

**NOVA ACADEMY
EARLY COLLEGE
HIGH SCHOOL**
Athletics Handbook



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INTRODUCTION

This *Athletics Handbook* is a reference guide for coaches, student-athletes, and parent/guardians concerning the policies governing interscholastic athletics at NOVA Academy.

Participation in NOVA Academy’s athletic program is voluntary and open to all students at NOVA Academy. However, participation in athletics is a privilege and not a right. With this privilege, student-athletes are expected to conform to the high standards of the athletic program, and the opportunity to participate may be revoked if a student-athlete fails or refuses to comply with the spirit of the rules, policies, and procedures.

Sound reasoning, good judgment and adherence to the school’s core values (Inspire, Educate, and Preparation) will be the standard by which situations outside the stated rules and regulations are determined and evaluated.

NOVA Academy’s athletic programs are governed by federal and state law, NOVA Academy Board policies and procedures, as well as California Interscholastic Federation (“CIF”) - Southern Section By-Laws.

Sports Offered at NOVA Academy

FALL	WINTER	SPRING
Cross Country (B/G) Volleyball (G)	Basketball (B/G) Soccer (B/G)	Softball (G) Volleyball (B)

STUDENT FIRST, STUDENT-ATHLETE SECOND

The Athletic Department philosophy is aligned with the academic mission of the school, to produce lifelong learners and leaders. We are committed to developing the student-athlete to be successful in college, career and in life.

While our society places great emphasis on athletics and sports, the intention of the Athletic Department is to have all student-athletes understand how participation serves as a supplement to their academic development more generally. Our student-athletes are to be students first, and successful participation in athletics can only exist if there is successful participation in the classroom.

Student-athletes are expected to:

- Graduate with a high school diploma.
- Seek support from their teachers, advisors, peers, or other tutoring resources available on (or off) campus before they are academically ineligible.
- Be a responsible member of each class, by punctually attending class, taking notes, cooperating with classroom rules, doing their homework, preparing properly for class, and participating in classroom activities.
- Meet with their counselor to set up a four-year plan that will prepare them for the overall high school experience, as well as position themselves to continue their development beyond graduation.
- Always uphold academic integrity and honesty.
- Emphasize that they are here for **academics first**.
- ***At no time will practice or games be used as an excuse for not meeting classroom obligations.***

ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

The intent of this policy is to help all student-athletes maintain the academic rigor offered them as a student at NOVA Academy, and we look forward to seeing our student-athletes flourish both on and off the field.

1. Bi Weekly, on Monday's, the Athletic Director will run a Progress Report on all Student-athletes in Season.
2. Student-athletes with:
 - a. All A, B, or C grades will be "eligible" to participate for the given 2-week period.
 - b. Anyone with grades below a C will **NOT** be able to participate, if two or more teachers recommend that the student-athlete not be eligible (to focus on course content or missing assignments)
 - c. Any F grades will **NOT** be eligible to compete for the given 2-week, until their grade is raised.
3. Ineligible student-athletes, for the given 2-week period:
 - a. Will not be released early from the school day for athletic events
 - b. May regain eligibility by raising their grade(s) and with teacher approval.
4. All CIF eligibility rules apply as well.
 - a. At a minimum, student-athletes must maintain above a 2.0 Grade Point

Average (“GPA”), with no more than one F, at each grading period (quarters and semesters)

Chronically ineligible student-athletes may be let go from their respective teams, at the discretion of the coach and/or Athletic Director.

PRE-PARTICIPATION REQUIREMENTS

When going out for a sport, the following requirements must be met before participating in each new season:

- Have a pre-participation physical exam performed by a medical professional
- Submit a completed Sports Packet to the Athletic Director
- Provide proof of health insurance or seek assistance from the Front Office
- Student-athlete and parent/guardian must sign COVID-19 waiver
- Submit the Acknowledgement of Spring Athletic Handbook

ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT POLICIES

GENERAL

- Each coach will create a contract with their team to create team expectations.
- Student-athletes must notify their Head Coach if they will be absent from school.
- If a student-athlete has attended school, he/she may not miss practice unless approved by the Head Coach and/or Athletic Director.
- A student-athlete must attend $\frac{1}{2}$ of the school day in order to practice or play in an athletic contest. An exception may be granted if the Athletic Director is informed prior to the absence.
- Student-athletes may request to miss a practice or game in order to participate in another academic or extracurricular school activity, but student-athletes must also recognize that missed practices or games may result in reduced playing time in future contests.

NOTE: Winter and Spring sport athletic activities may be scheduled during vacation periods, when the school is not regularly in session.

