



2026 - 2027
Cumberland County Schools
Athletics
Procedure Manual

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FOREWORD

Cumberland County Schools believes that athletes should be competitive, sportsmanlike, and excel academically. We believe students and adults in the stands should have fun, but not take the focus away from the game. We believe coaches should act as teachers, helping student-athletes develop while still keeping interscholastic sports in perspective. We believe that parents/ guardians should always be positive role models and be supportive of their child's decisions. We believe officials commit their own time to interscholastic sports, and respect should always be shown and given to them.

These procedures provide a reference for regulations, existing rules, and information in effect concerning the Cumberland County Schools' Athletic Programs. It is intended that this guide will contribute to a better understanding of athletic procedures and help to provide guidelines toward a consistent, harmonious, and efficient athletic program.

This guide will be used to assist the members of the athletic staff and the administrative team from each CCS school in developing a mutual framework of operation. Adhering to these policies and procedures will provide continuity and consistency for all programs.

Cumberland County Athletics will be governed by and follow the TSSAA Bylaws for all athletic endeavors. In addition to the TSSAA Bylaws, CSS Elementary Athletics will adhere to the guidance provided by the CSS Athletic Procedure Manual. A link to the full handbook and bylaws can be found using the following link: [TSSAA Handbook and Bylaws](#)

These administrative procedures shall be required reading of all Elementary School coaches employed by Cumberland County Schools.

Goals and Objectives

- A. To provide a positive image of school athletics at Cumberland County Elementary Schools.
- B. To strive to play with excellence that will produce winning teams within the bounds of good sportsmanship and the mental health of the student-athlete.
- C. To ensure growth and development that will increase the number of individual participants; give impetus to increasing attendance at each contest; and enable a program of continuing upkeep and improvement of facilities.
- D. To provide opportunities that will allow the program to serve as a learning environment by which students may cope with problems and handle situations similar to those that will be encountered in “real world” situations. CCS Athletics will provide adequate and natural opportunities for the following:
 - a. Physical, mental, and emotional growth and development.
 - b. Acquisition and development of special skills in activities of each student’s choice.
 - c. Team play with the development of such commitments as loyalty, cooperation, fair play, and other desirable social traits.
 - d. Directed leadership and supervision that stresses self-discipline, self-motivation, excellence, and the ideals of good sportsmanship that encourage winning and losing graciously.
 - e. A focus of interest in activity programs for the student body, faculty, and community that will generate a feeling of unity.
 - f. Achievement of initial goals as set by the school in general and by the student as an individual.
 - g. Provision for the worthwhile use of leisure time in later life, either as a participant or spectator.
- E. To provide a superior program of student activities that includes appropriate activities for every child.
- F. To provide opportunities for students to experience success in activities they select.
- G. To provide sufficient activities to offer outlets for a wide variety of student interests and abilities.
- H. To provide student activities that offer the greatest benefits for the greatest number of students.
- I. To create a desire to succeed and excel.
- J. To practice self-discipline and emotional maturity in learning to make decisions under pressure.
- K. To develop social competence and operate within a set of rules, thus gaining respect for authority and the rights of others.
- L. To develop an understanding of the value of activities in a balanced educational process.

Elementary/Countywide Head Coach Job Description

Qualifications:

1. Coaches may be faculty members of Cumberland County Schools or may be non-faculty coaches. All coaches must be suggested and approved by the building principal and director of schools in order to coach.
 - a. Faculty Coaches must meet the following requirements:
 - i. NFHS Training Courses (required annually for all faculty coaches)
 1. Concussion in Sports
 2. Sudden Cardiac Arrest
 3. Heat Related Illness
 4. All documents must be submitted to the building principal
 - b. Non-faculty Coaches must meet the following requirements:
 - i. CCS Volunteer Application (Level 3 for all)
 - ii. Background Check / Fingerprinting (every 5 years)
 - iii. CCS Coaching Verification (first time hires only)
 - iv. NFHS Training Courses (required one time for life)
 1. Fundamentals of Coaching - \$100 (to be reimbursed by the program /or school the coach represents)
 2. First Aid, Health, and Safety for Coaches - \$100 (to be reimbursed by the program /or school the coach represents)
 3. All documents must be submitted to the building principal
 - v. NFHS Training Courses (required annually for all nonfaculty coaches)
 1. Concussion in Sports
 2. Sudden Cardiac Arrest
 3. Heated Related Illness
 4. All documents must be submitted to the building principal
2. Will attend an annual sport-specific training and an annual meeting to review the CCS Athletic Handbook and Governing Bylaws with CCS Personnel.
3. Has the ability to organize and supervise a total sports program and has substantial knowledge of the technical aspects of the sport and at the same time must continue to examine new theories and procedures pertinent to the field.
4. Has the ability, the knowledge, and the training to support any additional coaching staff.

