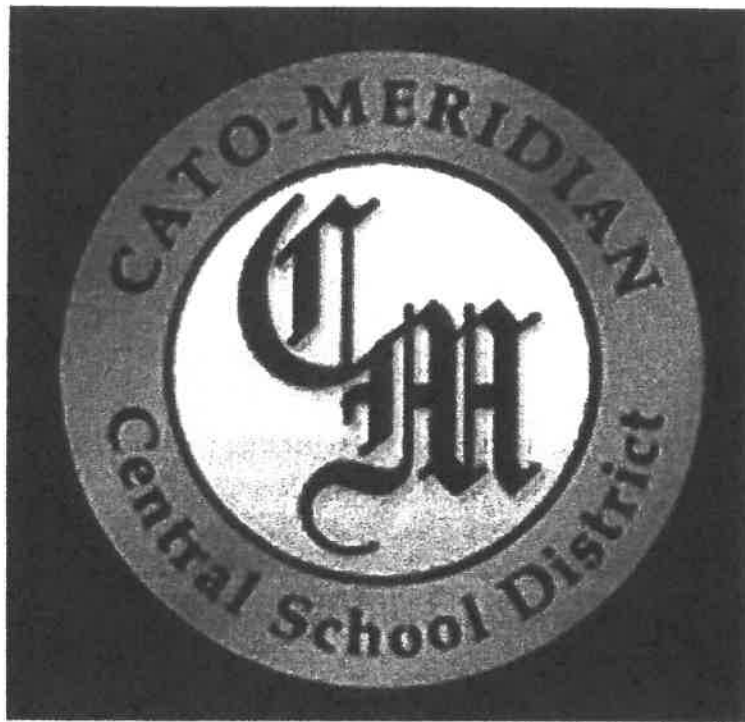


**CATO-MERIDIAN  
CENTRAL SCHOOL**



**Interscholastic  
Parent/Student  
Handbook**

Dear Parents:

It is with great pleasure that I welcome you to the Cato-Meridian Athletic Program. As your son or daughter enters our program, he/she will enable Cato-Meridian to continue the fine tradition that has been established through years of successful participation in interscholastic athletics.

The Cato-Meridian Athletic Program would like to take this opportunity to discuss a very sensitive but important issue in our program – SAFETY. Our philosophy stresses safety at all levels of competition. Therefore, we strive to conduct all activities in the safest manner possible.

Although we strive to minimize athletic injuries, we all know that they are a part of athletics. By following all rules and regulations outlined in this Interscholastic Parent/Student Handbook, and by following all coach's rules and instructions, the student athlete can help prevent or minimize injuries during competitions.

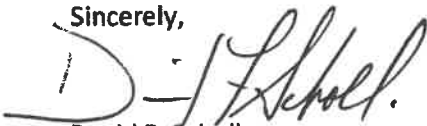
Parents must be aware that with athletic participation comes a certain risk of injury. Any athlete that participates in athletics at Cato-Meridian Central School District could be at risk. Although national statistics indicate there are fewer injuries related to supervised activity, as opposed to unsupervised activity, injuries can and do occur.

Most athletic injuries are minor in nature, ranging from pulled muscles to broken bones. However, under the safest conditions, more serious injuries can and do occur. These injuries could range from permanent paralysis to death. I realize that these are not comforting words to hear, but it is our feeling that parents should be informed of all aspects of the athletic program, not only the positive ones. We need you to be informed of these risks so that you can make an educated decision as to your child's participation in athletic sports.

Our dedicated coaching staff's primary focus is to coach to the best interest of the team and its athletes. Your support of their decisions will greatly enhance the athletic experience. Public criticism or second-guessing undermines the good work being done and places the athlete in the middle. If a concern arises, please do not hesitate to contact the coach (it is suggested to wait 24 hours). If you would like to discuss the situation further, please feel free to call me at the High School at 626-3317.