TEAM SELECTION

In accordance with NOVA Academy’s philosophy of athletics and its desire to see as many students as possible participate in the athletic program while at NOVA Academy, the Charter School encourages coaches to keep as many student-athletes as they can without sacrificing the integrity of their sport. Time, space, facilities, equipment, personal preference, and other factors will place limitations on the most effective team size for any program.

TRYOUTS

Coaches will hold a pre-season meeting for all interested student-athletes, explaining the tryout schedule and any pre-season conditioning sessions. Potential student-athletes will be given a minimum of three days to try out for each team. Student-athletes coming from another sport are given the same tryout period (three days) once their season ends.

MULTI-SPORT STUDENT-ATHLETES

Multi-sport student-athletes must complete their current season and any post-season games before trying out or practicing for the next sport season. It is expected that all members of the coaching staff will support the entire athletic program and support student-athletes who must complete the prior season before starting the next season. This policy will be enforced by the Athletic Director to protect the team that is in season and the student-athlete from overuse injuries.

MULTIPLE SPORTS-SAME SEASON

Student-athletes may compete in more than one sport in the same season (e.g., girls cross-country and girls volleyball), but only with the consent of both coaches.

TEAM MANAGERS

Student-athletes may join a sports team as a Team Manager. The Team manager position will follow the same expectations of any other student-athlete on the team, but will be assisting the coach in team needs instead of participating in practices or games.

NOVA Academy STUDENT-ATHLETE CODE OF CONDUCT

Interscholastic athletic competition should demonstrate high standards of ethics and sportsmanship and promote the development of good character and other important life skills. The highest potential of sports is achieved when participants reflect the concepts learned through athletics: teamwork, integrity, sportsmanship, restraint, persistence, leadership, self-esteem, discipline, and humility.

I understand that, in order to participate in high school athletics, I must strive to:

- Represent the School in a positive manner at all times.
- Be on time; be enthusiastic, dependable, loyal, and cooperative.
- Be responsible and open to coaching.
- Be a team player and support my teammates.
- Abide by the general rules of discipline as established for you by the CIF and NOVA Academy
- Place academics first.
- Demonstrate respect for teachers, coaches, and fellow student-athletes at all times.
- Maturely accept constructive criticism and take responsibility for my actions.
- Use appropriate language

CODE OF ETHICS FOR ATHLETICS AGREEMENT

It is the duty of all concerned with school athletics to emphasize the proper ideas of sportsmanship, ethical conduct and fair play. Student-athletes and parent/guardians are expected to respect the integrity and judgement of officials, to show courtesy to the visiting team, and to recognize that an athletic contest is only a game, the purpose of which is to promote the physical, mental, moral, social and emotional well-being of the individual student-athletes. Please read the specific behavior guidelines established below for parent/guardians and student-athletes. Your signatures below signify your willingness to respect and abide by these Code of Ethics.

STUDENT-ATHLETE'S CODE

- I will conduct good citizenship and sportsmanship principles on/off the court and/or field at all times
- I will comply with the school's academic and athletic eligibility policies
- I will respect and comply with the decision(s) of my coach, game officials and athletic personnel
- I will not violate team rules
- I will not display inappropriate verbal/physical accusations to others at any time
- I will not bully, intimidate or sexually, racially or religiously harass any individual(s)
- I will not steal, fight, assault or possess any weapons
- I will not possess/distribute tobacco products, alcohol or illegal substances
- I will not involve myself with criminal trespassers or trespass using a motor vehicle on any property
- I will not vandalize, deface or write graffiti on any property

I understand that the violation of any of the above will jeopardize my athletic eligibility

Printed Student-athlete Name: _____

Student-athlete Signature: _____ Date: _____

PARENT/GUARDIAN'S CODE

- I will support the school's code of conduct and interscholastic athletic policies
- I will ensure that my child will comply with the school's athletic and academic policies
- I will set an example by conducting good citizenship and sportsmanship principles at all times, and encourage others to comply with these standards
- I will respect the decision of the coach, game officials and athletic personnel
- I will consult with the appropriate athletic representative(s) to resolve any problems that may occur

I understand that infractions of the above will jeopardize my child's eligibility and may result in being barred attendance at future school athletic contests.

Printed Parent/Guardian Name: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

HAZING

Events have made it necessary to clarify and articulate the policies regarding hazing. As defined by the California Education Code, hazing means “a method of initiation or preinitiation into a pupil organization or body, whether or not the organization or body is officially recognized by an educational institution, that is likely to cause, serious bodily injury or personal degradation or disgrace resulting in physical or mental harm, to a former, current, or prospective pupil.” But the term “hazing” does not include athletic events or school-sanctioned events. The violation of this section is misdemeanor, punishable by a fine of not less than one hundred (\$100), nor more than five thousand (\$5,000) dollars, or imprisonment in the county jail for not more than one year or both.