Supervision and Professionalism

To instruct athletes in the fundamental skill, strategy and physical training necessary for them to realize a degree of individual and team success. At the same time, the student shall receive instruction that will lead to the formulation of moral values, pride of accomplishment, acceptable social behavior, self-discipline and self-confidence.

- A. Constant Presence: Coaches must be immediately accessible at all times during practices, games, or travel.

- B. Systematic Oversight: The more hazardous the activity, the more closely it must be supervised. No student or unqualified individual should ever supervise a drill or activity ("Negligent Entrustment").
- C. Facility Security: Coaches are responsible for locker room discipline and must secure all doors, lights, and windows before leaving if custodians are not on duty.
- D. Coaches are also responsible for signatures in parent packets that include: Player Physicals, Concussion Awareness Form, Sudden Cardiac Arrest Form, Player Conduct Form and Parent Conduct Form. All coaches are required to have copies of this information on file at all team events including practices and games / matches. (moved this from another section)

Athlete Safety and Injury Management

- A. Teaching Fundamentals: Coaches must teach athletes proper skills to protect themselves and warn them of inherent risks within the sport.
- B. Evaluation: Coaches must assess athletes for injury or incapacity before allowing continued play.
- C. Hydration: Athletes shall never be denied rest or water.
- D. Emergency Protocol: Coaches must know and use emergency procedures and first aid, maintaining accurate records of all incidents.

Equipment and Facilities

- A. Inspection: Coaches are responsible for the regular inspection, repair, and reconditioning of all equipment to ensure it is effective and safe.
- B. Instruction: Athletes must be taught to inspect their own equipment for safety.
- C. Accountability: Coaches must maintain an annual inventory and collect costs for any equipment lost or not returned.

Duty of Coaches

- A. Coaches shall actively use their influence to enhance sportsmanship by their spectators, working closely with cheerleaders, pep club sponsors, booster clubs, and administrators.
- B. Before and after the contest, rival coaches should meet and exchange friendly greetings to set the correct tone for the event.
- C. A coach shall not exert pressure on faculty members to give student athletes special consideration.
- D. The coach should treat prospective players, team players, and their parents with fairness and dignity.
- E. The winning coach should be considerate of the score with local teams.
- F. While "in-person" scouting of other teams has always been a part of game preparation, coaches will refrain from filming / videoing opponents for the purposes of scouting, and will refrain from making arrangements for others to do so for the same purpose. However, this does not disallow a mutually agreed upon film / video exchange.
- G. The coach should avoid using negative motivational techniques.

Students' Eligibility and Enrollment Rules

Cumberland County Athletics will be governed by and follow the TSSAA Bylaws for all athletic endeavors. In addition to the TSSAA Bylaws, CSS Elementary Athletics will adhere to the guidance provided by the CSS Athletic Procedure Manual. A link to the full handbook and bylaws can be found using the following link: [TSSAA Handbook and Bylaws](#)

