However, the Board of Education will have up to thirty (30) days to hear the final appeal.

**Same Season/Two Sport Policy**

There exist circumstances in which it may be in the best interest of both a particular team and an individual athlete to allow participation on more than one athletic team during a particular season. This would allow individual athletes an opportunity to excel in athletics that will help both them and others grow and develop physically, socially, and emotionally while, at the same time, helping the overall growth, development and success of the entire team. Athletes at Caro Community Schools are allowed to participate in more than one sport during a particular season. If a student decides to participate in more than one sport at a time, a coach shall in no way discourage this decision, rather the coaches involved should work together to make this situation as smooth as possible. This policy may not work for all sports, however this will be the guideline for the sports it does work in. Realizing that there is potential for conflicts arising when an athlete is participating in two sports at the same time, the following guidelines will be adhered to:

1. The athlete will declare a *primary sport* and a *secondary sport*.
2. If contests are scheduled on the same day, the athlete will participate in his/her *primary sport*.

**EXCEPTION**: if the *secondary sport* is a league contest and the *primary sport* is a non-league contest, the athlete will participate in the *secondary sport*.

1. On days that an athlete is not in competition, he/she should make an effort to practice both sports. If only one sport can be practiced, it should be the *primary* *sport*.
2. In the event that it would be possible for an athlete to participate in both sports on the same day, he/she will not be allowed to drive to the second contest. Only an athlete’s parent or guardian will be allowed to transport the athlete. There will be *no exceptions* to this rule.
3. Coaches are not to discipline an athlete for a missed practiced on a day that the athlete is competing in his/her other sport as agreed upon by the coaches unless a new game plan is installed.
4. All eligibility rules will remain the same.
5. An athlete must begin practicing in each of the two sports at the beginning of each sport’s season. After the start of the seasons, Athletic Director approval is needed.
6. Before being allowed to participate in two sports during a season, the athlete, his/her parents/guardian, athletic director, and the two coaches involved must meet and sign an agreement prior to the start of the season.

**ATHLETIC AWARDS**

Letter requirements for all varsity sports:

**As head coaches and sports regulations change, the letter requirements that follow may change. The changes will be outlined in each coaches written sports guidelines and reviewed with the athletic director. Caro Community School will provide one (1) varsity letter for the first sport that the student athlete qualifies in. Any additional letters for each additional sport will be available for purchase from the school at cost. Each additional year of service on any varsity team will earn that student athlete a pin.**

**CHEERLEADING** - A varsity award will be issued to any person who satisfies the following requirements:

1) Member of the varsity squad for one (1) season

2) Regular attendance at practice and contests.

**BASKETBALL** - (boys & girls) - A varsity award will be issued upon completion of either of the following requirements:

1) Played in at least twenty (20) quarters during the regular season.

2) A senior athlete who has been a member of the varsity team for a minimum of two (2) seasons.

**BASEBALL/SOFTBALL** - A varsity award will be issued upon completion of one of the following requirements:

1) Nine (9) times at bat in a season.

2) Twenty (20) innings in the field in one season.

3) A senior athlete who has been a member of the varsity team for a minimum of two (2) seasons.

**BOWLING** - (boys & girls) - A varsity award will be issued upon the completion of either of the following requirements.

1) Played in at least one half (1/2) of all varsity bowling matches, not including scrimmages.

2) A senior athlete who has been a member of the varsity team for a minimum of two (2) seasons.

**CROSS COUNTRY** - (boys & girls) - A varsity award will be issued upon completion of either of the following requirements:

1) An athlete must finish better than the opposition's 5th runner in 1/3 of all dual and invitational meets in which he/she participates.

2) A senior athlete who has been a member of the varsity team for a minimum of two (2) seasons.

**FOOTBALL** - A varsity award will be issued upon completion of either of the following requirements:

1) Played in a minimum of four (4) quarters of competition.

2) A senior athlete who has been a member of the varsity team for a minimum of two (2) seasons.

**GOLF** - (boys & girls) - A varsity award will be issued upon completion of either of the following requirements:

1) Participation in Varsity Jamboree/Match

2) A senior athlete who has been a member of the varsity team for a minimum of three (3) seasons.

**TENNIS** - (boys & girls) - A varsity award will be issued upon the completion of either of the following requirements:

1) Played in at least one half (1/2) of all varsity tennis matches, not including scrimmages.