In addition, the person against whom the hazing is directed may commence a civil action for injury or damages. The action may be brought against any participants in the hazing, or any organization to which the student is seeking membership whose agents, directors, trustees, managers, or officers authorized, requested, commanded, participated in, or ratified the hazing.

Please be aware that there are legal ramifications if students engage in activities that can be considered hazing.

To guide student-athletes in activities involving a school club or team, parent/guardians are encouraged to use these guidelines:

- Check with the coach, teacher or advisor of the activity to ensure that the activity has his or her approval.
- Check with the coach, teacher or advisor for written guidelines to govern the activity.
- Get written verification that adults are involved in the activity.
- Do not assume that if a group of student-athletes from the team are organizing an event that the school is actually sponsoring it. Student-athletes who organize events in the name of any school group without authorization will be subject to disciplinary action by the school.
- Do not allow your child to travel to any school-related or school-sponsored event for which student-athletes are driving one another. Only parent/guardians whose insurance has been documented with the school are permitted to drive student-athletes.

BULLYING

Players may face school consequences, including suspension, for:

- Committing sexual harassment
- Bullying or cyber bullying another person
- Causing, threatening to cause, or participating in an act of hate violence
- Engaging in harassment, threats or intimidation
- Making terrorist threats against school officials or property

School administrators may suspend or recommend for expulsion student-athletes who

engage in bullying of student-athletes. If the bullying behavior significantly disrupts the school environment the school shall intervene even if the bullying originated outside of the school environment.

CONSEQUENCES FOR UNETHICAL BEHAVIOR

Allegations of breaking the Code of Conduct, CIF Southern Section Code of Ethics, or other behavioral expectations should be reported to the Head Coach, Athletic Director (“AD”), or the Head of School. The Head Coach is responsible for reviewing the alleged infraction, and then report the results of the review to the Athletic Director, in written report. The report must be filed with the Athletic Director, and list pertinent facts, the action(s) taken, or penalties recommended by the Head Coach.

- The penalty is to be progressive whenever possible. Examples include, but are not limited to, probation, ineligibility to practice, ineligibility to start in contests, sitting out games, suspension, or dismissal from the team.
- Student-athletes may be required to participate in assistance programs, to address behavioral problems. The sanction for any violation shall be subject to the review and approval of the Athletic Director.
- Discipline by the Athletic Director does not supersede that imposed by the Head of School.
- The Head Coach must immediately notify the parent/guardians of any infractions, as well as possible penalties.
- Players, coaches, parent/guardians and/or fans may be ejected from a contest for inappropriate behavior.
- For persistent violations for the Code of Conduct, parent/guardians and or fans may be asked by the coach or Athletic Director not to attend future contests.

REASONS FOR NON-PARTICIPATION

The following is a list of reasons why a student-athlete may not be allowed to participate in a practice or game: (This list is not exhaustive)

- Any situation which would imperil the safety of the student-athlete, such as an injury
- An attitude that is detrimental to the overall team spirit/morale, by either the student-athlete or their parent/guardians.
- Any violations to team or school policy.
- Academic ineligibility

Playing time is based on practice, attitude, ability to produce, and adherence to team rules, including a positive attitude. It is appropriate for a student-athlete to ask the coach why he/she is not playing, and what he/she should do to improve.

Dismissal from team if not complying any of the above listed guidelines, is the final option for repeat offenders. Violations will be dealt with in a progressive manner. Continued refusal to abide by team policy may result in the student-athlete being suspended from or dismissed from the team. Suspension or termination of the participation privilege is within the sole discretion of the Head of School.

LOCKER ROOM CONDUCT

Student-athlete security and safety in the locker room facilities are the priority of the coaching staff. Each student-athlete is expected to assist in keeping the area clean, safe, and secure.

- Possessions must be locked and secured at all times. Student-athlete should not share lockers or combinations with anyone.
- Horseplay is absolutely not allowed. Injuries and/or bad feelings may result from rough housing.
- Student-athletes must clean their locker and locker area daily.
- Treat the facility with respect.
- Report anyone that damages walls, bathrooms, lockers, or other related areas.
- Profanity, vulgarity and abusive or harassing language will not be tolerated at any time. Use words that do not denigrate anyone.

TRAINING AND PRACTICE SESSIONS

In order to have an efficient and productive training session, student-athletes shall observe the following guidelines:

- Come to practice ready to train, be on time, stay focused, socialize outside of practice.
- Warm up and proper technique are important.
- No friends, parent/guardians, or significant others are allowed at training practice sessions.

