



Uwharrie Charter Academy

ATHLETIC HANDBOOK

2026-2027

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***UCA Disclaimer:** The information contained in the Uwharrie Charter Academy Athletic Handbook is intended to serve as a general source of information for UCA Administrators, Athletic Directors, Coaches, and Parents. The information in this handbook shall not alter, modify, or otherwise change NCHSAA requirements, State Board of Education policies, Uwharrie Charter Board of Directors policies, or the General Statutes of North Carolina.*

Table of Contents

PART I – PROGRAM OVERVIEW

- 1. Mission Statement
- 2. Purpose
- 3. School-Based Administrator
- 4. Assumption of Risk

PART II – ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

- 5. Requirements for Athletic Participation
- 6. Residency/Transfer Requirements
- 7. Academic Requirements
- 8. Attendance
- 9. Insurance
- 10. Required Pre-Participation Forms

PART III – STUDENT-ATHLETE EXPECTATIONS

- 11. Expectations of Student-Athletes
- 12. Student Managers / Statisticians / Trainers
- 13. Sportsmanship
- 14. Taunting
- 15. Ejection Policy
- 16. Transportation
- 17. Hazing
- 18. Substance Abuse
- 19. Technology Responsible Use
- 20. Social Media
- 21. Quitting a Team
- 22. Playing Time
- 23. Return of Equipment
- 24. Weight Room Use

PART IV – STUDENT DISCIPLINE

- 25. UCA Student Discipline and Code of Conduct
- 26. Obligations as a Student

- 27. Obligations as an Extracurricular Participant
- 28. Obligations to the School and Community
- 29. In-School and Out-of-School Suspension
- 30. Use of Illegal Drugs, Tobacco, and Alcohol
- 31. Criminal Charges
- 32. General Requirements

PART V – PARENT AND COMMUNITY EXPECTATIONS

- 33. Expectations of Parents
- 34. Chain of Communication

PART VI – COACH AND STAFF EXPECTATIONS

- 35. Expectations of Coaches
- 36. Team Selections
- 37. Communications Parents Should Expect from Coaches

PART VII – ADMINISTRATIVE AND PURCHASING PROCEDURES

- 38. Purchase Order Process
- 39. Game Admission / Tickets
- 40. Code of Conduct for Spectators
- 41. Senior Night/Day Recognition

PART VIII – HEALTH AND SAFETY

- 42. Health and Safety Guidelines
- 43. Concussion Awareness
- 44. Concussion, Second Impact Syndrome, & Return to Play
- 45. Heat and Humidity Guidelines
- 46. Heat Guidelines for Games and Practices
- 47. Measuring Heat Index
- 48. Heat Guidelines for Cross Country
- 49. Guidelines for Off-Campus Running
- 50. Hot Weather Guidelines for Summer Practices
- 51. Coaches and Athletes Education
- 52. Fluids and Hydration
- 53. What Not to Drink During Exercise
- 54. Medical Referral
- 55. Medical Clearance to Participate
- 56. Asthma
- 57. Diabetes
- 58. Medication Policy
- 59. Sports Nutrition
- 60. Performance Enhancing Drugs (PEDs)
- 61. Infectious Disease Policy (MRSA, HIV, Hepatitis B)

- Blood-Borne Pathogens and Universal Precautions
- Sickle Cell Disease
- Commotio Cordis
- NFHS Lightning/Thunder Guidelines
- Emergency Action Plans

PART IX – JOB RESPONSIBILITIES

- Athletic Job Responsibilities
- Volunteer Coaches Hiring Process
- Paid Coaches Hiring Process

PART X – FACILITIES AND ADMINISTRATIVE POLICIES

- Athletic Facilities
- Administrative Regulations for Signs, Banners, and Flags
- Updated Athletic Related Policies

APPENDICES

List of Appendices

UCA ATHLETIC HANDBOOK

PART I – PROGRAM OVERVIEW

1. Mission Statement

The mission of the Uwharrie Charter Academy Athletic Program is to provide equal and safe opportunities for all students to participate in competitive sports, while fostering academics, sportsmanship, teamwork, and individual improvement.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this handbook is to communicate to athletes, parents, coaches, and administrators the philosophies, standards, rules, and expectations applicable to participants in the Uwharrie Charter Academy interscholastic athletic programs. The clear understanding and consistent application of these matters will help ensure that student athletes have the best possible experience in their respective athletic programs.

3. School-Based Administrator

The Principals are authorized to handle any incident that is not covered or mentioned in this handbook in a timely and appropriate manner. This is not intended to restrict in any way the authority of the Principals to make such a rule, not inconsistent with this code, as they are authorized by law to make for the government and operation of their respective schools. The Principal is the final authority for all site-based decisions.

4. Assumption of Risk

By its nature, participation in interscholastic athletics involves the risk of possible serious injury, including physical or mental impairments and even death, as well as the risk of transmission of infectious disease such as Methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus (MRSA), HIV and Hepatitis B. Although serious injuries are not common and the risk of HIV transmission is almost nonexistent in supervised school athletic programs, it is impossible to eliminate all risk and UCA does not provide accidental insurance.

Participants have a responsibility to help reduce that risk. Participants must obey all safety rules, report all physical and hygiene problems to their coaches, practice proper personal hygiene, inspect their own equipment daily, follow a proper conditioning program and refrain from the use of illegal drugs or

controlled substances. Students, parents and guardians should be aware that Sudden Cardiac Arrest is the leading cause of death among student-athletes during exercise in the United States and can only be detected by cardiovascular screening.

While every student is required to have a medical exam by a licensed medical professional every 395 days in order to participate in Uwharrie Charter Academy's (UCA) athletics programs, these medical exams do not typically include cardiovascular screenings. If a student experiences an injury/illness or change in his/her health status while participating on one of UCA sports teams, it is the responsibility of said student-athlete to inform his/her Head Coach/Athletic Director and/or a Licensed Athletic Trainer and adhere to the established injury management guidelines, which includes total rehabilitation and reassessments before being released to return to full participation.

Participation in any sport exposes the participant to the risk of concussion. A concussion is an injury to the brain caused by a direct or indirect blow to the head. All concussions are potentially serious and may result in complications including prolonged brain damage and death if not recognized and managed properly. Be aware that any student removed from a practice or competition due to a suspected concussion, will not return to participation that day. After that day, written authorization from a physician (M.D. or D.O.) on the required NCHSAA Return to Play form will be required in order for the student to return to participation.

PART II – ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

5. Requirements for Athletic Participation

Students must meet all requirements of athletic participation as established by the North Carolina High School Athletic Association (NCHSAA), the NC Department of Public Instruction (DPI) and the Uwharrie Charter Academy Board of Education (UCA). These include, but may not be limited to, the requirements outlined in this section.

6. Residency/Transfer Requirements

Under the North Carolina High School Athletic Association's rules and regulations, students participating in interscholastic athletics who transfer from one school to another in the same school district must generally sit out of interscholastic sports for 365 days unless the transfer is associated with a bona fide change in domicile. While school districts may develop eligibility criteria to allow for continued participation in interscholastic sports following a transfer, no student may participate in the same sport at a second school during the same season unless the transfer is associated with a bona fide change in domicile except by mutual authorities of the governing authorities of each PSU.