Additional Guidelines and Eligibility / Enrollment Clauses

- A. To be eligible to participate in athletics in Cumberland County Elementary Schools, a student must be enrolled at the school in which the student intends to participate in athletics.
 - a. For the 2026 Fall Season, a cooperative agreement between Trinity Academy and Stone Elementary will exist for grades 3-5 and for middle school sports..
 - i. Moving forward, in accordance with HB 1785 / SB 1822, private school student athletes in Cumberland County for grades 3-5 will be permitted to try out and participate in athletic programs at their zoned public school as a non-traditional student as defined by TSSAA - given that their school enrollment remains under 200 students.
 1. A student can only try out for a public school sport if their private school does not offer that sport.
 2. The student must legally reside within the specific attendance boundaries/zone of the public school or district where they intend to play.
 3. The law guarantees the right to try out, but coaches retain full control over roster decisions. No roster spots are automatically handed out.
 4. Students must meet all typical eligibility standards (academic standing, age limits, and health physicals) mandated by TSSAA.
 - ii. Cooperative Agreements for TSSAA Middle School Sports will be approved by the BOE and the agreed upon schools.
- B. No student shall be eligible to compete in CCS elementary athletics during any school year if the student becomes 15 years of age on or before August 1. No student shall be eligible to compete at the sixth grade and below in elementary athletics during any school year if the student becomes 13 years of age on or before August 1.
- C. CCS Elementary cheer squads and basketball teams will be composed of two sections:
 - a. Sixth through eighth grade students.
 - b. Third through fifth grade students.
- D. It will be the responsibility of the coach and the elementary school principal or designee to keep records of athletes using the CCS Athletic Verification Sheet.
- E. It is required that no student be permitted to participate in practice sessions or in athletic contests until there is a preparticipation medical evaluation form signed by a doctor of medicine, osteopathic physician, physicians assistant, or certified nurse practitioner stating that the student has passed a physical examination, not prior to April 15.
- F. To be eligible a student must be in regular attendance with no unexcused absences. Each unexcused absence will mandate a two-quarter suspension from the next local elementary game played. On game days during the school week (Monday through Friday), a student must be in attendance as required in Board Policy 4.300 (at least one minute over half a day or 3 hours and 31 minutes) that day in order to be eligible to play in any sports contest held that day. (Friday absences do not affect weekend game eligibility)
- G. To be eligible a student cannot have more than one (1) failing grade for each nine-week period. Students who fail to maintain adequate academic standards shall be ineligible for the following nine-week period; effective the day grade cards go out. (Academic eligibility for students

participating in sports during the first nine-week period will be determined by the last nine weeks of the previous year until first mid-nine weeks progress reports are reported. To be eligible a student cannot have more than one (1) failing grade on this progress report. Students who fail to maintain adequate academic standards shall be ineligible for the remainder of this grading period; effective the day progress reports go out.)

- H. Student athletes ejected from any game (in county or out of county) for unsportsmanlike conduct in any sport will be suspended for two games.. If it is thought by the principal or the Director of Schools that a longer-term suspension is in order, the suspension may be longer than two games with the Director of School having the final say in the matter. A written report must be provided to the Director of Schools within 48 hours of any player ejection. If a player is ejected for a second time for unsportsmanlike conduct, the player will face penalties up to suspension from all sports up to a 12-month period. The 12 - month suspension could carry into the high school season for 8th graders.
- I. If any ineligible player participates in a game, the offending school must forfeit that game, regardless of any agreement between coaches.

Understanding Cooperative Programs

- A. Cumberland County Director of Schools and/or designees will evaluate and approve co-op assignments. Middle school teams/countywide teams are considered co-op teams.
- B. The teams are established by the administration of each elementary school in conjunction with the CCS Director of Schools with the support of each individual high school's administrative team.
- C. The team and coaches will report to the high school coach for the sport they are playing.
- D. All players will be required to play for the team that feeds the high school that their elementary school presently feeds.
- E. Feeder schools are defined by the official bus transportation pattern.
- F. The CCS Director will present all cooperative agreements to the CCS Board of Education annually.

Practices and Games

- A. Cumberland County Director of Schools and/or designees, are responsible for scheduling all elementary interscholastic athletic contests for each team within the athletic program. Elementary games shall not conflict with high school games unless such conflict is made absolutely avoidable by circumstances beyond the control of elementary school officials.
- B. Tryouts for all schools should be after 10:00 AM on the final day of school unless otherwise approved by the school's athletic director and/or principal. Tryouts should be approved by the school's athletic director and/ or principal at least one month prior to tryouts.
- C. Dead Period Rule – No coaching, observing, or contact between coach and players in sport involved. There is no practice, no open facilities, no weight training/conditioning, no loaning or renting of facilities for athletic purposes.
 - a. The dead period, which is to be observed by all schools (High School, Middle School, and Elementary School) will coincide with the dead period scheduled by the NFHS yearly calendar.
 - b. Other than dead period, coaches may have open facilities in which no direct instruction is provided in the summer with building level principal approval.
- D. Students may and should be encouraged to participate in multi-sports. However, the sanctioned TSSAA sport will take precedence, and no penalty or pressure will be applied to an athlete or their family unit to give up one sport for another.
- E. In basketball when the score reaches a 20-point spread the use of "full court press" should be

- avoided. "Running up the score" past a 20-point spread should be avoided.
- F. No school means no practice and/or games for elementary and middle school sports..
Permission for access to athletic facilities for high school sports when school is not in session should be gained directly from the CCS Director of Schools via the school's principal and/or athletic director.
 - G. Elementary schools are not permitted to practice at the high school facilities nor are they permitted to practice with middle school or high school teams. Middle school and high school coaches from the respective feeder schools may visit / attend practices and games as spectators only.
 - H. If an athlete were to quit a team, he/she is not permitted to join another team until the team they quit has finished their season.
 - I. Once a season is concluded, (the team is eliminated from post season), there will be a mandatory two week dead period instituted for all athletes and coaches.