Electronics -- No personal electronic audio devices may be worn or used during training sessions. If a coach wishes to play music, then he or she shall control the content and level of broadcast. Cell phones are not allowed during any part of practices. This invites distraction, and or the possibility of theft.

Food – No food is allowed during practice, unless otherwise cleared by your coach.

WEIGHT TRAINING

A coach must be present and supervise the student-athletes as they train.

- The coach is not to participate in the workout. His/her job is to supervise for safety, technique.
- Only coaches are allowed to modify assigned workouts.
- If a student-athlete is injured during a workout, the Head Coach and Athletic Director must be notified. A form shall then be filled out and recorded by the Athletic Director.
- If a piece of equipment breaks, notify the Head Coach immediately in order to prevent any injuries occurring due to the mechanical failure of equipment. NOVA Academy shall replace or repair damaged equipment if practicable.
- Student-athletes shall always have a spotter when using weights. The spotter shall focus only on the lifter, and nothing else.
- Before performing an exercise, student-athletes shall ensure the area is safe to lift, and that no one is in danger.
- A student-athlete shall never attempt to lift a weight that is beyond his or her physical ability. If technique is compromised due to the amount of weight the student-athlete is attempting to lift, he or she shall immediately stop. The student-

athlete, teammates and coaches are in danger. If a student-athlete is in danger of losing a free weight, they shall drop it in a safe manner to the ground. A student-athlete shall not attempt to save a weight; doing so may result in injury.

- When a lifting session is over, the whole team must help in re-racking weights and bars, as well as other equipment such as belts. Leave the weight room safe and ready for the next team lifting. This includes picking up trash and wiping equipment such as leather pads.

HEAT AND HYDRATION

In Southern California there are periods of hot weather each year; weather that has the potential to negatively impact the performance and overall health of student-athletes that participate in sports that practice outdoors. The Athletic Director monitors the National Weather Service website which posts a daily heat advisory. When this index necessitates, the Athletic Director will communicate to coaches required changes or alterations in their daily practice plans or schedules. Student-athletes are responsible for keeping themselves hydrated on a daily basis, and the consumption of water shall be prioritized over sports drinks, especially before activity. The consumption of sports drinks shall be limited to during and after strenuous activity, and the consumption of soda should be avoided entirely.

Water fountains are located throughout the campus, and coaches are required to offer water breaks to student-athletes frequently throughout practices. When traveling off campus for competitions, student-athletes are encouraged to bring a personal water bottle to maintain hydration. If players do not have water bottles available, coaches will travel with water for the team.

ANABOLIC STEROIDS

NOVA Academy does not approve the use of steroids of any kind. *“The health risks associated with steroid use are severe. Anabolic steroid use has been implicated in early heart disease, including sudden death, the increase of bad cholesterol profiles (increased LDL, lower HDL), an increase in tendon injuries, liver tumors, testicular atrophy, gynecomastia (abnormal enlargement of breasts in males), male pattern baldness, severe acne, premature closure of growth plates in adolescents, emotional disturbances and other significant health risks.”* (STERIODS THREATEN HEALTH OF STUDENT-ATHLETES AND INTEGRITY OF SPORTS PERFORMANCE, American College of Sports Medicine, 2003).

It should also be noted that:

- NOVA Academy prohibits the use of androgenic and anabolic steroids, unless prescribed by an AMA fully licensed physician to treat a medical condition.
- CIF By-Law 202.B states that the student-athlete may be subject to penalties, including ineligibility for any CIF competition, if the student-athlete or his/her parent/guardian provides false or fraudulent information to the CIF.
- Student-athletes shall consult with their doctor, coach and athletic trainer, and parent/guardians, before starting any program designed to increase weight and

strength by ingestion of any supplement.

OPIOID INFORMATION SHEET

The Charter School annually provides each student-athlete with an Opioid Factsheet for Patients published by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The student-athlete and, if the student-athlete is 17 years of age or younger, the student-athlete's parent/guardian shall sign a document acknowledging receipt of the Opioid Factsheet for Patients and return that document to the Charter School before the student-athlete initiates practice or competition. The fact sheet is available at:

<https://www.cdc.gov/drugoverdose/pdf/AHA-Patient-Opioid-Factsheet-a.pdf>

ASSUMPTION OF RISK COVID-19 WAIVER

Activity (may list more than one): _____

Season or Date(s) of Activity: _____

Participant Name: _____

Participant is (check as applicable): a minor (under age 18) an adult (18 years or older)

Note: If Participant is a minor, this form must be completed and signed by the Participant's parent/guardian or Caretaker.