7. Academic Requirements

HIGH SCHOOL

- Student must have passed a minimum course load from the previous semester (70% of courses taken, minimum of 3 courses)
- Student must meet local promotion standards
- Student also MUST be enrolled in at least 3 courses during first semester to be eligible during the second semester
- Student cannot turn 19 years of age on or before August 31 of current academic year
- Student cannot participate in athletics after completing 8 semesters of high school
- Student cannot have participated in more than 4 seasons of any particular sport after initial entry into 9th grade
- Student cannot participate after graduating from high school

HOME SCHOOL / DUAL ENROLLMENT

A 2019 rule change by the NCHSAA allows home school students who are dually enrolled in a UCA high school to participate in high school athletics. Home school students who are dually enrolled in accordance with the school system's enrollment and assignment policies and procedures are eligible to participate in interscholastic athletics if they comply with all of the following. This does not apply to students enrolled in the UCA Virtual Academy, who are eligible for athletics at UCA due to full enrollment in the charter.

- The student must present a home school card from the Division of Nonpublic Education for the previous and current years, as well as a transcript, attendance record, and record of immunizations.
- The student must submit proof that the student has been enrolled in a registered home school for 365 days prior to participation in athletics.
- Prior to the first date of practice, the student must provide the results of a nationally standardized achievement test, taken within the last year, that indicates the student was on grade level at the time the test was taken. This must be approved by a content specialist in UCA.
- The student must participate in 4 classes in a UCA high school. At least one class must be taken on a UCA campus each semester.
- The student must pass all classes in which the student is enrolled at the assigned school in order to maintain athletic eligibility.
- Once dually enrolled and deemed eligible to participate in athletics, the student must maintain continuous dual enrollment. Failure to maintain continuous dual enrollment would render the student ineligible for athletic participation for 365 days.

- The student must notify the principal of the assigned school in writing of the student's intent to try out for an athletic team at least 10 days prior to the first practice date of each sport season in which the student wishes to participate. Failure to comply with this requirement renders the student ineligible for that sport season.
- The student must comply with all other applicable NCHSAA rules and regulations regarding eligibility for athletic participation.

A dually enrolled student who transitions to full enrollment within the school system will then be governed by NCHSAA rules and regulations regarding fully enrolled students.

MIDDLE SCHOOL

- Student must be in the 6th, 7th or 8th grade (6th graders cannot participate in Football)
- Student must meet local promotion standards
- Seventh and eighth grade student's initial eligibility will be determined at the beginning of each school year. To establish initial eligibility and remain eligible, a student must have been promoted from the previous year's grade, meet all the state standards with no more than one (1) failing mark (not including STEAM class). Students who are promoted have met the standard. Summer school and other programs do not affect the calculation of the average of the previous nine weeks' grades. Subsequent eligibility will be determined each semester.
- Refer to the state handbook for attendance requirements. A sixth grade student will be determined eligible at the beginning of the school year as long as he or she meets state's attendance rules and has been promoted from 5th grade. All 6th grade eligibility will be reassessed after the 1st semester, and at such time 6th grade students must meet all the state standards with no more than one (1) failing mark (not including STEAM class).
- **Appeal Process:** Any appeals regarding athletic eligibility will be handled in accordance with state and local conference guidelines.
- **Exceptional Children Eligibility:** If a student receives a letter grade, follow OPAC guidelines regarding eligibility. If a student is self-contained or receives special services and is graded pass/fail and is meeting IEP established goals, that student is eligible. If goals are not being met, they are not eligible.
- Student cannot turn 15 years of age on or before August 31 of the current academic year
- Student can only compete in athletics for (up to 6) semesters after first entry into 6th grade

8. Attendance

A student must have been in attendance for 85% of the school days from the previous semester [daily attendance not period attendance] in order to be eligible to compete on athletic teams during the current

semester. (A waiver of the 85% policy can only be granted through the Superintendent's Designee). A student must be in attendance at least one half of the school day to be eligible to practice with their team, take part in any team activity, or participate in an athletic event on that day. Any exceptions to this policy must be approved in advance by the Superintendent's Designee, in communication with the Athletic Director or Principal of the school. On exam days, absences accumulated as a result of an exam exemption do not count towards attendance eligibility. Absences on exam days when a student-athlete is exempt require parent and principal approval.

9. Insurance

UCA does not offer primary accidental insurance to student athletes. The school does subscribe to the North Carolina Catastrophic Policy. Group accident insurance programs will be made available to students each year. In arranging for this insurance, the Board will make every reasonable attempt to identify a company offering comprehensive insurance at economical rates. Dental insurance will also be made available to students. Information on these plans will be provided through school publications. Purchase of insurance constitutes an agreement between the student and/or parent and the insurance company. The school system does not assume any contractual responsibility for expenses not covered by insurance. For off-campus educational experiences, it is the responsibility of the principal to determine that each firm or business providing work-study experience for a student carries appropriate insurance coverage for the protection of the student or that the student is covered by student accident insurance or has furnished a waiver signed by his or her parent or guardian. The Superintendent may designate other activities, including certain school trips, as requiring accident insurance. Legal References:

G.S. 115C-36

10. Required Pre-Participation Forms

No student will be allowed to participate in any tryout, practice, scrimmage or contest before all required participation forms are signed in all appropriate spaces and on file with the school. These forms include, but may not be limited to, the following:

- **UCA Athletic Participation Parental Permission Form** - this form can be found on the UCA Schools website. It contains a statement of the student's residence, emergency contact person and contact information, the insurance waiver agreement, the Concussion Awareness statement (Gfeller-Waller Act) and the assumption of risk agreement that both student and parent/guardian must sign acknowledging the risk of injury.
- **Medical Exam Form** - this form can also be found on the UCA website. Every student is required to have a medical exam performed by a licensed medical professional every 395 days. This is the medical exam form the doctor or physician's assistant must complete, sign and stamp.

11. Expectations of Student-Athletes

Participation in athletics is completely voluntary. It is a privilege to be a member of a school's athletic team; a privilege which can only be earned when students abide by the rules of the state, the district, the school and of that specific team. Our student-athletes and coaches are expected to be models of good behavior and sportsmanship. They are representing the school and the community at athletic events throughout the area and across the state. A participating student athlete who engages in any conduct or behavior on or off campus, which is inconsistent with the student's position as a role model or representative of Uwharrie Charter Academy, is subject to disciplinary action, including suspension and/or removal from a team, as determined by the principal or school officials. The district and each individual school reserve the right to revoke or restrict the privilege of participating in athletics if a student fails to live up to expectations and/or violates school, district, state or team policies.

Providing false information about residence, domicile, home address or with whom the student actually resides is grounds for revoking the privilege of participating in athletics and can lead to a 365-day suspension from participation in athletics statewide by the NCHSAA.

12. Student Managers / Statisticians / Trainers

These individuals are considered participants of the sporting event and should follow the same guidelines as players and cheerleaders for their sport.

13. Sportsmanship

The NCHSAA defines sportsmanship as the quality of responsible behavior characterized by a spirit of generosity and a genuine concern for opponents, officials and teammates.

Student-athletes should:

- Students represent the school and therefore have an obligation to be a true sportsman, encouraging through your behavior the practice of good sportsmanship by others.
- Recognize that good sportsmanship is more important than victory, therefore approve and applaud good team play, individual skill and outstanding examples of sportsmanship and fair play exhibited by either team.
- Respect the judgment and integrity of game officials at all times.
- Be modest in victory and gracious in defeat.

All student-athletes, staff, administration, and coaches are expected to exemplify and follow these guidelines. When an athlete exhibits behavior that is detrimental to these concepts of sportsmanship and fair play, he/she can be removed from a given practice or contest and disciplinary action taken, including possible removal from the team.

14. Taunting

Taunting includes actions that are meant to bait, anger, embarrass, ridicule or demean others. Any form of taunting is not in keeping with conduct or behaviors that promote sportsmanship. In all sports, taunting is considered a flagrant unsportsmanlike foul and is subject to immediate ejection from a contest.