Cumberland County Athletic Seasons

Elementary Archery for Grades K-8:

Practice may begin: First Day of School
Competitions may begin at the discretion of the coach
The season will conclude at the end of the school year

Elementary Cross Country for Grades K-5: (Run times 4:00 PM CST)

Practice may begin: First Day of School
Races will begin: First Monday of September
Final Race concluded: Before Fall Break

Elementary Cheer (both divisions):

Practice may begin: First Day of School
Basketball games will begin: First Monday of September
Basketball games will conclude: End of November

Elementary Basketball for Grades 3-5: (Game times 5:30 PM CST)

Practice may begin: First Monday of August
Games will begin: Second Monday of September
Tournament will be concluded: Prior to Fall Break

Elementary Basketball for Grades 6 -8: (Game times 5:30 PM CST)

Practice may begin: First Monday of October
Games will begin: First Monday of November
Tournament will be concluded: End of November

Elementary Basketball Pup Leagues for Grades K-5:

Play days can be held on Saturdays only.
No more than two practices per week.
No more than one and half hours per practice.
Leagues may not begin until January.
All play days should be concluded by Spring Break.

**** All TSSAA sanctioned sports will follow the participation guidelines provided by TSSAA for the**

middle school and the high school divisions and will be monitored by the building level principal and the building athletic director.**

Ethical Behavior Toward Officials

- A. Officials contracted to officiate at Cumberland County Elementary Schools are guests of the schools and should be treated accordingly. Upon arrival, officials shall be greeted by a designated school employee.
- B. Contest officials shall have the respect and support of the coach.
- C. The coach shall not indulge in conduct, which will incite players or spectators against the officials.
- D. Public criticism of officials or players is unethical.
- E. Coaches should introduce themselves to the officials prior to the contest and extend a cordial welcome.
- F. During and after the contest, the coach's relationship with the official shall be on a professional level.
- G. Should an occasion arise for the coach to question the official concerning a contest situation, it shall be done in a respectful manner within the contest rules.
- H. Judgment calls of the official should not be challenged. At no time is the coach or a member of the bench to berate the official in such a manner as to incite the spectators.
- I. Coaches who promote a positive contest relationship with the officials can expect likewise treatment from the official.
- J. Elementary School Administrators will provide the following for officials:
 - a. Official parking available away from the general fan parking areas.
 - b. A clean and safe dressing room.
 - C. Notification as to special events, e.g. Homecoming, Parents Night, etc.
 - D. Clarification on any local playing conditions or ground rules.
 - E. Half-time refreshments are available.
 - F. Pay vouchers in order.

Accountability Measures for Misconduct by Coaches

- A. Any coach that receives two technicals during a contest will forfeit the right to coach their team for the remainder of that night, the next contest and will not coach his/her team in the post season.
- B. Any coach that receives a technical during the post season will forfeit the right to coach their team the remainder of the games.
- C. Any time a game has to be stopped for fan conduct the coach is issued a technical foul.
- D. Any time the game has to be stopped for fan conduct the school will be fined \$250 and it will be the responsibility of the fan to pay the \$250. The fan will also be suspended for the next two contests. (money can go to the general fund)

Locker Room responsibilities

- A. Each coach is responsible for the actions of members of his/her squad for the time they report for practice until they leave the building after practice.
- B. It is the coach's responsibility to be present at the time that the athletes are to report for practices, games, meets, home or away, and stays until the last athlete has left.
- C. The coach shall see that lights and showers are turned off, the doors are locked, equipment is locked up and the room left as neat as possible.