Introduction and Purpose: The activity (or activities) described above ("Activity") will occur at a time when there exists a public health emergency arising from the spread of the coronavirus that causes COVID-19("Coronavirus"), which has resulted in a global pandemic. Thus, there presently is a significant risk of community spread of the Coronavirus associated with the Activity. Participation in the Activity is not mandatory. Whether to participate in the Activity is a decision to be made by the student-athlete who desires to participate ("Participant") and/or his or her parent/guardian ("Parent/guardian"). However, the NOVA Academy requires that each Participant (or, if the Participant is a minor, his or her Parent/guardian) complete and sign this certification, waiver, and release ("Waiver") as a condition to, and in consideration of the Charter School allowing, participation in the Activity.

Coronavirus Exposure: By signing this Waiver, you hereby certify to NOVA Academy that neither the Participant nor any of (i) your or the Participant's parent/guardians, siblings, or family members or (ii) anyone else living in the Participant's household (collectively, "Participant's Family"), at any time within the 14 days immediately prior to you signing this Waiver, have: (i) had close contact with or provided care for any person diagnosed with or suspected to have COVID-19; or (ii) experienced any of the following symptoms: fever, cough, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, chills, muscle pain, sore throat, new loss of taste or smell. If you cannot certify to all of the foregoing, do not sign this Waiver — instead notify the Athletic Director and school site administration, whom, to the extent possible, will authorize participation in the Activity at such time as you are able to represent and warrant that all of the foregoing are true. By signing this Waiver, you also hereby represent and warrant to NOVA Academy that if, at any time prior to or during the Activity, any of the things described in the foregoing clauses (i) or (ii) occur, you will promptly notify the Athletic Director and school site administration and you will stay away (or, if you are the Parent/guardian, will keep the Participant and all of Participant's Family away) from the Activity.

Acknowledgement of Risk: By signing this Waiver, you hereby acknowledge that there are certain risks inherent in participation in the Activity generally, and that additional risks are associated with the Activity because it will occur during the COVID-19 pandemic. The specific risks may include, among other things, significant injury, permanent disability, or death, and social and/or economic losses. Such risks might result from, among other things, the actions, inactions, negligence, or willful misconduct of Participants or others, transportation to or from the Activity, the manner in which the Activity is conducted, the condition of the premises at which the Activity occurs, or the condition of any equipment used in connection with the Activity. Although NOVA Academy has taken precautions to reduce the spread of the Coronavirus, the risk that a Participant will be infected with the Coronavirus or will spread the Coronavirus to others cannot be fully eliminated. By signing this Waiver, you hereby acknowledge and agree that, you have been fully informed of the risks and dangers associated with the Activity, and you nonetheless voluntarily consent to participation in the Activity by the Participant.

Assumption of Risk: By signing this Waiver, you hereby, knowingly and without reservation or limitation: (i) accept and assume all risks associated with the Activity, including, without limitation, any and all risks, costs, expenses, and other liabilities that may be associated with any infection, injury,

disability, or death resulting from any exposure or suspected exposure to the Coronavirus in connection with the Activity; and (ii) accept and assume such risks on behalf of, and with the intent to bind, yourself, the Participant (if you are the Parent/guardian of the Participant), all of the Participant's Family, and the heirs, successors, assigns, executors, administrators, and legal representatives of you and all of them (collectively, the "Waiving Parties").

Waiver and Release: By signing this Waiver, you hereby, on behalf of yourself and all other Waiving Parties, waive and release the Charter School with respect to any and all claims, demands, actions, costs, damages, judgments, responsibilities, and other liabilities of whatever nature as may be associated with or arise from any and all injury, disability, and/or death resulting from participation in the Activity, including, without limitation, any and all liabilities that arise from any infection by, or exposure or suspected exposure to, the Coronavirus in connection with the Activity. In connection with such waiver and release, you also hereby waive the benefits and protections of Section 1542 of the California Civil Code, which provides that:

A general release does not extend to claims which the creditor or releasing party does not know or suspect to exist in his or her favor at the time of executing the release and that, if known by him or her, would have materially affected his or her settlement with the debtor or released party.

Compliance with COVID-19 Policies and Procedures: By signing this Waiver, you hereby:

(i) Acknowledge that you have received, reviewed, and understand the information provided by NOVA Academy regarding applicable requirements for social distancing, the use of face coverings, and/or other measures intended to prevent the spread of the Coronavirus ("Student-athlete need to knows");

(ii) Agree (if you are the Parent/guardian) that, prior to the commencement of the Activity, you will fully explain the Coronavirus Requirements to the Participant;

(iii) Agree that you (or, if you are the Parent/guardian, that the Participant and all of the Participant's Family) shall, in connection with the Activity, fully comply with all Student Need to knows, and that you shall bear any and all risk of any deviation from the Student-athlete need to know by you (or, if you are the Parent/guardian, by you, the Participant, and/or other members of the Participant's family); and

(iv) Acknowledge that if you do not (or, if you are the Parent/guardian, the Participant does not) fully comply with all Student-athlete need to knows NOVA Academy, upon discovering such lack of compliance, will not permit you (or, if you are the Parent/guardian, will not permit the Participant) to participate (or further participate) in the Activity and will ask that you (or, if you are the Parent/guardian, will ask that the Participant) leave the Activity.