15. Ejection Policy

The NCHSAA Ejection Policy applies to all persons involved in an athletic contest, including student-athletes, coaches, managers and game administrators. The NCHSAA may review video, when available, to invoke ejections or sanctions not reported by game officials. Video clips must be presented to the NCHSAA office for committee review within two (2) business days of the contest. The following examples include behavior or conduct which will result in an ejection from a contest:

- Fighting, which includes, but is not limited to, combative acts such as:
 - An altercation between 2 or more parties that includes swinging, hitting, punching and/or kicking;
 - An attempt to strike an opponent with a fist, hands, arms, legs, feet, or equipment;
 - An attempt to punch or kick an opponent, regardless of whether or not contact is made;
 - An attempt to instigate a fight by committing an unsportsmanlike act toward an opponent that causes an opponent to retaliate;
 - Leaving the bench area -- coming on to the playing area illegally;
- Flagrant contact, which includes, but is not limited to, combative acts such as:
 - Maliciously running over the catcher/fielder without attempt to avoid contact;
 - Excessive contact out-of-bounds or away from playing action that is unwarranted and extreme in nature;
 - Tackling/taking down a player dangerously in a malicious manner;
 - Illegally hitting or cross-checking an opponent in an excessive manner with the stick in lacrosse;
- Biting observed or determined by an official;
- Taunting, baiting or spitting toward an opponent or official;
- Profanity, inappropriate language, racial/ethnic slurs, sexist, or homophobic language;
- Obscene gestures, including gesturing in such a manner as to intimidate or instigate;
- Disrespectfully addressing an official (physically contacting an official is subject to automatic expulsion and can result in ineligibility for remainder of career); or,
- Use of tobacco products, alcoholic beverages, or other controlled substances.

PENALTIES FOR AN EJECTION

• Ejections during scrimmages:

- Coach or student-athlete is suspended from the remainder of the scrimmage - this is inclusive of multiple scrimmage events on the same day (jamboree).
- Student-athletes must complete the NFHS "Sportsmanship" course before being eligible to compete in the next scrimmage or contest.
- Coaches must complete the NFHS "Teaching and Modeling Behavior" course for any student-athlete or coach ejection during the scrimmage.

• Ejection Penalty: A membership entity shall impose at least the following penalties on a student, coach, or school official who is ejected from an interscholastic athletic contest:

- For the first offense, the person shall be reprimanded and suspended from participating in the next game at that level of play (varsity or junior varsity);
 - For a second offense, the person shall be placed on probation and suspended for the next two games at that level of play (varsity or junior varsity);
 - For a third offense, the person shall be suspended for one calendar year; and
 - A coach who is suspended shall not coach any team for any grade level during the period of suspension.
- Penalties are cumulative from sport to sport and from sport season to sport season. If a member of the school's coaching staff is not present to assume an ejected coach's duties, the contest shall be terminated by a forfeit.
 - Penalties are not cumulative academic year to academic year.
 - Ejected student-athletes may practice during their suspensions but may not play.
 - Ejected coaches may not be on the premises for a contest. The coach must leave the premises (pressbox, bleachers, adjacent field, etc.) and must not have any type of contact with the team.
 - Student-athletes who are disqualified or ejected during a contest will remain in the team area for supervision.
 - Anytime a student-athlete or coach is ejected from a contest, he or she does not participate or coach the remainder of that day.
 - The coach is not permitted to be at the game site during his or her suspension, but the student-athlete is allowed at the game site.
 - Any student-athlete or administrator who is ejected or disqualified from a contest is required to complete the NFHS "Sportsmanship" course before being eligible to return to competition. Any coach who is ejected from a contest must take the NFHS "Teaching and Modeling Behavior" course before being eligible to return to competition.
 - If a team has student-athletes ejected due to fighting, the head coach must take the NFHS Learning Course "Teaching and Modeling Behavior". It must be completed before coaching in the next game.

CLARIFICATION FOR SOCCER ONLY

Coaches and athletic directors will be responsible for tracking yellow cards accumulated by their student-athletes.

- Accumulated yellow cards by an individual student-athlete will result in the following:
 - Five (5) yellow cards: post-game ejection.
 - An additional five (5) yellow cards - second post-game ejection.
 - An additional five (5) yellow cards - third post-game ejection.
 - A red card disqualification that is not an ejection is the equivalent of two yellow cards.
- Penalties are enforced at the conclusion of the game, and an ejection report must also be filed at the appropriate time for accumulation of yellow cards.
- Yellow cards are reset to zero once playoffs begin (all previous penalties must be served).
- If a student-athlete accumulates three (3) yellow cards in the playoffs, that student-athlete is suspended for next game. If also during the playoffs a student-athlete accumulates a total of five (5) yellow cards, the student-athlete is suspended for an additional game.

16. Transportation

In most cases, transportation to and from athletic contests for team members (including managers and statisticians) is provided in UCA owned vehicles. Unless otherwise stated, all team members MUST travel in these vehicles. It is the coach's responsibility to ensure that athletes behave responsibly and in accordance with the school district's bus safety guidelines. Athletes should be reminded that as team members they are representing Uwharrie Charter Academy and their behavior and decorum will reflect on their team. Any exceptions to this policy must be approved in writing by the school principal or his/her designee prior to the contest.

Eating on Trips: During athletic trips, coaches must communicate in advance if the team plans to stop and eat on the ride home.

17. Hazing

Students shall not engage in what is known as hazing or to aid or abet any other student in hazing. Hazing is to annoy any student by playing abusive or ridiculous tricks on him/her, to frighten, scold, beat or harass him/her or to subject him/her to personal indignity. Such actions violate North Carolina statute (G.S. 14.35).

18. Substance Abuse

Student-athletes are role models and leaders in their schools and communities. As a result, they are

expected to adhere to high standards- physically and socially. UCA strongly discourages the use of any legal drugs, inhalants or medications contrary to the manner in which they were prescribed, as well as any use of illegal substances, alcohol or tobacco products by our students. By discouraging the use and/or abuse of these substances, UCA emphasizes its concern for the health of our students and of the long-term physical and emotional effects of chemical use on student's health and well-being. This handbook reflects the District's support of existing state laws that restrict the use of, and/or possession of illegal substances and establishes standards of conduct for our students. UCA also does not support nor condone the use of any performance enhancing drugs. Any student-athletes found in possession of any illegal substances will face disciplinary actions mandated by Board policy.

19. Technology Responsible Use

The use of school system technological resources, including access to the Internet, is a privilege, not a right. Individual users of the school system's technological resources are responsible for their behavior and communications when using those resources. Responsible use of school system technological resources is use that is ethical, respectful, academically honest, and supportive of student learning. Each user has the responsibility to respect others in the school community and on the Internet. General student and employee behavior standards, including those prescribed in applicable Board policies, the Employee Code of Ethics, the Code of Student Conduct, and other regulations and school rules, apply to use of the Internet and other school technological resources.

20. Social Media

The use of social media is an integral part of communication and can connect people in various ways. Uwharrie Charter Academy expects all of our student-athletes and coaches who use social media platforms to adhere to the UCA Parent/Student Handbook on Technology Responsible Use. Additionally, student-athletes and coaches are expected to follow all social media expectations:

- Take responsibility for my online profile, including my posts and any photos, videos or other recordings posted by others in which I appear.
- Do not degrade my opponents before, during, or after games.
- Only post positive things about my teammates, coaches, opponents, and officials.
- Use social media to purposefully promote abilities, team, and community.
- Consider "Is this the me, I want you to see?" before posting anything online.
- Ignore any negative comments and not retaliate.
- If a teammate posts something potentially negative online, bring it to the attention of a coach or Athletic Director.
- Represent my sport(s), school, team, family and community at all times, in a positive manner.
- It is prohibited to post information or comments using UCA proprietary and copyrighted logos on

unauthorized social media sites or webpages.