In signing the permission form on Family ID, parents are not only giving their child permission to participate in athletics, but they are also indicating that they have read and understand the Interscholastic Parent/Student Handbook. This document aids in the maintenance of the high standards of participation and success we have experienced.

Sincerely,



David F. Scholl

Director of Athletics, Health and Physical Education

Cato-Meridian High School  
2851 Route 270 E.  
Cato, New York 13033  
(315) 626-3317

## **Cato-Meridian Athletic Department Philosophy**

The Cato-Meridian Central School District understands that interscholastic athletics are a significant part of the educational process. The combination of academics and athletics enhances the quality of students' lives and expands their options for learning and personal growth. Athletics provide an educational opportunity in which students can learn essential life lessons beyond those that can be learned in an academic classroom.

The interscholastic competitive environment provides an opportunity for our participants to learn positive life skills, values and ethics in a climate that demands dedication, responsibility, self-discipline, cooperation, positive work ethics and respect for others. This program provides an opportunity for all to share their common interests, to celebrate their differences, and to appreciate physical competitions as a lifelong process.

All involved in the program must show a personal commitment to the goals of the team, and make the personal sacrifices necessary in order to achieve success. Making such a commitment to excellence nurtures a sense of pride, loyalty and leadership qualities in an athlete, enabling the individual to become more resilient and better prepared to face life's challenges. This unique experience allows students to achieve their full potential as students, athletes and citizens.

It is the nature of athletic competition to strive for victory. However, the number of victories is only one measure of success. Ultimately, the real challenge is guiding the individual and the team to reach full potential. This is the true measure of achievement. The competitive athletic environment is one that demands respect for a full effort, and applause for those who rise to the challenge and accept the risk of defeat. If one strives towards reaching full potential, with a passion and perseverance, personal victories that last a lifetime are the end reward, even though the win-loss record may not always meet expectations.

### **Cato-Meridian Athletic Department Philosophy by Sport Level**

#### **Modified**

This program of competitive sports focuses on the fundamentals of the game and team play, rules, training, and basic skills. At this introductory level, an emphasis is placed on academics, sportsmanship, chemical-free lifestyle, and socio-emotional growth along with commitment and dedication. Less emphasis is placed on winning and maximum participation is desired. An attempt will be made to play all participants as long as they are in good standing as a team member. It is recognized, however, that they may not all play equally in each game.

#### **Junior Varsity (JV)**

At the Junior Varsity level of competition there is an increased emphasis placed upon team play, physical conditioning, and refinement of basic skills. Winning at the Junior Varsity level is considered important and participants should be taught how to cope with game situations and how to win and lose properly. Coaches will try to get players into contests. There will be contests that not every player will receive playing time or play equal time. Playing time is dictated by past experience, past performance, practice performance, injuries, conditioning, attitude, work ethic, present game performance, need, and score. At the Junior

Varsity level it is most important to put the best team forward and getting the team prepared for the varsity level.

**Varsity**

The Varsity level of athletic competition is the culmination of the high school athletic program. Team play, sportsmanship, individual physical ability, motivation, and mental attitude are all very important aspects of competition at the varsity level. The team definitely plays to win the contest but varsity contestants should accept the fact that important lessons are to be learned from losing. There continues to be very strong emphasis on academics, sportsmanship, chemical-free life style, and community service. It is recognized that not all participants may play in every contest or receive equal playing time.

Cato-Meridian currently offers the following athletic opportunities:

<b><u>FALL</u></b>		
<b>Varsity Football</b>		<b>Modified Football</b>
<b>Varsity Field Hockey</b>		<b>Modified Field Hockey</b>
<b>Varsity Boys Soccer</b>		<b>Modified Boys Soccer</b>
<b>Varsity Girls Soccer</b>		<b>Modified Girls Soccer</b>
<b>Varsity Girls Cross Country</b>		<b>Modified Girls Cross Country</b>
<b>Varsity Boys Cross Country</b>		<b>Modified Boys Cross Country</b>
<b>Varsity Cheerleading</b>		
<b><u>Winter</u></b>		
<b>Varsity Boys Basketball</b>	<b>JV Boys Basketball</b>	<b>Modified Boys Basketball</b>
<b>Varsity Girls Basketball</b>	<b>JV Girls Basketball</b>	<b>Modified Girls Basketball</b>
<b>Varsity Girls Volleyball</b>	<b>JV Girls Volleyball</b>	<b>Modified Girls Volleyball</b>
<b>Varsity Wrestling</b>		<b>Modified Wrestling</b>
<b>Varsity Cheerleading</b>		
<b><u>Spring</u></b>		
<b>Varsity Baseball</b>	<b>JV Baseball</b>	<b>Modified Baseball</b>
<b>Varsity Softball</b>		<b>Modified Softball</b>
<b>Varsity Girls Track</b>		<b>Modified Girls Track</b>
<b>Varsity Boys Track</b>		<b>Modified Boys Track</b>
<b>Varsity Golf</b>		

## **Athletic Placement Process (APP)**

The Athletic Placement Process has been developed for a few select students who benefit from such placement because of their level of readiness. The APP was revised to assess a student's physical and emotional maturation, physical fitness, and sport skill, so that a student may be placed at a level of competition that should result in increased opportunity, a fairer competitive environment, minimized risk, and greater personal satisfaction. The APP is used only when an individual athlete's athletic skills warrant moving to the commencement or intermediate sport competition level, and therefore, it should be initiated by the athletic director, physical education director, or physical education staff. It is not the intent to evaluate all modified students, and evaluation should be considered only for those students with the appropriate physical and emotional readiness, and whose athletic abilities are outside of those of their age-related peers.

If a student has attained an appropriate level of physical maturity, and has a height and weight that are comparable to those of the proposed team members as determined by the medical director, they may proceed to the next level of skills assessment by the athletic/physical education director. If the medical director does not clear the student to participate in the desired sport and level due to the student not attaining the appropriate physical maturity level, he or she may not proceed any further in the evaluation process. If a student is determined to be comparable with the physical size and maturity of the average age and sex of the students against whom they wish to compete, but fails to meet more than one of the physical fitness test standards, or if a student fails to meet an appropriate sport skill level as determined by the coach, he or she may not proceed any further in the evaluation process. An athlete may not be approved to participate by the medical director due to health impairment and/or the student's physical maturation level. In addition, all student-athletes are requested to sign up for their current grade level team. A physical screening must be administered by a physician. Each student athlete must pass the physical fitness test. Each athlete that successfully completes this process will then be allowed to try-out the specific sport. The athlete must participate in three of the first five practice days. The student athlete may be assigned to JV or Varsity level according to his/her ability in the sport, or may return to an appropriate level if the athlete's ability is determined to be lower than that of the desired level. If a student athlete is placed at a higher level, that student may not return to a modified level in that particular sport at any time in the future. If the student practices one day over the permitted try-out period for that specific sport, they are not permitted to go back to the modified level.

If your child successfully meets the requirements of the APP, he or she will be allowed to try out for competitive high school athletics during 7th and/or 8th grade(s), or compete at the modified level if in grades 9-12. Under normal circumstances, a student is eligible for senior high school athletic competition in a sport for only four consecutive seasons, beginning with the student's entry into the ninth grade. However, by meeting the Athletic Placement Process requirements established by NYSED, your child's eligibility can be extended to permit:

- a) participation during five consecutive seasons in the approved sport after entry into the eighth grade; or
- b) participation during six consecutive seasons in the approved sport after entry into the seventh grade.

It is important for you and your child to understand that, once the requirements are met and if he/she is accepted as a member of the team, he or she cannot return to a lower-level team (modified) in that sport in that season. Remember, at the higher level of play your child will be exposed to the social atmosphere

that is common among older students in a high school environment. Therefore, it is important to take into account your child's ability to handle the additional demands.

