

HCSD Athletic Handbook Suggested Edits 2026-2027

Topic	Page #	Suggested Edit
Unexcused late arrivals and early dismissals		Getting in line with the Student Progression Plan(SPP): Per the Student Progression Plan, based on the number of combined unexcused late arrivals to school and/or unexcused early dismissals from school, a student must have a combined 9 or less unexcused late arrivals to schools and/or unexcused early dismissal from schools per semester, in order to maintain privileges and participate in extracurricular events, including athletics. Students may attend practices if they become ineligible due to this attendance requirement but may not compete until HCSD attendance eligibility requirements are met.
Arrests		If a student is arrested on or off campus and/or charged with a felony, or a delinquent act that would be a felony if committed by an adult, the student will be suspended from and deemed ineligible to participate in extracurricular activities, including athletics, for no less than 90 school days from the date the school becomes aware of the violation. The suspension may be lifted if the charges are dropped or a not guilty finding is entered into the court record. Hernando County School officials will complete an investigation per HCSD Student Code of Conduct and rule on further participation. If a student is arrested for any other offense, they will be suspended pending a determination by administration at the school.
Drugs/Alcohol/Tobacco/Vape		Getting in line with the Code of Conduct: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Removing the words “attend and” because students ultimately just need to complete the substance or tobacco abuse course. • Clarified in what time frame a second offence creates dismissal from athletics – “in the same school year” • Added - Students caught selling or distributing tobacco/vaping products will be removed from athletic participation for 90 school days. These days will be carried over to the next school if the time frame calls for it. This suspension does not apply to summer workouts/conditioning. • Removed selling or distributing “tobacco/vaping” from dismissal from athletic participation for a calendar year.
Personal Use of Football Helmets		Student-athletes participating in 11-man football, are required to wear school-issued football helmets in practice and in games unless a parent/guardian personally supplies a football helmet that meets the criteria below and agrees to the following: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. For initial use and approval, the parent/guardian must provide documentation that the helmet is brand new and has never been used. b. The helmet must meet all NFHS, FHSAA and NOCSAE rules and standards.

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> c. Before each season, the helmet must be fitted on the student-athlete and inspected by a coach or appropriate school-based personnel. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. A coach or other appropriate school-based personnel may deny use of personal equipment at any time should he/she determine the equipment does not fit correctly, is unsafe or out of compliance with any NFHS, FHSAA or NOCSAE rules and standards. d. After each FHSAA sanctioned season of use, the helmet must be reconditioned by the school and follow the same rigorous reconditioning timeline, process and standards as all the other school issued helmets. e. Failure to meet any of the above criteria will result in denial of the use of the personal helmet. <p>NOTE: All school issued or personally supplied sports related safety equipment (including but not limited to helmets, head gear, mouth pieces, shin guards and other protective padding) utilized by a student-athlete in practice or games, must meet all NFHS, FHSAA and NOCSAE rules and standards.</p>
Transfers - Good Cause		Removed #18 because all of this process has gone back to the FHSAA
Name, Image, & Likeness		Per FHSAA Policy 9.9.4, Student-athletes may profit off of their Name, Image and Likeness(NIL) and engage in NIL agreements. However, these agreements must be reported to the FHSAA within five business days of signing a NIL agreement. Student-athletes are prohibited from making any reference to and will not otherwise use or authorize others to use the uniforms, logos, mascots, insignia, or identifying marks of a member school, the FHSAA, the NFHS, and/or any FHSAA, NFHS, or member school event, game, or championship when engaging in any NIL activity. Student-athletes will be prohibited from monetizing their Name, Image, and Likeness with the use of their school’s uniform, equipment, logo, name, proprietary patents, products, and/or copyrights associated with an FHSAA member school, NFHS, and/or school district, either in public, print, or social media platforms, unless granted authorization by prior written consent from the superintendent.
Sideline Cheer		Participation or non-participation in Sideline Cheer shall not be used as a prerequisite for participation in Competitive Cheer. Sideline Cheer and Competitive Cheer are two separate teams.
Parent Transport when District Transport is provided		A parent/guardian may request permission for a student-athlete to ride home from an event they were provided transportation for with an individual listed on the student’s emergency contact form. The parent/guardian must notify the coach in advance. The individual providing transportation must present valid identification to verify they are listed as an approved emergency contact and must

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		sign the student-athlete out with the coach prior to departure. If for some reason, it is necessary for a student-athlete to ride to and from an away event with their parent/guardian in which district transportation is provided, a written request from the parent/guardian must be brought to the attention of and approved by the principal or designee.
Non-Traditional(Type 4 - Private School) Athletic Fees		Note: Current (6/8/26) Non-Traditional Type 4 Students (Private School) will have an Athletic Fee of \$400 per student-athlete, per sport.
Sports Media Credentials		Once the online form is completed, if a media member requesting credentials is working for a qualified and recognized media outlet, they will be run through our Safe Visitor Solutions platform at no cost. If the requesting media member does not work for a qualified and recognized media outlet, they must go through the Level 1 volunteer process via the link provided below. There is a \$9.95 cost associated with this application. (https://www.hernandoschools.org/volunteer-applications)
Sports Media Credentials - Reporting		NOTE: For those requesting media members needing the Level 1 Volunteer clearance, in meeting the criteria of Florida Statute 943.04.351, each individual whose criminal background screening would make them ineligible for employment with the HCSD will be ineligible to volunteer in any District school in any capacity as well as be ineligible to be granted sports media access. Individuals must self-report any violation(s) of this statute, failure to do so will result in sports media credentials being revoked.
ECGs		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ECG Screening – FHSAA Form EL1 – Revised 2/26 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ FHSAA EL1 Form
State Series No-Shows - Fines		Per FHSAA Policy 10.4.2, a student-athlete who qualifies in a FHSAA state series competition as an individual, is expected to compete on successive levels of the FHSAA state series unless ill, injured, suspended due to disciplinary action, or for any other reason acceptable to the Executive Director. A school must submit in writing to the FHSAA office the name of the student-athlete and an explanation for the inability to compete in advance of the competition whenever situations make it possible to do so. If an individual student-athlete fails to communicate to their coach and/or AD a valid and acceptable reason in a timely fashion for failing to appear/compete in a state series event, they may be held financially responsible for fines levied by the FHSAA for failing to appear/compete at the state series event.

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New Bag Procedures at Athletic Events		<p>1) Hernando County School District Athletic Event Bag Procedures and Expectations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Bags of any type, with the exception of small, clutch type 4.5”x 6.5” purses, will be prohibited at all HCS D athletic events.• Coolers are not permitted.• Binoculars or cameras will be allowed into games if carried by hand.• Blankets are allowed during cold weather but should not be placed in a bag nor used to conceal other items.• Seat cushions are allowed, but subject to search.• For outdoor events only, foldable/camping chairs are allowed.• Spectators with unapproved bags or items will not be allowed entry and must return the belongings to a vehicle. <u>NO BAGS WILL BE LEFT AT THE GATE OR UNATTENDED.</u>• There will be exceptions for bags required for medical needs, diaper bags, pre-approved members of the media, and essential gameday personnel (school staff, security/emergency personnel, administration, student-athletes, coaches and officials).• <u>All bags and items are subject to search. Refusal of search will result in denied entry.</u>• No Re-entry
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