Any violation of our social media policy may result in disciplinary consequences up to and including suspension and/or dismissal from the team.

21. Quitting a Team

Commitment and dedication are two-character traits that participation in athletics help to promote. With that in mind, no student-athlete may quit one team in order to begin participating on another sports team at the school during the same sport season, unless by the mutual agreement of the athlete, the coach of the team the athlete is leaving and the school's athletic director. Quitting a sport is not to be viewed as a penalty that prevents an athlete from being allowed to participate on other sport teams. However, the athlete who quits a team cannot participate in another sport until the season of the team they quit has ended. No athlete may quit one sport and participate in off-season workouts or skill-development for another sport during that same season.

22. Playing Time

The amount of playing time an athlete receives on any level team at UCA is a privilege, not a right. While we are committed to developing all our athletes, most of an athlete's development should take place during practice. Practice is where you prepare to play. Playing time is earned in practice and is not an entitlement and the coach determines playtime, not administration. The seniority of an athlete is not a factor in determining if a player will start or how much they will play. Players will be evaluated by their coaches on their athletic ability, work ethic, attitude, and knowledge of the coach's strategy/strategies when determining playing time. We must teach our athletes that most things in life are not given to us and for our program/teams to be excellent, time must be spent developing those skills.

23. Return of Equipment

All uniforms and equipment issued by the school to an athlete must be returned in good shape or must be paid for before an athlete can play another sport or in another season. Seniors will not be eligible to participate in graduation exercises until all school-issued athletic uniforms and/or equipment is returned or paid for. Student-athletes who transfer will have all records held until school-issued athletic uniforms and/or equipment is returned or paid for.

24. Weight Room Use

- The weight room is a common-use facility. Each team will have equal access to this facility, with priority given to in-season sports.
- Coaches will schedule the weight room through the athletic department.
- No student is permitted to use the weight room without direct supervision from a UCA coach.

- Students must have proper workout attire, consisting of a clean, dry T-shirt, athletic shorts, socks, and athletic shoes (no cleats). Students must remove all jewelry before entering the weight room.
- Students are responsible for re-racking and cleaning the weight room after each use.
- Violations of weight room rules or policies may result in a loss of privileges.

PART IV – STUDENT DISCIPLINE

25. UCA Student Discipline and Code of Conduct

Because an educated citizenry is essential to good government and can be attained only in an atmosphere conducive to teaching and learning, the Uwharrie Charter Board of Directors requires the maintenance of good order in the schools. The purpose of this section of the handbook is to provide students, parents, guardians, school personnel, and the public with a comprehensive description of the expectations for the behavior of student-athletes enrolled in Uwharrie Charter Academy. All students shall comply with the Code of Student Conduct, state and federal laws, School Board policies and local school rules governing student behavior and conduct.

Remember, participating in extracurricular/co-curricular activities is a privilege and not a right.

26. Obligations as a Student

In addition to the rules of this code of conduct, a participating student must at all times conform to the rules of conduct of the extra-curricular/co-curricular organization in which he/she is participating, as well as all school and school system rules. She/he shall not expect nor receive special privileges with regard to meeting his/her academic requirements or obligations to teachers and any other school personnel.

27. Obligations as an Extracurricular Participant

Each sport activity has certain individual requirements that lead to the development of specific skills requiring different types of training. Every high school student-athlete has an obligation to know the rules of the North Carolina High School Athletic Association and as well as those rules governing his/her sport. Students participating in clubs or co-curricular activities are responsible for learning and adhering to the by-laws of their respective organizations.

As an extracurricular participant, the student not only represents himself/herself, fellow team members, coaches, and teachers, but also the school and its student body. For these reasons, the participating student is expected to display the highest form of character and sportsmanship throughout the school year. If at any time a student's actions bring harm or discredit to the organization of which the student is a member or to the school or if a student's language or behavior reflects negatively on the organization or school the student may be subjected to disciplinary action, including suspension and/or removal from

the extra-curricular/co-curricular organization.

28. Obligations to the School and Community

A participating student is supported actively by the school and the community. Many volunteers work long hours to provide equipment and facilities for our extracurricular groups to have the opportunity to compete on an even basis with any established program in the state. Participating students are held accountable for the equipment/materials issued to them and shall reimburse the school for any equipment/materials not returned or damaged beyond normal wear and tear. Participating students are expected to exercise respect for and take care of the facilities and equipment provided by the school and booster club.

29. In-School and Out-of-School Suspension

(ISS) ~ IN-SCHOOL SUSPENSIONS: If a student athlete is in ISS for the full day, they will not be allowed to participate the day of their suspension and administration will determine if they are allowed to be a spectator (case by case).

(OSS) ~ OUT-OF-SCHOOL SUSPENSIONS: If a student athlete has OSS, he or she will not be allowed to participate or to be a spectator during the time of the suspension.

30. Use of Illegal Drugs, Tobacco, and Alcohol

All students are expected to follow all school policies and procedures while participating or traveling to and from athletic events. This includes but is not limited to practices, games, or any organized team activities. Coaches and assistant coaches will report all drug/tobacco/alcohol infractions to school administration and they will follow the school discipline matrix.

31. Criminal Charges

Any participating student charged with a criminal offense other than a traffic infraction will be suspended from extracurricular activities while the Principal/District Athletic Coordinator investigates the underlying circumstances and assesses the impact of the matter on the school environment. The Principal along with the District Athletic Coordinator will review each offense individually and determine what action will be taken.

32. General Requirements

Any participating student in attendance and checking-out with parental permission will be excused to participate in extracurricular activities such as practices, games or events. Any participating student absent in the morning hours must be in attendance half of the school day to be eligible to participate in extracurricular activities. Any student-athlete who quits officially or dismissed from a team before the season is over (including the playoffs) may not practice or participate with any other athletic team until that season is completely over (including the playoffs). A student-athlete is considered a member of a team if he/she is listed on the Eligibility Sheet.

All participating students are required to turn in all uniforms and equipment that is issued to them. A participating student may not participate in any other extra-curricular activity until he/she has turned in his/her uniform and equipment to the coach/faculty representative.

PART V – PARENT AND COMMUNITY EXPECTATIONS

33. Expectations of Parents

The role that parents play in the life of a student-athlete has a tremendous impact on the student's athletic experience. Among the many responsibilities of a parent is to give their child roots and wings to soar. The roots come from a solid sense of security and protection, a clear sense of being unconditionally loved and a strong sense of self-worth, but not over inflated self-esteem or entitlement. The wings and the ability to fly both come from developing the right muscles, testing out the air currents through repeated trials and errors, and having the courage to eventually leave the nest. We encourage parents to support your student unconditionally. Making mistakes is part of learning.

Recognize what your student is trying to do, the effort he/she is giving, not necessarily the results. You can also help your student learn the importance of teamwork and sacrificing for the greater good of the team by modeling teamwork. If possible, get involved in your school's athletic booster club or find ways you can volunteer to help support your student's team. Be ever mindful that your student's teammates, coaches and game officials are not the enemy. Avoid being critical of other players, the coaches or officials. It is extremely conflicting for a student to demonstrate respect for those whom he/she is fully aware that his/her parents do not respect. With these thoughts in mind, here are a few guidelines:

- Attend the pre-season parents' meeting; sign and return all required participation forms.
- Abide by all regulations, rules and procedures for our athletic programs.