## **Glossary of Terms**

### **BULLYING**

New York State's Dignity for All Students Act seeks to provide the State's public elementary and secondary school students with a safe and supportive environment free from discrimination, intimidation, taunting, harassment, and bullying on school property, a school bus, and/or at a school function. Bullying against any individual is strictly prohibited. This includes bullying of staff members against students, students against staff members, staff members against other staff members, and bullying by or against any parents, persons in parental relation, volunteers, visitors, or vendors who may be on school property or at school sponsored events.

### **Concussion Management**

Any student who is believed to have sustained a mild traumatic brain injury will be removed from the activity immediately and be evaluated as soon as possible by an appropriate health care professional. No student will return to play while symptomatic. Students are prohibited from returning to play the day the concussion is sustained. Once a student has been symptom free for 24 hours and has been given clearance from the school medical director, the student will then begin the 6-Step for Return to Play Protocol. If there is any return of symptoms during the Return to Play Protocol, the student will return to the previous day's activities until symptom free. The physical education teacher and nurse must complete the paperwork indicating the student's performance on the Return to Play Protocol. If the student completes this process successfully, the student will need approval from the school physician for permission to return to play.

### **Hazing**

Hazing in any form is strictly forbidden by New York State law. Activities that are demeaning, abusive and/or illegal behaviors that harm victims and are inconsistent with the educational goals of the district by negatively impacting the school environment are considered forms of hazing. Hazing of a student by another student or group of students is strictly prohibited on school property; in school buildings; on school buses; by school sponsored groups, clubs, or teams; and at school sponsored events and/or activities whether occurring on or off-campus. Hazing among students is defined as any humiliating or dangerous activity expected of a student to join a group, regardless of their willingness to participate. Hazing behaviors include, but are not limited to, the following general categories:

- a) Humiliation: socially offensive, isolating or uncooperative behaviors.
- b) Substance abuse: abuse of tobacco, alcohol or illegal drugs.
- c) Dangerous hazing: hurtful, aggressive, destructive, and disruptive behaviors.

Even if the hazing victim participated "willingly" in the activity, there was no "intent" by the hazer to harm or injure another individual, hazing is still hazing and against district policy

### **Offensive Language/Gestures**

The use of vulgar, obscene, or offensive gestures or language will not be tolerated. Violations will result in reprimand, suspension, or dismissal, depending on the severity of the offense, by the coach or administrator.

### **Physical Risk**

Participation by a student in athletic activities involves a certain degree of risk of physical injury. Such physical injury can occur in any type of activity, be it a contact or non-contact sport. Furthermore, many injuries are truly accidental in nature and by choosing to participate in a school-sponsored athletic activity a student and his/her parents/guardians assume the risks of injuries which may occur.

### **Title IX**

The Board of Education of Cato-Meridian Central School District does not discriminate on the basis of sex, race, color, national origin, or special needs in the educational programs or activities which it operates, and is in full compliance with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

### **Transportation**

All players must ride the team bus to all away contests. All parents/guardians are strongly encouraged to have their son or daughter ride the team bus home from team contests. However, if a parent or legal guardian would like to sign out their son or daughter from a game or contest, they may do so on the Transportation sign-out form. No student athlete will be allowed to drive himself/herself to or from contests. Coaches may not release a student to anyone other than the parent or legal guardian unless prior approval by an administrator.

### **Section III & Cato-Meridian Disqualification Policy**

Sportsmanship is an integral and vital ingredient of any interscholastic athletic program. The National Federation of High School Athletics, the New York State Public High School Athletic Association, Section III and Cato-Meridian Central School District have targeted the area of sportsmanship for a major emphasis. Section III and Cato-Meridian Central School District have instituted the following policy to ensure the development of and the understanding of the importance of proper sportsmanship and fair play.

Any Cato-Meridian student athlete who is ejected/disqualified from a contest will be automatically suspended for a number of games according to NYSPHAA/Section III guidelines. The game(s) is to be the next game(s) played and may be carried over to the player's next season. A conference between the player and the Athletic Director will take place before eligibility is restored.