Executed on _____

Signature: _____

Printed Name: _____

Person who signed above is (check as applicable): the Participant the Participant's Parent/Guardian

INJURIES

All sports carry the inherent risk of injury, even serious injury or death. It is our goal as a community to take necessary precautions, to safeguard against such injuries both in practice and game situations. Despite the best efforts of the community and coaching staff, injuries to student-athlete may occur.

This policy statement is meant to function as a guide in the treatment of injured student-athletes, not as a policy that suggests that athletic injuries can be eliminated in their entirety.

The goal of all athletic endeavors is for student-athletes to be able to compete. Occasionally this goal will best be accomplished when student-athletes discontinue practicing and/or playing while they recover from injury. It is always the responsibility of the student-athlete to openly communicate injuries with their coaching staff and the Athletic Department. Student-athletes must be honest with their coaches, their parent/guardians, and themselves about the extent of their injuries. Every NOVA Academy team is provided with a head coach who is First Aid and CPR certified, however coaches are not doctors and should not be expected to diagnose injuries nor prescribe treatment for them. All coaches will travel with basic First Aid supplies for off-campus competitions.

Parent/Guardians and student-athletes must keep the coaching staff and the Athletic Department informed of injuries that are sustained in practice and/or games. When it is necessary for a student-athlete and his/her family to consult a physician for the treatment of an injury, the student-athlete should find out how long he/she will be unable to participate and what, if any, activities can be done during the rehabilitation period. Before a student-athlete is permitted to return to his or her sport activity, a written clearance by his/her physician must be brought to the Athletic Director. The Athletic Director will then decide whether it is prudent for the student-athlete to return to play.

Student-athletes occasionally suffer from more serious injuries which will immediately prevent them from training or competing. The following are considered serious in nature and, if suspected require the immediate cessation of athletic activity and may necessitate a 911 call.

- Neck & Spine injuries
- Head injuries
- Injuries to vital organs
- Broken bones
- Ligament injuries to major joints (elbow, shoulder, knee, ankle, etc.)
- Dislocation of joint(s)
- Heat Related Illness
- Loss of Consciousness

For any serious injury (or suspected serious injury) that requires immediate cessation of physical activity, the coaching staff will immediately contact the student-athlete's

parent/guardians and the Athletic Director. The parent/guardians of the seriously injured student-athlete must seek medical treatment and eventual physician and Athletic Director clearance for their child before the student-athlete may return to team activities.

STUDENT-ATHLETE INJURIES

Report **ALL** injuries to the Head Coach, and if need be, the Athletic Director immediately. After each contest, coaches will email the Athletic Director a report of all injuries during the contest. They will file a report. While this is not a substitute for medical advice, student-athletes and parent/guardians should be familiar with “RICE” procedures (Rest, Ice, Compression, and Elevation). Oftentimes this can ease the discomfort of some minor injuries. The most important thing is to report all injuries to a medical professional, who will make the objective decision of what should be done next. At no time will the coaching staff have a decision on playing time, if a medical professional recommends rest.

CONCUSSIONS and HEAD INJURIES

A concussion is a brain injury that can be caused by a bump, blow, or jolt to the head, or by a blow to another part of the body with the force transmitted to the head. Even though most concussions are mild, all concussions are potentially serious and may result in complications including prolonged brain damage and death if not recognized and managed properly. Because NOVA Academy has elected to offer an athletic program, we must immediately remove from a school-sponsored athletic activity for the remainder of the day a student-athlete who is suspected of sustaining a concussion or head injury during that activity. The student-athlete may not return to that activity until the student-athlete is evaluated by, and receives written clearance from, a licensed health care provider. If the licensed health care provider determines the student-athlete has a concussion or head injury, the student-athlete shall also complete a graduated return-to-play protocol of no less than 7 days in duration under the supervision of a licensed health care provider. On a yearly basis, a concussion and head injury information sheet must be signed and returned by the student-athlete and the student-athlete’s parent/guardian before the student-athlete initiates practice or competition. This requirement does not apply to a student-athlete engaging in an athletic activity during the regular school day or as part of a physical education course. A document regarding concussions will be part of the athletic clearance process.