- Attend as many of your child's events as possible.
- Understand the ultimate purpose of athletics. It exists as an integral part of the total educational mission of the school, and is meant to teach life-long lessons. Recognize and help reinforce that this is interscholastic athletics and NOT professional sports. The goals of each are very different and should be remembered as such.
- Appreciate the educational opportunity that your child is receiving in our athletic program. This includes the enormous time and effort provided by the coaches.
- Understand that the goals of the team & athletic program are more important than the hopes & dreams you have for your child.
- Support the coach in public around other parents, fans and particularly at home in front of your student.
- Learn the rules of the game in order to be a better-informed spectator.
- Avoid putting pressure on your son/daughter to start, to score, or be the star of the team; emphasize team first. Dwelling on playing time or stats is a selfish act and not conducive to building the team-first concept.
- Be respectful of other players & their parents. You never know whose grandparents, aunt, uncle or family friend may be nearby.
- Serve as beacons of good sportsmanship, to your student and other parents as well. Show respect for opponents and game officials. Treat all visiting teams in a manner in which you would expect you and your child to be treated.
- Remain in spectator areas at all times during competition.
- Express concerns and questions in a courteous and civil manner and do it at the appropriate time and in the proper setting.

APPROPRIATE COMMUNICATION FROM PARENTS TO COACHES

- Notification of any specific medical abnormalities or medical needs of your child
- Notification of any schedule conflicts well in advance
- Notification (in advance) of any transportation plans that deviate from stated district and school policy
- Specific concerns early in the season regarding a coach's expectations

APPROPRIATE CONCERNS PARENTS SHOULD ADDRESS WITH COACHES

- The treatment of your child emotionally or physically
- Safety and health concerns regarding your child
- Concerns about your child's grades, behavior or disciplinary actions towards him/her
- Ways to help your child mature and improve
- Realistic evaluation of your child's opportunity to play collegiately and/or questions about the

process of college recruitment

- Team rules or policies that are unclear

ISSUES NOT APPROPRIATE FOR PARENTS TO DISCUSS WITH COACHES

- Game strategy
- Playing time or positioning of team personnel
- Play calling
- Any other students besides your own child

TO DISCUSS AN APPROPRIATE CONCERN WITH YOUR CHILD'S COACH

- Call the school and schedule a meeting with the coach
- If you cannot reach the coach, contact the school's Athletic Director who will schedule the meeting with the coach

NOTE: Under NO circumstances should parent/coach meetings occur immediately prior to or immediately after practice or contest. These tend to be emotional times and NOT productive.

34. Chain of Communication

1. Meet with your child's coach
2. If no satisfactory resolution, meet with the school's Athletic Director
3. If still no satisfactory resolution, meet with the school's Administration
4. If there are still concerns, contact the District's Coordinator of Athletics

PART VI – COACH AND STAFF EXPECTATIONS

35. Expectations of Coaches

The coach is responsible for setting an example for his or her players and setting the tone for the program. A coach who behaves professionally will encourage others around him or her to do the same. Coaches must exhibit proper leadership and conduct, be fair and consistent disciplinarians, show respect to opponents and officials, and instruct, train and encourage every player on their team. The coach must be a strong, positive, respectful role model for his/her athletes by being a consistent ambassador of the game, his/her school and Uwharrie Charter Academy. Coaches should conduct pre-season meetings with players and their parents/guardians in order to convey expectations and team rules and establish a line of communication. All coaches are expected to have an understanding of

conference, district and state athletic policies, as well as the rules and regulations governing their respective sport.

COACHES / AD EDUCATIONAL ATHLETICS CERTIFICATIONS & COURSES

- Fundamentals of Coaching Course - Mandatory
- First-Aid, CPR, AED Course - Mandatory (Every two years)
- Concussion Course - Mandatory (Annually)
- Heat related Illness Course - Recommended
- Sudden Cardiac Arrest Course - Recommended
- National Certified Athletic Administrator Certification (CAA) - AD's Only (Recommended)
- Registered Athletic Administrator (RAA) - AD's Only (Recommended)
- Registered Middle School Athletic Administrator (RMAA) - Middle School AD's Only (Recommended)

14 LEGAL DUTIES OF A COACH (NFHS/NIAAA)

The National Federation of State Associations (NFHS) and the National Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association (NIAAA) both recognize 14 legal duties of a coach:

- **Duty to Plan** – A coach must demonstrate awareness of the maturity, physical development and readiness of athletes with appropriate plans for instruction, conditioning and supervision.
- **Duty to Supervise** – A coach must be physically present, provide competent instruction, structure practices that are appropriate for the age and maturity of players, prevent foreseeable injuries and respond to injury or trauma in an approved manner.
- **Duty to Assess Athletes Readiness** – Athletics administrators and coaches are required to assess the health and physical or maturational readiness skills and physical condition of athletes.
- **Duty to Maintain Safe Playing Conditions** – Coaches are considered trained professionals who possess a higher level of knowledge and skill that permits them to identify foreseeable causes of injury inherent in defective indoor and outdoor facilities or hazardous environments.
- **Duty to Provide Safe Equipment** – Courts have held athletic supervisors responsible to improve unsafe environments, repair or remove defective equipment or disallow athlete access.
- **Duty to Instruct Properly** – Athletic practices must be characterized by instruction that accounts for a logical sequence of fundamentals that lead to an enhanced progression of player knowledge, skill, and capability.
- **Duty to Match Athletes Appropriately** – Athletes should be matched with consideration for maturity skill, age, size and speed. To the degree possible, mismatches should be avoided in all categories.
- **Duty to Condition Properly** – Practices must account for a progression of cardiovascular and musculoskeletal conditioning regimens that prepare athletes sequentially for more challenging practices and competitive activities.

- **Duty to Warn** – Coaches are required to warn parents and athletes of unsafe practices specific to a sport and the potential for injury or death.
- **Duty to Ensure Athletes are Covered by Injury Insurance** – Athletics administrators and coaches must screen athletes to ensure that family and/or school insurance provides basic level of medical coverage.
- **Duty to Provide Emergency Care** – Coaches are expected to be able to administer standard emergency care (first aid, CPR) in response to a range of traumatic injuries.
- **Duty to Design a Proper Emergency Response Plan** – Coaches must design plans to ensure an expedited response by EMS and an effective transition to the care and supervision of emergency medical personnel.
- **Duty to Provide Proper Transportation** – In general, bonded, commercial carriers should be used for out of town transportation. Self or family transportation for local competition may be allowed if parents have adequate insurance coverage.
- **Duty to Select, Train, and Supervise Coaches** – Administrators have a responsibility to ensure that appropriate skill and knowledge levels exist among members of the coaching staff to ensure appropriate levels of safety & well-being among athletes.

COACH CONDUCT STANDARDS

Consequently, Uwharrie Charter Academy expects that each athletic coach in our district, whether certified, classified, contracted or volunteer, who provides supervisory and instructional service in our interscholastic athletic programs shall:

- Show respect for players, parents, other coaches and staff.
- Respect the integrity and judgment of the game officials.
- Establish and model fair play, sportsmanship, and proper conduct during practices/contests and in the community.
- Never place winning above the value of instilling the highest desirable ideals of character and sportsmanship.
- Ensure that all players are in compliance with all aspects of the Gfeller-Waller Act and that player safety and welfare is the highest priority.
- Ensure that all required forms and documentation for participation are on file for every athlete under the coach's supervision before the athlete is allowed to participate in any athletic activities.
- Provide proper supervision of student-athletes while under the coach's direction.
- Use discretion and proper language when providing constructive criticism and when reprimanding players.
- Have completed the NFHS "Fundamentals of Coaching" and the NFHS "Concussion in Sports" courses prior to the date of the first practice in the sport in which they are coaching (high school coaches only).
- Will complete all paperwork and turn in documentation prior to being paid for coaching services.