Any spectator who acts in an inappropriate manner such as:

1. Making inappropriate comments or gestures
2. Going on the playing field or court without permission during a contest will be asked to leave the contest immediately.

3. Uses any derogatory remarks or use of profanity toward a player or a coach, the spectator will be suspended from any home contests. The length of the suspension will be determined by the Athletic Director.

Any spectator who is ejected/disqualified from a contest will be suspended for a number of games to be determined by the athletic director or administrator.

#### **Communication Concerns (Chain of Command for Parents)**

The following is the due process procedures used by the Director of Athletics for handling situations and/or concerns that may occur before, during, or after a sports season: **(remember to allow 24 hours after a game before approaching the coach; this gives both parties time to think through "situations" prior to commenting).**

- a. The athlete asks his/her coach questions and discusses concerns.
- b. If the athlete is not satisfied with the answer/outcome after discussing his/her concerns with the coach, the parent/guardian must then call the coach and arrange a meeting to clarify the situation and resolve the issue.
- c. If the parent/guardian and athlete still do not feel that the situation has been resolved and wish to pursue it further, they then call the athletic director for a joint meeting with the coach, parent, and athlete.

#### **Athletic Awards**

Varsity awards (letters) and certificates will be awarded to all athletes who start the season in good academic standing, attend practices and games, and complete the season in good academic and team standing. Any athlete that becomes academically ineligible more than once per season will not be eligible to qualify for a varsity letter or pin. The athlete will only receive a certificate of participation. If the athlete violates any policy of the Interscholastic Parent/Student Handbook, the post season awards will be determined by the coach and athletic director. Additionally, when an athlete becomes academically ineligible or violates any policy of the Interscholastic Parent/Student Handbook, the athlete may not receive any credit towards a Senior Cup Award (as determined by the coach and athletic director). The first time you play a varsity sport the athlete is awarded a varsity chenille letter. Every subsequent sport you letter in, you receive a pin for that specific sport and a certificate.

JV awards (certificates) will be awarded to athletes who start and end the season in good standing. Modified athletes will receive a participation certificate award.

**THIS POLICY IS IN EFFECT from July 1 through June 30<sup>th</sup> of each school year, and applies to all Student Athletes in grades seven through twelve.**

#### **Attendance Policy (Per Board of Education Policy #7422)**

A student must be in full day attendance or be in compliance with the tardy policy (See Student-Parent Handbook), except for an eligible excuse. The student must also be in attendance for the full day preceding a weekend or vacation contest. Repeated absences or tardiness on the day before or the day after a contest will result in ineligibility. Ineligibility will also result from school or repeated class truancy.

Only legal excuses according to the New York State attendance policy will be honored and verified as an exception to the attendance policy. Eligible excuses are as follows:



1. Illness
2. Sickness or death in the family
3. Impassable roads due to weather
4. Religious observance
5. Required court appearances
6. Quarantine
7. Doctor's appointment\*/health clinics\*
8. Attendance at health clinics
9. Approved college visitations
10. Approved cooperative work programs
11. Military obligations
12. Any other reason for absence may be judged by the Board of Education

\* A student will be required to submit a written statement from a physician when they return from a Doctor's appointment during the school day.

Any athlete that spends time in the in-school suspension room more than one period on any given day, or receives out of school suspension for any disciplinary infraction will not be allowed to practice or participate in any contest until reinstated back to school. Any athlete who is serving a disciplinary infraction that is for two or less periods a day, for a series of days, will only be ineligible for the first day served.

Student athletes must be prepared for and actively participate in Physical Education class to be eligible to practice or play in the next contest.

#### **Unexcused Absence and Unexcused Tardiness**

Any unexcused absence from or tardiness to practice will not be tolerated. When an athlete will be absent from practice, his/her coach should be notified as soon as possible. This is not necessary when the athlete is absent from school. Violations will result in reprimand, suspension, or dismissal depending on the severity of the offense.