For more information on concussions, please see the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website’s concussion page at <http://www.cdc.gov/headsup/>

SUDDEN CARDIAC ARREST PREVENTION AND AUTOMATED EXTERNAL DEFIBRILLATORS

NOVA Academy is invested in the health of its student-athletes, especially their heart health. Sudden cardiac arrest (“SCA”) is when the heart stops beating, suddenly and unexpectedly. A document regarding sudden cardiac arrest will be part of the athletic clearance process.

EQUIPMENT

All equipment issued to student-athlete belongs to NOVA Academy. Student-athletes shall treat it with respect. Student-athletes are responsible for any equipment that is lost, damaged, or stolen. Student-athletes shall always secure all equipment. This includes student uniforms.

DRESS

It is expected that student-athletes are dressed appropriately for practice and games. In game situations everyone is dressed in “game day” fashion, representing the team concept, and not individuality.

At practice, the Head Coach determines what the practice attire will be. This policy is to be respected while the student-athlete is on the team. Student-athletes shall dress only in areas designated by the Head Coach, and not in public.

Appropriate attire may include shorts, sweatpants, warm up pants, spandex pants, or any gear deemed appropriate by the Head Coach. Clothing that contains offensive or degrading graphics or words, are not allowed. Athletic shoes and socks are mandatory. Flip flops or any other non-athletic shoes are not allowed. No open toes shoes, sandals, dress shoes or deck shoes are allowed. These only inhibit proper participation and can be a danger to the student-athlete.

If parent/guardians or student-athletes have any questions regarding appropriate attire including shoes, parent/guardians and students are encouraged to check with the Head Coach/and or Athletic Director prior to making any purchases.

In areas deemed necessary for the protection of student-athlete, including but not limited to the weight room and field, all shirts must cover the shoulders in an effort to prevent the spread of bacteria and infections, including Methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus (“MRSA”). Student-athletes shall use a towel to wipe away an area he or she has just occupied and left sweaty. Everyone shall be fully clothed while in the facility. When arriving from practice, the appropriate clothing guideline must be followed.

TRANSPORTATION

Games

- All team members are expected to ride with the team to and from all contests unless other arrangements have been made and approved by the Athletic Director or Head of School.
- With **prior written and signed permission** turned into the Athletic Director or Head of School, **two weeks prior to the contest/game**, parent/guardians may drive their student-athlete to and from a contest/game.
 - Parent/guardians may not drive other student-athletes to or from contests without a liability waiver signed by the parent/guardian of the other

student-athlete and permission from the Head Coach, Athletic Director or designee.

- Busses or school vehicles are arranged for contests/games by the Head Coach and the Athletic Director.
 - Only school employees with current and proper paperwork filed and approved, may drive NOVA Academy vehicles.
- Student-athletes may not drive their own vehicles to or from any contest/game in which they are participating.
- Student-athletes shall not eat food in the school vehicles.

Off-site Practices

- Student-athletes may drive their own vehicles to a practice in which they are participating, however may not take another student-athlete without **prior written and signed permission** from that student-athlete's parent/guardian turned into the Athletic Director or Head of School, **two weeks prior to the practice**.
 - A copy of the written permission will be filed with the Athletic Director and be kept on file for the duration of the season.
- Parent/guardians may drive their child and other teammates directly home after a practice as long as teammates parent/guardians have given written permission to said parent/guardian to do so.

PARENT/GUARDIANS

Parent/guardians are vital to the success of the NOVA Academy athletic program. The partnership between coaches and parent/guardians is a key dynamic to the overall growth experience of the student-athlete. When a child becomes involved in the NOVA Academy athletic program, the parent/guardian(s) have a right to understand the expectations that are placed on the child. The most important part of this is a clear communication between the - student-athlete, coach and parent/guardian.

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR PARENT/GUARDIANS

Athletics competition between interscholastic age children should be fun and should be a significant part of the child's education. Everyone involved in sports programs has a duty to assure that their programs impart important life skills and promote the development of good character. Essential elements of character building are embodied in the concept of sportsmanship and NOVA Academy's core values: being committed to developing the student-athlete to be successful in college, career and in life.

The highest potential of sports is achieved when all involved consciously uphold these values and are committed to the ideal of pursuing victory with honor. Parent/guardians of student-athlete can and should play an important role in their child's athletic experience, and their good-faith efforts to honor the words and spirit of this code can dramatically improve the quality of a child's sports experience.

- Represent the School in a positive manner at all times.
- Be on time; be enthusiastic, dependable, loyal, and cooperative.