- Understand the proper administrative chain of command and refer to all requests or grievances through proper channels, equipment purchases, fundraising, program funding, eligibility, parental concerns, etc.
- Consistently require all players to adhere to the established rules and standards of the game and demonstrate sportsmanship.
- Properly instruct each player in the safe use and care of equipment and uniforms.
- Maintain updated inventory of all team equipment, including uniforms, and secure all practice and play areas related to their respective teams, including locking all doors and gates, as well as turning off all lights after practices/contests.
- Not show students sexually explicit pictures or materials, nor send excessively personal letters, cards, electronic messages or gifts to students, and should avoid giving students rides when it may result in a student being alone in the car with the adult.
- Not recruit student-athletes from other schools.
- Not exert undue influence on a student-athlete's decision to enroll in a particular athletic program at any public or private college, university or post-secondary educational institution.
- Not suggest, provide, or encourage any athlete to use non-prescription drugs, anabolic steroids, or any substance to increase physical development or performance that is not approved by the U.S. Food & Drug Administration, the Surgeon General, or the American Medical Association.

36. Team Selections

Students try out for sports teams voluntarily. For some of our athletic teams that limit the number of team members, students run the risk of being cut from that team. Choosing the members and captains of athletic teams is the sole responsibility of the coaches. The criteria for selecting the team are developed by the coach. Additionally, coaches will inform student-athletes whether or not they were selected for the team and will be available to answer any student-athlete questions.

- Tryouts are open to all students who meet all prescribed rules of eligibility, including completion of all required pre-participation forms along with necessary parental signatures.
- Before tryouts begin, coaches will provide an explanation of the skills and abilities to be evaluated as well as the commitment necessary to make the team.
- Students should not try out for a team unless they are willing and able to make the emotional, physical and time commitments necessary should they make the team.
- The tryout period for each team should be of a sufficient duration to allow the coach to make a reasonable assessment of each candidate's ability and potential.
- Students who are not present on the first day of tryouts due to lack of proper paperwork or without being excused by the coach in advance forfeit the minimum 2-day tryout period.

- Attendance is required at ALL practices/games/scrimmages scheduled including those on non-school days, unless the student-athlete has prior approval from the coach.
- Only the head coach, school Administration or Athletic Director can excuse a student-athlete from practices and contests. Failure of a student-athlete to attend practice or contests is grounds for removal from the team.
- Sunday practices or any required team gatherings are ABSOLUTELY PROHIBITED.
- Uwharrie Charter Academy Board of Directors policy prohibits athletic practices or contests on any day that school is canceled or dismissed early due to inclement weather conditions (unless special permission is granted by the Superintendent or his/her designee).

37. Communications Parents Should Expect from Coaches

- Expectations the coach has for your student and other players on the team
- Philosophy of the coach (general and sport-specific)
- Team requirements (i.e. special equipment, off-season conditioning, etc.)
- Locations and times of all practices and games/contests
- Any additional team requirements- i.e., fees, special equipment, overnight trips, off-season conditioning programs
- Procedure for dealing with injuries should they occur during practice or at away contests

PART VII – ADMINISTRATIVE AND PURCHASING PROCEDURES

38. Purchase Order Process

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all athletic purchases, paid by the school, go through proper channels.

PROCEDURE FOR NEW PURCHASE REQUESTS

1. Coach gets a quote from the vendor.
2. Coach submits a Purchase Request to the District Athletic Director.
3. Accounts Payable places the order.
4. Coach verifies receipt of goods.
5. Coach does NOT pay for items with personal funds without prior authorization.

6. Parents are NOT authorized to place orders on behalf of the school.

BOOSTERS AND PARENT ORGANIZATIONS

Boosters are separate entities from the school. Funds raised are earmarked for specific sports. However, all expenditures must be processed through the school purchasing office to ensure compliance with financial policies.

PROCEDURES FOR REIMBURSEMENTS

Prior written approval is required for any reimbursement. The coach must submit an itemized receipt along with a completed reimbursement form to the Athletic Director.

PROCEDURES FOR ATHLETIC FUNDRAISERS

All fundraisers must be approved by the Athletic Director and the school Principal. Proceeds must be deposited into school accounts.

PROCEDURES FOR FUNDRAISERS AND PURCHASES THROUGH BOOSTERS

Coaches must coordinate with the booster president and Athletic Director. All fundraiser income must be accounted for according to booster club bylaws and school policy.

FAILURE TO FOLLOW PROCEDURES

Failure to follow purchasing procedures will result in a Letter of Reprimand placed in the personnel file. The coach will be held personally responsible for payment of any unapproved purchase.

39. Game Admission / Tickets

Ticket procedures are managed through the Athletic Director's office. The AD will share visiting team ticket information in advance of each contest. Gate workers are assigned by the AD and the school principal. Admission fees for NCHSAA playoff events are set by the NCHSAA and supersede all local fee schedules.

40. Code of Conduct for Spectators

All spectators attending UCA athletic events are expected to conduct themselves in a respectful and sportsmanlike manner. Disruptive, threatening, or abusive behavior directed toward athletes, coaches, officials, or other spectators will result in immediate removal from the facility. Individuals who are removed may be banned from attending future UCA athletic events. UCA reserves the right to involve law enforcement when warranted.

41. Senior Night / Day Recognition

Each athletic program is encouraged to hold a Senior Night or Senior Day ceremony to honor graduating student-athletes. These events are organized by coaches in coordination with the Athletic Director. Families of recognized senior athletes must be notified at least one week in advance. All senior athletes and their families are recognized regardless of playing time or team status.

PART VIII – HEALTH AND SAFETY

42. Health and Safety Guidelines

Uwharrie Charter Academy is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for all student-athletes. Coaches, Athletic Directors, and administrators share responsibility for implementing the health and safety guidelines described in this section. All coaches must be current in First-Aid, CPR, and AED certification and must be prepared to respond to medical emergencies at any practice or contest.

43. Concussion Awareness

Under North Carolina's Gfeller-Waller Concussion Awareness Act, a parent or guardian and the student-athlete must sign and return the Concussion Awareness information sheet before the student may participate in any athletic practice or competition. A concussion is an injury to the brain caused by a direct or indirect blow to the head. Signs and symptoms may include headache, dizziness, confusion, nausea, sensitivity to light, or loss of consciousness. All concussions are potentially serious and must be taken seriously. Any student removed from a practice or competition due to a suspected concussion will not return to play that same day.

44. Concussion, Second Impact Syndrome, and Return to Play

Any athlete who suffers a head injury with concussion symptoms will be removed from play immediately. Return to participation requires written authorization from a licensed physician (M.D. or D.O.) on the required NCHSAA Return to Play form. A gradual, six-stage return-to-activity protocol must be followed:

Stage	Activity	Goal
1	Complete cognitive and physical rest	Recovery
2	Light aerobic exercise (walking, swimming)	Increase heart rate
3	Sport-specific exercise	Add movement
4	Non-contact training drills	Exercise, coordination, cognitive load

5	Full-contact practice (after medical clearance)	Restore confidence, assess by coaches
6	Return to competition	Full participation

Second Impact Syndrome (SIS) occurs when an athlete sustains a second concussion before the first has fully healed. SIS can cause rapid, severe brain swelling and is potentially fatal. No athlete will be allowed to return to play before completing the full return-to-activity protocol and receiving physician clearance.