#### **Family Vacations**

When parents and student athletes choose to take family vacations during a sport season, it must be understood that time missed by the student athlete can affect team chemistry and personal conditioning. Student athletes who miss practices or competition for any reason may have their position or playing time adjusted.

#### **Cato-Meridian Athletic Training Rules**

Students that participate in athletics must meet certain requirements to be considered eligible. These requirements include:

1. Maintaining bona fide student status by taking at least four subjects including Physical Education.
2. Students must have a physical (*must be valid before the season starts*) and be cleared by the school nurse and school physician.
3. Abiding by specific team conduct and training rules established by his/her coach, in addition to the overall program regulations.

## **Changing/Quitting a Sports Team**

Quitting an athletic team is strongly discouraged. If an athlete wants to quit a team to join another, he/she must obtain consent from the coaches involved. If an athlete is cut from a team and wants to join another, he/she will be permitted to do so. After fourteen calendar days from the first day of practice of the season, athletes will not be allowed to quit a team to avoid compliance with the Code of Conduct for Student Athletes. Athletes who choose to quit a team will be deemed ineligible to participate in the next sport season that the athlete usually participates in. For example: A student plays football and quits the team. The next season that the athlete participates in is in the spring, so the athlete would not be eligible to participate. If a parent removes a student from the team, the athletic director shall determine what will be the next season the student is eligible to participate.

**THIS POLICY IS IN EFFECT from July 1 through June 30<sup>th</sup> of each school year, and applies to all Student Athletes in grades seven through twelve**

### **Level 1 – Violations**

1. Student athletes will adhere to individual team rules.
2. Student athletes will return school equipment and uniforms at the end of the season, or they will not be eligible to participate in any other sport until matter has been resolved.
3. Student athletes will dress appropriately and participate in scheduled physical education classes to be eligible to practice or play in the next contest.
4. Student athletes will not engage in activities or actions which bring discredit to the school program or team as determined by the coach, athletic director or principal.
5. Student athletes will be responsible for theft or damage to uniforms, money, or school property.
6. Athletes will not be absent from practices or games to attend sports, clubs, or recreational type activities. In-season interscholastic programs take priority over these activities.
7. Student athletes will not violate the Social Media for Students acknowledgement and Consent Form Rules.

### **Level 1 – Consequences**

Decisions regarding the enforcement of the Level 1 consequences for the first and second offenses are made by the individual coach (es), who submit a written report to the athletic director regarding the violation and the consequences imposed as a result of the violation. All third offenses will be reviewed by the coach and athletic director to determine the consequences.

- 1<sup>st</sup> Offense:** A first offense penalty may range from an official warning to exclusion from athletics for up to 10 calendar days. Post-season awards will be determined by the coach and athletic director.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Offense:** A second offense penalty may range from exclusion from athletics for up to 21 calendars days, which could be carried over to the next season of participation once the practice begins. Post-season awards will be determined by the coach and athletic director.

During the period of suspension, the student athlete is ineligible to participate in any contests or team activities for the duration of the suspension. The coach, athletic director and principal

will determine whether the suspended student athlete will participate in practices and/or attend contests. In no case will the suspended student athlete dress in a school uniform.

**THIS POLICY IS IN EFFECT from July 1 through June 30<sup>th</sup> of each school year, and applies to all Student Athletes in grades seven through twelve**

### Level 2 – Violations

A penalty will be imposed on student athletes who commit any of the following:

1. Use, possess, sell, distribute or be under the influence of alcoholic beverages, illegal drugs or performance enhancing substances (e.g., caffeine pills, steroids, synthetic drug), whether legal or illegal, possess or use of any prescription drug that does not belong to you, look-alike drugs, or drug paraphernalia on school grounds, off school grounds, whether during sport season or out of sport season.
2. Possess or use any tobacco products and/or electronic cigarettes, for the purpose of this handbook, "tobacco" is defined to include any cigarette, cigar, pipe, bidi, clove cigarette, electronic cigarettes and any other smoking product; and smokeless or spit tobacco, also known as dip, chew, snuff or snus in any form. "Smoking" is defined as inhaling, exhaling, burning, or carrying any lighted or heated cigar, cigarette, pipe, or any other lighted or heated tobacco or other product intended for inhalation, in any manner or in any form. Smoking also includes the use of an e-cigarette which creates vapor, in any manner or any form, or the use of any oral device for the purpose of circumventing the prohibition of smoking in this handbook. "E-cigarette" means any electronic oral device, such as one composed of a heating element, battery, and/or electronic circuit, which provides a vapor of nicotine or any other substances for inhalation. The term shall include any device, whether manufactured, distributed, marketed, or sold as an e-cigarette, e-cigar, e-pipe, or under any other product name or descriptor, but does not include any product specifically approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration for use in medical treatment, such as an asthma inhaler.
3. Use, possess, or distribute firearms, weapons or explosive devices on school grounds or at school events.
4. Engage in illegal gambling activities.
5. Harassing behaviors that include but not limited to: verbal threats, threatening, fighting, hazing activities, bullying, cyber bullying, vandalism, intimidation, retaliation or abuse, conduct or speech based on a persons' actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion/religious practices, disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender, or perceived gender, protected federal rights, or other personal misconduct, including, but not limited to, conduct that involves police or court action.
6. Engaging in indecent exposure at any time or at any place.
7. Will not commit or be involved in any criminal activity that includes but not limited to theft, vandalism, or destruction of school property.
8. Student athletes will not violate the Social Media for Students Acknowledgement and Consent Form Rules.

For the purposes of this section, "possess" shall mean to have in one's possession or control, e.g., on one's person or in one's physical control or keeping, or to have in one's presence or close proximity.

### Level 2 Violations- Consequences

Following the investigation of the facts by the coach, athletic director or building administrator, the following actions will be taken for violation of the Interscholastic Parent/Student Handbook by the athletic director:

- athlete will be notified by the athletic director or principal and parents/guardians will be notified by mail. The letter will include the violation of the rule and procedure for appeal.
- suspension from participation in district's athletic programs until the student has been through the reinstatement process.

#### **PROCESS:**

The student athlete is immediately suspended from the team or athletic club for the remainder of that sport season. This includes all regular season games and post-season play. The suspension continues for future interscholastic sports participation while the student's appeal or request for reinstatement is pending. **While the student athlete is on suspension he/she is not allowed to practice or participate in any contest. The suspended student may not dress in a school uniform.**

The student athlete may seek reinstatement for eligibility for the season of desired participation. If approved, participation would commence following completion of the in-season suspension and completion of any additional consequences imposed. The reinstatement process requires that a student submit a written request for a meeting with the Athletic Review Board who will determine whether the student shall be reinstated to the district's athletic program. This meeting will be held within two weeks from receipt of the student's written request. Within five school days after the Athletic Review Board has determined their decision, the athletic director shall notify the student in writing of the decision of the Athletic Review Board.

#### **Appeal Procedures (Per Board of Education Policy #7422)**

When a violation occurs, the athlete will be notified by the athletic director or principal personally, and the parents/guardians will be notified by mail. The letter will inform the student of the violation of the rule, the facts of the violation, and procedure for appeal as follows:

a) If the student and parents/guardians appeal, a hearing with the Athletic Review Board and the student and parent guardian will be conducted as soon as possible but not later than two weeks from the receipt of the student's written request. Within five school days after the Athletic Review Board has determined their decision, the athletic director shall notify the student in writing of the decision of the Athletic Review Board.

b) If the parties are not satisfied with the outcome of this informal hearing, they then have the right to appeal the review board's decision to the principal of the student's building.

c) If not satisfied with the results of this hearing, the parties may appeal the principal's decision to the superintendent.

d) If not satisfied with the results of this hearing, the athlete may request a fourth hearing before the Cato-Meridian Central School District Board of Education. If the ruling of the Board of Education is adverse, an appeal may be made pursuant to the laws of New York State.

