

Optional Student Athlete Drug Testing Programs

The Board of Education authorizes individual PCS schools to implement a drug testing program for student athletes. However, individual PCS schools are not required to implement a student athlete drug testing program. The purpose of these optional programs is to prohibit and prevent illicit drug use, possession and/or distribution by student athletes in our schools. Students participating in extra curricular activities cannot practice or compete while under the influence of any illegal drugs, alcohol or other banned substance because that can be a danger to themselves or others. If a PCS school implements a drug testing program, all student athletes at that school will have to consent to and participate in a random drug-testing program thereafter as a condition of participation in interscholastic athletic programs. Students will not be permitted to try out and/or participate in any athletic programs at the school if they and/or their parents refuse to sign the drug testing consent form and/or to submit to the testing means. Further, the school administration shall ensure that all athletes receive instruction and information about the dangers of illicit drug use, including the health risks posed by steroids and other so-called performance enhancing drugs.

I. Belief Statement:

Participation in any extra or co-curricular activity is an important part of the educational experience of any student. A primary goal of such activities is to teach students character and self-discipline skills that will enable them to develop to their highest potential. As role models for their peers and younger students, students who participate in extra or co-curricular activities ("participating students") are held accountable for their actions at a higher standard than other students. Because of the public nature of the extra and co-curricular programs sponsored by schools, participating students are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that will reflect the high standards and ideals of their school and community.

II. The objectives of student athlete drug testing programs include:

- A. To improve the health and safety of athletes by ensuring that they do not practice or compete while under the influence of drugs. This objective is designed to supplement parents' efforts to prevent drug use by student athletes.

- B. Due to the minimal time drugs are present in a child's system and the inability of drug tests to be 100% accurate, a negative test cannot and does not guarantee that a student athlete is drug free.
- C. To prevent drug use/abuse by student athletes and to educate our student athletes about the dangers and problems associated with drug use/abuse.
- D. To develop a drug free athletic program that produces student athletes who can serve as role models and influence their peers to lead healthy and responsible lives.
- E. To help students and their families address illicit or improper drug use and to provide opportunities for counseling and treatment for any student athlete who is determined to be using/abusing drugs.
- F. To identify any student who may be using/abusing drugs and to determine the identity of the drug(s).
- G. To educate student athletes involved in drug abuse about the effect drugs have on their physical, emotional, and mental well being as well as the adverse effect to the athletic team and its members.
- H. To provide reasonable safeguards that every student athlete who participates in interscholastic athletics is medically and physically competent.
- I. To remove the stigma of drug use/abuse from those student athletes who do not use drugs.

III. Coverage:

- A. **Student athlete:** Any student on a school roster of an athletic team shall be covered by the school drug testing program, including cheerleading teams.
- B. **Sport Season:** A sport season or athletic season is a Fall, Winter or Spring season. Each season begins on the first day of practice for the particular season and ends on the last day on which the team competes, including any playoffs for which the team qualifies. If the

ending date of one season overlaps with the starting date of another season, a suspended student shall remain suspended throughout the end of the season in which the suspension began.

- C. **Drugs:** Prohibited drugs include steroids (or other illegal performance enhancing drugs), alcohol, and any compound listed or referred to by North Carolina General Statutes, sections 90-89 through 90-94, unless used as prescribed by a physician. Prohibited substances specifically include, but are not limited to, cocaine, opiates, marijuana, amphetamines, methamphetamines, barbiturates, PCP, LSD or other hallucinogenic compounds.

IV. Testing Procedure:

- A. **Orientation:** If a school implements a student athletic drug testing program, the students and his/her parent and/or guardian shall receive proper orientation to the school drug testing program. The school athletic director and coaches will deliver the orientation during the organizational meeting for the sport and during the parent meeting for the sport. Orientation training shall include but not be limited to the following; drug and alcohol awareness, performance enhancing drugs and their dangers, illegal drugs and their dangers and the rationality and desired goals of the policy as well as the procedures for the policy. No drug testing will be done until after orientation.
- B. **Prior Consent:** Where a PCS school has implemented a student athletic drug testing program, the student and his/her parent and /or guardian shall sign a written consent to drug testing before the student participates (including try-outs) on the interscholastic athletic team or a cheerleading squad.
- C. **Test Frequency:** A minimum of one random drug test shall be conducted for each school sport. The principal may order additional random tests to ensure that it is always a possibility that students may be tested.
- D. **Student Selection:** At least 10% of school student athletes shall be selected for each random testing event. The principal or athletic director shall arrange for a method of student selection that ensures that students are selected at random based on a numbered roster system.
- E. **Sample Collection and testing:** The principal or athletic director will contact and arrange for an authorized drug test administrator for sample collection, sample testing including maintenance of a split sample, and test verification by a Medical Review Officer (MRO).