45. Heat and Humidity Guidelines

All outdoor athletic activities must be monitored for heat and humidity risk. The Heat Index or Wet Bulb Globe Temperature (WBGT) will be used to determine the appropriate level of activity. The following table outlines required adjustments:

Level	Heat Index	Required Actions
Green	Below 80°F	Normal activity; ensure adequate hydration

Yellow	80–103°F	Regular water breaks; monitor athletes closely; pads and helmets may be worn
Red	104–124°F	Remove pads; 5-minute rest break every 15 minutes; monitor all athletes for heat illness
Black	125°F or above	Suspend all outdoor activity; no outdoor practice permitted

46. Heat Guidelines for Athletic Games, Meets, and Practices

Officials and coaches may delay, modify, or cancel contests when the Heat Index is in the Red or Black zone. Athlete safety takes priority over competition. Coaches must check the Heat Index before every outdoor practice and contest and document the reading. Any decision to suspend or modify activity due to heat must be communicated to the Athletic Director and school administration promptly.

47. Measuring Heat Index

Heat Index should be measured using a sling psychrometer or an electronic WBGT device in the shade at the practice or event location. If no measurement device is available, coaches must use the NCHSAA-approved Heat Index chart. Measurements should be taken at the start of practice and again

at regular intervals during prolonged outdoor sessions.

48. Heat Guidelines for Cross Country Meets and Practices

Cross country coaches must apply the following heat thresholds for meets and practice runs:

- **80–89°F Heat Index:** Caution; increase monitoring and hydration frequency.
- **90–99°F Heat Index:** Strongly consider postponing or canceling 5K races; reduce to 3K maximum for practice.
- **100°F+ Heat Index:** Cancel all running activities.

49. Guidelines for Off-Campus Running

When athletic practices include off-campus running, a coach or responsible adult must accompany athletes at all times. The route must be pre-approved by the Athletic Director. All athletes must carry water. Practice must be modified based on the current Heat Index. Athletes with known medical conditions must be specifically monitored during off-campus runs.

50. Hot Weather Guidelines for Summer Practices

To allow adequate acclimatization, summer athletic practices involving protective equipment must follow a progressive schedule:

- **Week 1:** No protective pads or helmets; conditioning only.
- **Week 2:** Helmets and shoulder pads only.
- **Week 3+:** Full equipment permitted after acclimatization is established.
- Twice-a-day practices require a minimum three-hour rest period between sessions. Athletes must have access to shade and adequate hydration throughout all summer practices.

51. Coaches and Athletes Education

All coaches must complete the NFHS-approved heat-related illness course. Athletes must be educated at the start of each season about the signs and symptoms of heat illness, including:

- **Heat Cramps:** Painful muscle spasms caused by fluid and salt loss.
- **Heat Syncope:** Fainting or near-fainting during exercise in heat.
- **Heat Exhaustion:** Heavy sweating, weakness, cold/pale/clammy skin, nausea, or vomiting.
- **Heat Stroke:** High body temperature (103°F+), hot/red/dry skin, rapid pulse, loss of consciousness. This is a life-threatening emergency requiring immediate activation of EMS.

52. Fluids and Hydration

Proper hydration is essential for athletic performance and safety. All athletes should follow these guidelines:

- Drink 16–24 oz of water two hours before exercise.
- Drink 6–12 oz of water every 15–20 minutes during exercise.
- Drink approximately 24 oz for each pound of body weight lost during exercise.
- Do not wait until feeling thirsty to drink — thirst is a late indicator of dehydration.
- Cold water is preferred as it is absorbed more quickly by the body.

53. What Not to Drink During Exercise

The following beverages are not appropriate for rehydration during athletic activity:

- Caffeinated beverages (coffee, energy drinks) — increase dehydration risk.
- Carbonated beverages — reduce fluid intake volume and cause discomfort.
- Sports drinks with high sugar concentrations — slow absorption and may cause gastrointestinal distress.

54. Medical Referral

Any athlete showing signs of heat illness, concussion, cardiac symptoms, or other medical emergency must be referred to licensed medical personnel immediately. Coaches must document and report any medical incidents to the Athletic Director and school nurse. Athletes may not return to participation after a medical incident without written clearance from a licensed healthcare provider.

55. Medical Clearance to Participate

Written medical clearance is required from a licensed physician (M.D., D.O., PA, or PA-C) following any significant injury or illness before an athlete may return to participation. The physician must complete the applicable NCHSAA clearance form. The completed form must be submitted to the Athletic Director before the athlete resumes practice or competition.

56. Asthma

Student-athletes with asthma must have an updated Asthma Action Plan on file with the school nurse and Athletic Director. The coach must be made aware of the student's condition and must know the location of the student's rescue inhaler at all times during practice and competition. Student-athletes may self-administer their inhaler in accordance with school policy and physician authorization.

57. Diabetes

Student-athletes with diabetes must have a current Diabetes Management Plan on file with the school

nurse and Athletic Director. Coaches must be trained to recognize signs of hypoglycemia (low blood sugar) and hyperglycemia (high blood sugar) and must know appropriate first-response procedures. Student-athletes may carry and self-administer insulin or glucose per physician orders and school policy.

58. Medication Policy

All medications must be managed in accordance with UCA's standard medication administration policy.

MEDICATION CHECK-IN PROCEDURES

All medications must be checked in to the school office or nurse upon arrival. Medications will be kept in a secure, locked location. Only the school nurse or authorized school designee may administer medications during the school day and at athletic events.

SELF-ADMINISTERED MEDICATION

Student-athletes may carry and self-administer certain medications — including rescue inhalers, auto-injectors (EpiPen), and insulin — with written authorization from both the physician and parent or guardian, as permitted by school policy.

59. Sports Nutrition

A well-balanced diet supports athletic performance and recovery. Coaches and Athletic Directors should encourage athletes to maintain healthy eating habits throughout the season. Key guidance includes:

- Balanced intake of protein, carbohydrates, and healthy fats supports energy and muscle recovery.
- Pre-competition meals should be consumed 3–4 hours before activity and should be moderate in size.
- Heavy meals immediately before competition should be avoided.
- Post-competition nutrition (protein and carbohydrates within 30–60 minutes) supports recovery.

60. Performance Enhancing Drugs (PEDs)

Uwharrie Charter Academy does not condone the use of any performance-enhancing drugs (PEDs), including anabolic steroids, human growth hormone, stimulants, or any other substance banned by the NCHSAA, U.S. Food and Drug Administration, the Surgeon General, or the American Medical Association. Student-athletes found in possession of or using PEDs will face disciplinary action in accordance with Board policy. Coaches are prohibited from suggesting, providing, or encouraging any athlete to use non-prescription performance-enhancing substances.

61. MRSA, HIV, and Hepatitis B / Infectious Disease Policy

MRSA (METHICILLIN-RESISTANT STAPHYLOCOCCUS AUREUS)

MRSA is a highly contagious skin infection caused by antibiotic-resistant bacteria. Symptoms include red, swollen, painful skin lesions that may resemble a spider bite. Athletes must not share personal items such as towels, razors, or equipment. Any suspected MRSA infection must be reported to the coach immediately. Athletes with skin infections must receive a physician evaluation and obtain a written clearance form before returning to contact sports. See Appendix I (Wrestlers) or Appendix J (Non-Wrestlers) for the required NFHS Physician Release forms.

HIV AND HEPATITIS B

The risk of transmitting HIV or Hepatitis B during athletic participation is extremely low. However, all athletes and coaches must follow universal precautions. Any athlete with an open or bleeding wound must be removed from play until the wound is properly covered. Blood spills on surfaces must be cleaned immediately using a 1:10 bleach-to-water solution.

62. Blood-Borne Pathogens and Universal Precautions

All coaches and athletic staff must treat all blood and bodily fluids as potentially infectious. Universal precautions require:

- Wearing disposable gloves when handling blood or bodily fluids.
- Disposing of contaminated materials (bandages, gloves) in a sealed biohazard bag.
- Cleaning all contaminated surfaces with a 1:10 bleach solution.
- Washing hands thoroughly after any contact with blood or bodily fluids.