2) A senior athlete who has been a member of the varsity team for a minimum of two (2) seasons.

**TRACK** - (boys & girls) - A varsity award will be issued upon the completion of either of the following requirements:

1) Earns a minimum of ten (10) points during the season in dual meet competition.

2) Earns points in a major meet (conference, regional, invitational, etc.)

3) A senior athlete who has been a member of the varsity team for a minimum of two (2) seasons.

**VOLLEYBALL** - A varsity award will be issued upon completion of either of the following requirements:

1) Played in at least twenty (20) games.

2) A senior athlete who has been a member of the varsity team for a minimum of two (2) seasons.

**WRESTLING** - A varsity award will be issued upon completion of one of the following requirements:

1) Wrestles in at least eleven (11) varsity matches.

2) Wins a minimum of six (6) varsity matches.

3) Wins a medal in an individual major tournament.

4) A senior athlete who has been a member of the varsity team for a minimum of two (2) seasons.

**SWIMMING** - (boys & girls) - A varsity award will be issued upon the completion of one of the following requirements:

1) Score a minimum of ten (10) points during dual meet competition.

2) Earns points in a major meet or invitational.

3) Senior athlete who has been a member of the varsity team for a minimum of two (2) seasons.

**VARSITY SOCCER** - (boys & girls) - A varsity award will be issued upon completion of either of the following requirements.

1) An athlete who has played in a minimum of six (6) games.

2) A senior athlete who has been a member of the varsity team for a minimum of two (2) seasons.

**NOTE:** A varsity letter may not be awarded to any athlete who has not been a member of a team for at least 50% of a season.

**NOTE:** The above letter requirements have been established with some degree of flexibility in order that the coach may award a letter to any player who he/she feels has earned his/her varsity award (who has worked and been faithful in attendance at practice and games but has fallen short of the established time or goal.) Athletes are expected to complete each season, and may forfeit earning his/her Varsity letter if he/she does not do so.

**MEDICAL POLICY AND INSURANCE PROGRAM**

The Board of Education does not assume responsibility relative to medical expenses. Athletics are voluntary. **The student and his/her parents participate with the knowledge that athletic training and competition involves the possibility of injury.**

**The school's insurance policy does not pay for medical bills for athletic injuries.** All injuries must be reported immediately by the athlete to the coach and subsequently to the Athletic Director.

**PHYSICALS**

Athletes must have passed a satisfactory physical examination for the current school year, given on or after April 15 of the previous school year, and have it on file in the Athletic Office. Only the most current physical form from MHSAA will be valid.

In keeping with the school district's consideration of safety, health, and welfare of its athletes, any athlete who is aware of any physical condition which would impair the athlete's ability to participate or compete in practices or contests, must immediately advise the coach of such physical condition.

**MEDICAL CONSENT FORMS**

A medical consent form must be filled out and signed or waived by the parent or guardian and on file in the Athletic Office. This form is a portion of the MHSAA physical. A copy of the completed medical consent forms must be placed in the medical kit of each individual sport.

**CARO ATHLETIC BOOSTERS**

The purpose of this association shall be:

1. To provide financial assistance for the operation of the athletic programs at Caro community Schools.
2. To provide volunteer support for the promotion of a well-rounded athletic program.
3. To encourage community support of activities designed to promote school athletics.
4. To encourage cooperation and communication between this association, the administration and the athletic director.

If you are interested in joining this group of outstanding athletic supporters please contact the athletic office.

**SNOW DAY PROCEDURES**

(All practices on snow days will be non-mandatory)

A. If school is called off during the school day.

1. No team practices.

2. If a varsity team contest is scheduled for the next day:

3. Varsity teams only may practice after safety and team arrangements have been considered;

B. If school is called off before the school day starts.

1. No junior high, ninth grade, or junior varsity practices are to be held (unless approval from administration)

2. Varsity team only may practice (unless approval is not given from administration)

**NCAA ELIGIBILITY CENTER**

Students interested in competing in division one or two collegiate athletics must register with the NCAA Eligibility Center. Students should contact either the Athletic Office or the Counseling Office, or view the NCAA website at [www.ncaaeligbilitycenter.org](http://www.ncaaeligbilitycenter.org).