- Be responsible and open to coaching.
- Be a team parent/guardian and support all teammates.
- Abide by the general rules of discipline as established for you by the CIF and NOVA Academy
- Place academics first.
- Demonstrate respect for teachers, coaches, and fellow student-athletes at all times.
- Maturely accept constructive criticism and take responsibility for his/her actions.
- Use appropriate language.
- Be loyal to the school and team; put the interest of the team above your child's personal glory.
- Teach your child to live and play with class and be a good sport. He/she should be gracious in victory and accept defeat with dignity; compliment extraordinary performance, and show sincere respect in pre- and post-game rituals.
- Do not engage in disrespectful conduct of any sort including profanity, obscene gestures, offensive remarks of a sexual or racial nature, trash-talking, taunting, boastful celebrations, or other actions that demean individuals or the sport.
- Treat game officials with respect. Do not complain about or argue about calls or decisions during or after an athletic event.
- Exercise self-control. Do not fight or show excessive displays of anger or frustration.
- Promote to your child the avoidance of all illegal or unhealthy substances including alcohol, tobacco and drugs and some over-the-counter nutritional supplements, as well as of unhealthy techniques to gain, lose or maintain weight.
- Sexual Conduct – Sexual or romantic contact of any sort between student-athletes and adults involved with interscholastic athletics is improper and strictly forbidden. Report suspected misconduct to the Athletic Director/ and or other school administrator and the police.

COMMUNICATION

Communication is a vital component to NOVA Academy's overall academic approach, so it is important to maintain effective and appropriate communication avenues between all involved in athletics.

Expectations from Coaches to Parent/Guardians

- Philosophy of the coach.
- Expectations of the coach for each student-athlete and the team.
- Locations and times of practices and games.
- Team requirements in and out of season (e.g. fundraising, lifting, conditioning, contests, etc.)
- Procedure to follow if a child is injured.
- Discipline that results from a lack of participation or cooperation of any child.
- That availability of the coach to speak with parent/guardians if they have a concern.

Expectations from Parent/Guardians to Coaches

- Concerns are to be expressed at the appropriate time, in an office setting.
- Notification of any schedule conflict which may involve an absence from practices or a contest, well in advance.
- Support of the program, and of all those involved in it.

PROCEDURES TO ADDRESS A CONCERN

1. NOVA Academy Athletic Department supports the student-athlete in first, meeting with the Head Coach of their sport to address the concern.

2. If the issue is not resolved after the student-athlete has met with the coach, the student-athlete's parent/guardians should then contact the Head Coach directly at school via email. All head coaches have a NOVA Academy email address. Leave your name, number a short message and the best time to call. The coach will contact you within 48 hours.
 - a. Do not attempt to contact a coach in person, 1 hour before a practice, 3 hours before a game, during a game or practice, and at least 1 hour after a practice and 2 hours after a game. A coach's time during the aforementioned times is to prepare for and supervise each event.
 - b. **The 24-Hour Rule.** NOVA Academy respectfully requests that during the 24 hours surrounding a practice/game that student-athlete and parent/guardians wait to contact or discuss any issue of concern with a coach. The period of time after a game is an emotional time for student-athletes, parent/guardians, and coaches, and is therefore less conducive to solving problems rationally.
3. If the issue is not resolved after the student-athlete and the parent/guardian have contacted the Head Coach, the parent/guardian should contact the Athletic Director. The Athletic Director will investigate the concern and provide feedback as soon as practicable, usually within 48 hours. A meeting between the student-athlete, parent/guardian, Head Coach, and Athletic Director may be conducted to discuss the situation, and to reach an appropriate plan of action.
4. If the issue is not resolved after the student-athlete and the parent/guardian have contacted the Head Coach and the Athletic Director, the parent/guardian should contact the Head of School. The Head of School will investigate the concern and will provide feedback and a plan of action to all concerned parties as soon as practicable, usually within 48 hours.

RETRIBUTION

Retribution is prohibited by Athletic Department policy. Student and parent/guardians must be confident that the voicing of an opinion or concern, using the proper forum and method, is not only free from penalty or retribution, but also is strongly encouraged. The Athletic Director and all coaches are committed to insuring that after a student or parent/guardian raises an issue or concern, there shall be no 'retribution' in any form within the Athletic Department at NOVA Academy.



**ACKNOWLEDGEMENT
SPRING 2023 ATHLETICS HANDBOOK**

Thank you very much for taking the time to read the NOVA Academy Athletics Handbook in good faith. Your support and contribution to NOVA Academy athletics is very much appreciated. We look forward to an exciting year of amazing experiences for our student-athletes, parent/guardians, coaches, and the rest of our school community.

“My signature below indicates that I have reviewed, understand, and agree to all parts of the NOVA Academy Athletics Handbook.”

Printed Parent/Guardian Name: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

Printed Student-Athlete Name: _____

Student-Athlete Signature: _____ Date: _____

Sport(s): _____

Please remove or print this page and submit it to the Athletics Office with your sports packet.