Any positive results from the screening will be confirmed using test methods approved by the National Institute on Drug Abuse. All testing shall comply

with state and federal law. Sample collection shall take place under reasonable and sanitary conditions, and shall maintain student privacy and dignity. Any contested positive result shall be confirmed by a scientifically valid confirmatory test, at the expense of the school athletic program. The student shall be temporarily suspended from the team until confirmation is received from the second test on the original sample.

- V. Consequences:** If a drug test result is positive and confirmed by the MRO, the following action will be taken
- A. First Confirmed Positive Drug Test during a student's 8-semester eligibility:
 - 1. The principal, athletic director or coach will notify the student and the student's parent or guardian of the positive test result and will give the student an opportunity to explain to the MRO the positive result. The sample will be sent to the lab for final confirmation. The student will temporarily be suspended from the team while the lab is processing the sample.
 - 2. If the result of the test is still positive after lab analysis, the student and his parent or guardian will receive the packet describing Project F.I.N.D. and fill out the referral paperwork for Project F.I.N.D. Parents will pick up the cost of intake and treatments at Project F.I.N.D or program of their choice.
 - 3. The student will be suspended from all games and contests for a 21-calendar day suspension but parents have the option for their student to attend all practices, games and remain in the supervised environment provided by our athletic coaches unless attending a counseling session. The student will be permitted to return to play after their 21-day suspension provided that the student is making progress towards successful completion of Project F.I.N.D and has a clear drug-screening test.
 - B. Second Confirmed Positive Drug Test during a student's 8-semester eligibility
 - 1. The principal, athletic director or coach will notify the student and the student's parent or guardian of the positive test result and will give the student an opportunity to explain to the MRO the positive result. The sample will be sent to the lab for final

confirmation. The student will temporarily be suspended from the team while the lab is processing the sample.

2. If the result of the test is still positive after lab analysis, the student and his parent or guardian will receive the packet describing Project F.I.N.D and fill out the referral paperwork for Project F.I.N.D. Parents will pick up the cost of intake and treatments at Project F.I.N.D or program of their choice.
3. The student will be suspended from all games and contests for a 42-calendar day suspension but have the option for their student to attend all practices, games and remain in the supervised environment provided by our athletic coaches unless attending a counseling session. The student will be permitted to return to play after their 42-day suspension provided that the student is making progress towards successful completion of Project F.I.N.D and has a clear drug-screening test.

C. Third Confirmed Positive Drug Test during a student's 8-semester eligibility:

1. The principal, athletic director or coach will notify the student and the student's parent or guardian of the positive test result and will give the student an opportunity to explain to the MRO the positive result. The sample will be sent to the lab for final confirmation. The student will temporarily be suspended from the team while the lab is processing the sample.
2. If the result of the test is still positive after lab analysis, the student and his parent or guardian will receive the packet describing Project F.I.N.D and fill out the referral paperwork for Project F.I.N.D. Parents will pick up the cost of intake and treatments at Project F.I.N.D or program of their choice.
3. The student must complete a 365-day suspension from all athletic activities and complete Project F.I.N.D and demonstrate a clean drug screen before being eligible to try out for athletics after completing his 365-day suspension. Students may not be eligible to compete for more than one year depending on when the suspension occurs.

VI. Confidentiality of Information

All information, interviews, reports, statements, memoranda and drug test results, written or otherwise, received by a school for a drug testing program on any student are confidential communications and may not be used or received in evidence, obtained in discovery or disclosed in any public or private proceedings, except as allowed or required by law.

VII. Code of Conduct Exception

Optional school student athlete drug testing programs are not subject to the normal Pitt County Schools, standard Code of Student Conduct consequences. They are expressly designed for the aforementioned purposes regarding student athletes. However a student found to be under the influence and/or in possession of an illegal substance during school hours or school sponsored events/activities, and/or other circumstances covered by the Code of Student Conduct will be subject to regular disciplinary action under the Code.

VIII. Costs of Optional Student Athlete Drug Testing Programs

Costs of optional student athlete drug testing programs will be paid by the individual school and/or student/parent organizations.

Last Revision/Adoption: February 2, 2009

Legal References: NC Statute § 115C-47

Cross References: Policy 10.207 (Student Substance Abuse); Policy 10.303 (Suspensions and Expulsions Policy)