\*Appeals will be reviewed on the merits of fact and penalties.

The Athletic Review Board shall consist of the following:

1. Athletic Director (no vote)
2. Student Council President or other student representative
3. Coach
4. Two teachers-one special education teacher will serve on the review board if the student's education is governed by the CSE
5. School Counselor

Once the Athletic Review Board has determined that the student will be reinstated, then, as a condition of such reinstatement, one or more of the following additional consequences will be applied based on seriousness of the violation:

- Educational awareness counseling or education may be required. A date will be selected by the athletic director/principal. The course will require successful participation as determined by the counselor/instructor.
- If the suspension is not completed during the present sport season, the student will have the remaining of the difference applied to the next sport season of participation.  
Example: A soccer/baseball player is suspended from the fall season for a total of 30 days. He/she only completed 13 days in the fall season. This means in the next season he/she participates in, he/she will need to sit out for 17 more days once practice begins. He/she will not be allowed to participate in practice or a contest (excluding tryouts for the first five days of a new season) until suspension is completed.
- If the suspension carries over to the following season and If the request for reinstatement to participate in future season is denied. The student and his or her parent or guardian have the right to appeal the decision within (5) days to the athletic director.
- The minimum suspension after student reinstatement process is 14 calendar days and could range up to one calendar year from the date of the violation of penalty.

## Students

**SUBJECT: HIGH SCHOOL ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY**

The number one priority of the Cato-Meridian Central School is to educate the whole child, first by stimulating the child intellectually and then by providing a number of common experiences designed to develop the social, emotional, physical and ethical values necessary to be a productive member of society. Co-curricular programs help to provide such experiences and are, therefore, considered an integral part of the total educational program. Involvement in co-curricular activities can have a positive influence on the academic achievement of students. However, "academics" must always come first. To accomplish this objective, an eligibility standard has been established.

1. Students' grades will be reviewed after each progress report period and each marking period (generally every five weeks).
2. Students who meet the class average of 70% or higher (65% for students with a disability), yet are failing one class, will be deemed eligible.
3. Students who have a 64 in a course will be placed on probationary status. They will be allowed to continue to participate/compete, however, their grades and effort will be reviewed weekly. Continued failure and/or lack of effort will result in automatic ineligibility.
4. Students who meet the class average of 70% or better (65% for students with a disability), yet are failing the same core course (math, science, English, social studies) for ten consecutive weeks, will be deemed ineligible. The only exception to this will be an elective core course not required for graduation.
5. Students failing two or more classes will be deemed ineligible for five weeks, regardless of the class average.
6. Students who fail two or more courses for the last marking period will be ineligible for two weeks in September (three weeks if summer school is needed yet the student chooses not to attend or fails multiple courses in summer school). For the purpose of extra-curricular activities that begin prior to September, the ineligibility will begin when the activity (season) begins.
7. Passing a course in summer school will erase any pending ineligibility period in September only for that course.
8. Students will be deemed in good standing once they are no longer ineligible.
9. Appeals to the principal must be in writing *and* can only be made/upheld if the student substantiates that an error was made when calculating the grade.

**SUBJECT: HIGH SCHOOL ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY**

10. The superintendent or his/her designee has final authority to determine eligibility status for activities or situations not delineated under this policy.
  
11. This policy is applicable to students in grades 9 through 12. The Academic Eligibility Policy for middle school students takes precedent for middle school students; hence any student who is attending middle school and participating at the junior varsity or the varsity level in a 9 through 12 sport will adhere to the Middle School Academic Eligibility Policy, not the High School Academic Eligibility Policy.

Adopted: 7/6/10

Re-Adopted: 6/18/12; 11/5/12; 5/28/13; 8/10/15; 8/13/18; 9/16/19