63. Sickle Cell Disease

Student-athletes with sickle cell trait are at increased risk for complications during intense exercise, high heat, or high altitude conditions. Coaches must be informed of which athletes have sickle cell trait. Affected athletes may require modified conditioning protocols, more frequent rest breaks, and increased hydration monitoring. Any athlete with sickle cell trait who experiences unusual pain, fatigue, or breathing difficulty during exercise must be evaluated by medical personnel immediately.

64. Commotio Cordis

Commotio Cordis is a sudden cardiac event caused by a blunt impact to the chest directly over the heart at a critical moment in the cardiac cycle. It is most commonly reported in baseball, softball, hockey, and lacrosse. Protective measures include the use of age-appropriate chest protectors and cardiac protective equipment where available. An Automated External Defibrillator (AED) must be accessible at all UCA athletic events. All coaches must hold current CPR and AED certification.

65. NFHS Lightning and Thunder Guidelines

At the first sound of thunder or the first sight of lightning, all outdoor athletic activities must be immediately suspended. All athletes and staff must seek shelter in a substantial building or a hard-topped vehicle. The following guidelines apply:

- Wait at least 30 minutes after the last sound of thunder before resuming outdoor activities.
- Designated shelter locations must be identified for each athletic venue before the season begins.
- Coaches are responsible for ensuring all athletes reach shelter immediately when lightning is observed.
- The decision to resume activity rests with the Athletic Director and coaching staff, not with officials alone.

66. Emergency Action Plans

Each school must maintain a written Emergency Action Plan (EAP) for every athletic venue. EAPs must be reviewed and updated at the start of each season. Each EAP must include:

- Emergency contact numbers (911, school nurse, principal, AD).
- Location of the nearest hospital and directions for EMS vehicle access to each facility.
- Location of all AED units.
- Designated roles and responsibilities for coaches, administrators, and first responders.
- Procedures for common emergencies: cardiac arrest, concussion, heat illness, severe bleeding, and allergic reaction.

All coaches must review the EAP for their assigned venue at the start of each season. Current NCHSAA Emergency Action Plan resources are available on the UCA website and through the Athletic Director's office.

PART IX – ATHLETIC JOB RESPONSIBILITIES

67. Athletic Job Responsibilities

ATHLETIC DIRECTOR

The Athletic Director (AD) serves as the primary administrator of all UCA athletic programs.

Responsibilities include:

- Administer and implement all athletic policies in compliance with NCHSAA, DPI, and Board requirements.
- Prepare and distribute game schedules for all sports.
- Contract and coordinate game officials.
- Determine student eligibility in accordance with all applicable rules.
- Maintain complete and accurate athletic records.
- Communicate regularly with coaches, parents, students, and school administration.
- Supervise home athletic events and ensure safe, orderly operations.
- Represent UCA at conference and state-level athletic meetings.
- Ensure all coaches complete required certifications before the first practice of each season.
- Oversee the purchasing process for all athletic equipment and supplies.

ASSISTANT ATHLETIC DIRECTOR

The Assistant Athletic Director supports the AD in all administrative and operational duties, assumes full AD responsibilities in the AD's absence, and manages event logistics as assigned.

HEAD COACH

The Head Coach is responsible for the overall operation of their athletic program. Responsibilities include:

- Plan, organize, and conduct all practices and competitions.
- Maintain team discipline and enforce school and NCHSAA rules.
- Ensure all athletes have complete and current participation paperwork on file before the first practice.
- Maintain an updated inventory of all team equipment and uniforms.
- Implement and teach fundamental skills appropriate to the sport and age group.
- Conduct a mandatory pre-season parent meeting before the first competition.
- Communicate regularly with the Athletic Director, school administration, parents, and athletes.
- Model exemplary sportsmanship and professional conduct at all times.

ASSISTANT COACH

Assistant Coaches support the Head Coach in all areas of practice preparation, skill development, game management, and athlete supervision. In the absence of the Head Coach, the Assistant Coach assumes all Head Coach responsibilities.

ATHLETIC TRAINER (WHEN APPLICABLE)

The Athletic Trainer must maintain current Board of Certification (BOC) certification and a valid North Carolina State Athletic Trainer License. Responsibilities include:

- Evaluate, refer, and treat athletic injuries in accordance with the scope of practice.
- Maintain accurate treatment and rehabilitation logs for all athletes.
- Manage medical supplies, equipment, and emergency kits.
- Communicate with physicians, parents, coaches, and administration regarding athlete health status.
- Maintain all medical records in compliance with FERPA and applicable state law.
- Assist in the development and review of Emergency Action Plans for each athletic venue.

FIRST RESPONDER / MEDICAL SUPERVISOR

A designated First Responder or Medical Supervisor must be present at all home athletic events. This individual is responsible for administering first aid, managing medical emergencies until EMS arrives, and ensuring that all AED units are accessible, functional, and properly stocked.

CHEERLEADING COACH

The Cheerleading Coach is responsible for the safety, training, and supervision of all UCA cheerleaders. All cheer safety guidelines, including proper progression for stunting and tumbling, must be followed at all times. No stunting or advanced skills may be practiced without direct coach supervision. All UCA cheer policies and NCHSAA cheerleading rules apply.

68. Volunteer Coaches Hiring Process

All volunteer coaches must complete a criminal background check, sign the UCA Volunteer Agreement, and complete all required NFHS coaching certifications before working with student-athletes. Volunteer coaches must be approved by the Superintendent or their designee and placed on the Authorized Volunteer list before beginning service.

69. Paid Coaches Hiring Process

All paid coaches are hired through the standard UCA employment process, which includes a background check, reference verification, and formal onboarding. Paid coaches must meet all applicable North Carolina state licensure requirements and hold all NCHSAA-required coaching certifications before the first practice of their assigned sport season.

70. Athletic Facilities

All UCA athletic facilities are managed by the school and the Athletic Department. Use of any UCA athletic facility requires a completed Facility Use Application, approved by both the Athletic Director and the school principal. Unauthorized use of UCA athletic facilities is prohibited and may result in disciplinary action or criminal trespass charges. Coaches are responsible for securing all facilities — including locking all doors and gates and turning off all lights — after each practice or contest.

71. Administrative Regulations for Signs, Banners, and Flags at Sporting Events

All signs, banners, and flags displayed at UCA sporting events must be approved by the Athletic Director and the school principal. The following regulations apply:

- Maximum size for any sign or banner is 24" × 24".
- No offensive, threatening, or inappropriate content is permitted.
- No commercial or business advertising is permitted without prior written approval from the Superintendent.
- UCA logos and marks may not be reproduced on privately produced signage without written authorization.

72. Updated Athletic Policies

ATHLETIC PASSES

Athletic passes are issued annually to UCA coaches, athletic staff, and Board members. Passes are valid for regular season home athletic events only and do not apply to NCHSAA playoff events or special events unless otherwise noted. Passes must be presented at the gate. Lost or stolen passes will not be replaced.

APPENDICES

The following forms and reference documents are available from the UCA Athletic Office or on the UCA website at uwharriecharter.org:

Appendix	Document Title
A	UCA Athletic Participation Parental Permission Form
B	Medical Exam Form (required every 395 days)
C	NCHSAA Return to Play Form (Concussion)
D	Concussion Awareness Information Sheet (Gfeller-Waller Act)
E	Academic Improvement Plan Template (Middle School)
F	Heat Index Reference Chart
G	Emergency Action Plan Template
H	Facility Use Application
I	NFHS Physician Release for Wrestler to Participate with Skin Lesions
J	NFHS Physician Release to Participate with Skin Lesions – Non-Wrestler
K	UCA Booster Club Agreement
L	Purchase Request Form
M	Reimbursement Request Form