- D. Since many coaches will be using the locker room office area (coaches office), each coach must make an effort to keep this area as neat and clean as reasonably possible. The custodian will clean this area as scheduled.
- E. Each coach shall keep a numerical and alphabetical record of the locks and lockers used by his/her squad. This record should include lock combinations. A copy of this record shall be made available to the principal.
- F. All keys to the building, locker rooms, equipment rooms, etc., will be issued to coaches by the principal or designee. All coaches will return their keys to the principal on the final day of the school year, unless permission has been granted for summer use of the athletic area.
- G. Coaches are not to give athletes their keys at any time. Managers may use coaches' keys during practice sessions, but managers are not to have their own keys.
- H. If keys to the athletic area are lost, the coach should report this to the principal immediately.

Athletic Injuries

- A. The coach in charge of the activity is to assume the responsibility. He/she must be prepared to recognize and properly administer first aid or refer injuries to the appropriate medical personnel.
- B. No member of the coaching staff should overstep his/her bounds and attempt to diagnose or treat an injury. Since athletes are bound to have injuries, the coach must understand first aid and be ready to administer it. In addition to knowing what to do, he/she should know what not to do.
- C. It is the responsibility of the coach in charge of a team to have a complete list of emergency telephone numbers and pertinent student health information and a first aid kit at every practice and contest.
- D. Encourage heavy fluid intake before, during, and after practice sessions.

Emergency Procedures

- A. Check for consciousness and vital signs (breathing and pulse); look for abnormally displaced body parts. If unconscious, assume the injured athlete may have a spinal injury.
- B. Take appropriate steps to control excessive bleeding.
- C. Movement of the injured should be kept at a minimum.
- D. Keep the injured as warm and comfortable as possible, except with heat related illnesses.
- E. When there is any question as to the extent, seriousness or nature of the injury by the coach, seek professional medical help immediately.
- F. Notify the parents of the injured athlete immediately.
- G. Call 911 as needed.
- H. The athlete's parents' home and work phone numbers, other contact person, preferred physician and preferred hospital are listed on the "Emergency Medical Authorization" card that is carried at all times in the team's medical kit.
- I. If the parents are not available, a member of the coaching staff will accompany the athlete to seek the necessary medical attention, taking the Emergency Medical Authorization card. He/she should continue to try to contact the parents.
- J. Notify parents of all noticeable injuries, illnesses, infections, etc. The parents should always make contact with the family physician.

Accident/Injury Report Procedures

- A. The coach will complete the "Athletic Injury Report" form immediately following any athletic injury that requires medical professional or health care personnel. This includes athletic injuries or accidents that involve any students under their control during a practice, contest or while

- traveling to or from a contest.
- B. The form shall be turned into the principal's office and/ or school nurse the following morning with the coach retaining a copy.
- C. Coaches should follow up on all injuries by attempting to personally contact the parents.

Return to Participation

Athletes that have been out of action for a time because of illness or injury, and were under the treatment of the family physicians, must have a written statement allowing return to competition.

Awards Banquets

- A. The coach shall be responsible for coordinating the awards format for his/her program at the end of the season.
- B. The coach may choose to work with a support club, or a group of selected parents in planning the type of awards ceremony under the supervision of the principal.
- C. The team banquet should:
 - a. Ensure that the cost of attendance or participation does not create a barrier for any student-athlete.
 - b. Highlight and celebrate the academic and athletic growth rather than the extravagance of the venue or decor and/or gifts to outgoing players.
 - c. Ensure all financial documentations are finalized and that we are being good stewards of the funds entrusted to us by our boosters and the community.

Cooperative Agreements

Public School Agreements

Cumberland County Middle School will be composed of Frank P. Brown Elementary, Glenn Martin Elementary, Pleasant Hill Elementary, and South Cumberland Elementary.

Stone Memorial Middle School will be composed of Crab Orchard Elementary, Homestead Elementary, North Cumberland Elementary, Pine View Elementary, and Stone Elementary.

Stone Memorial High School will have a cooperative agreement with Phoenix High School.

Private School Agreements

Cumberland County Middle School will enter a cooperative agreement with Christian Academy of the Cumberlands (middle school division).

Cumberland County High School will enter a cooperative agreement with Christian Academy of the Cumberlands (high school division).

Stone Memorial Middle School will enter a cooperative agreement with Trinity Academy.

Definitions of Seasons

Preseason: First day of school until first official practice date: Conditioning and weight training can occur - no more than 3 person groups for individual instruction. Open gym style for the others.

Summer: No restrictions other than dead period (last day of school until first day of school)

Off season: Begins when team is eliminated from post season until school ends: could have 10 practices in 15 days near the end of the school to prepare for tryouts.