

Topeka Public Schools Middle School Athletics Handbook For Parents and Students



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CODE OF ETHICS

There are times when fans can become quite vocal at events and loudly critical of both game officials and opposing players and teams. This type of negative behavior is counterproductive to what schools are trying to promote. It creates an uncomfortable environment for the other fans that come to support their team and wish to enjoy the game. This behavior can be an embarrassment to the school and the young people that are involved in the activity.

The greatest challenge to good sportsmanship is adversity. When things are not going well, the easy response is to shift the blame, in particular, to shift away from ourselves to our opponents or more often, to the officials. When this is done, the focus is away from the positive, “to perform harder and better”, to the negative, “how can we possibly overcome the bad calls.” Schools feel that it is essential that our students involved in activities maintain a positive approach to handling adversity. Students and schools need the support of the fans, as role models, to accomplish this goal.

Sportsmanship addresses the following:

1. Be positive, not negative
2. Don't put down your opponent with trash talk and gestures. Instead be positive with remarks for you own team.
3. Play within the rules, don't expect a fair advantage.
4. Play for the fun, the experience, and the educational value. Do play to win
5. Win with humility and respect for your opponent: lose with dignity and respect for your opponent,
6. The 24 Hour Rule: Set an appointment with your coach for the following day to discuss any issues.

KSHSAA Rule 52

SPORTSMANSHIP is a general way of thinking and behaving. The following sportsmanship policy items are listed below for clarification:

- ★ Be courteous to all (participants, coaches, officials, staff and fans).
- ★ Know the rules, abide by and respect the official's decision.
- ★ Win with character and lose with dignity
- ★ Display appreciation for good performance regardless of the team
- ★ Exercise self-control and reflect positively upon yourself, team, and school.
- ★ Permit only positive sportsmanlike behavior to reflect on your school or its activities.

If a student has an inhaler, proper paperwork needs to be completed with the school nurse.

Copies of the current KSHSAA forms can be found in the appendix.

ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY

Athletes must pass five classes the previous quarter before the activity to be eligible to participate.

Athletes are students first and when an athlete has an F in a class the day before an activity they will not participate in a contest until the grade is brought up. It is up to the discretion of the coach to limit playing time if an athlete has a D in a class.

Rule 13

SCHOLARSHIP REQUIREMENTS

Section 1: General Regulations (apply to grades 7-12)

Art. 1: Students who must attend a semester to regain scholastic eligibility, may not participate in interschool activities until after they have attended classes in a new semester.

Art. 2: Schools that issue credit in subjects on an annual rather than a semester basis, shall consider the grade issued at the end of the first half of the school year the equivalent of a first semester grade, and a grade issued at the end of the school year the equivalent of a second semester grade. Each half year must consist of at least eighteen weeks.

Art. 3: A student in grades 7-12 shall meet the following requirements for eligibility in interschool activities:

a. Scholarship—The student shall have passed at least five new subjects (those not previously passed) of unit weight, or its equivalency, the previous semester or the last semester of attendance. (*See Rule 14-1-1, Bona Fide Student and Rule 15-1-3, Enrollment/Attendance.*)

b. Enrollment—The student shall be enrolled in and attending a minimum of five new subjects (those not previously passed), of unit weight, or its equivalency, during the present semester. (*See Rule 14-1-1, Bona Fide Student, and Rule 15-1-3, Enrollment/Attendance.*) **NOTE:** High school students dually enrolled in colleges, who have their college hours recorded on their high school transcript, may count five hours of college credit as two subjects of unit weight or three hours of college credit as one subject of unit weight. However, the student must attend at least one class of unit weight at the member, base school per semester.

EXCEPTION: Schools who are operating their academic programs under **Outcomes Based Education** may apply to the Executive Board for their approval of an exception to Article 3. Such exceptions must assure the Association's member schools that students are making progress toward graduation (promotion).

Art. 4: If a student drops out of school four weeks or less before the close of the semester and has completed a sufficient amount of work to give him or her a semester's credit without relying upon the work that is incomplete, the student may be certified as eligible the following semester, as far as grades are concerned.

Section 2: Senior High Regulations (See General Regulations.)

Section 3: Middle/Junior High School Regulations

Art. 1: Middle and junior high schools may elect to report scholastic eligibility on a quarterly basis, at the option of the local school. In that event, the student shall meet the following requirements for eligibility in interschool activities:

a. Scholarship—The student shall have passed at least five new subjects (those not previously passed) of unit weight, or its equivalency, the previous quarter or the last quarter of attendance. (*See Rule 14-1-1, Bona Fide Student and Rule 15-1-3, Enrollment/Attendance.*)

b. Enrollment—The student shall be enrolled in and attending a minimum of five new subjects (those not previously passed) of unit weight, or its equivalency, during the present quarter. (*See Rule 14-1-1, Bona Fide Student and Rule 15-1-3, Enrollment/Attendance.*)

Early Dismissal

Students are responsible for all missed work due to early dismissals for activities. Students should obtain any work that will be missed prior to their dismissal. All work is still due at the normal time. Students must not put off making up missed tests or quizzes.

COMMUNICATION PLAN

There are situations that may require a conference between the coach, the athlete and the parent. These are encouraged. When these conferences are necessary, the following procedures should be allowed to help resolve the concern.

When appropriate your child should first talk with the coach about the concern. If the coach/athlete meeting does not clear up the situation then the parent(s) should call and set up an appointment with the coach. The student-athlete must be present with the parent during the parent-coach meeting. If the parent(s) need further discussion on the issue, the Activities Coordinator is the next contact. If a satisfactory resolution still cannot be reached, the Principal is the next person a parent should contact.

Please do not approach a coach before or after a contest or practice. These can be emotional times for both the parent and the coach. Meeting at these times generally does not work well for any of the parties involved.

The following ARE appropriate concerns to discuss with the coach:

- Advanced notice of schedule conflicts.
- The treatment of your son/daughter
- Ways to help your son/daughter improve.
- Concerns about the behavior of your son/daughter.

The following matters should be left to the discretion of the coaches:

- Playing time.
- Team strategy and play calling
- Other students athletes' conflict issues.

Please understand that participation in the athletic program is a privilege, not a right. We expect parent to support the concept of "being a student first", to represent the school, coaching staff and team with honor, and to set a good example for your child.

The parent will not engage in any disrespectful conduct of any sort, including profanity, gestures, offensive remarks of sexual or racial nature, trash-talking, taunting and other actions that demean individuals, the school or the sport. The parent will expect their student-athlete to do the same.

Please understand that we expect that parent will NOT coach from the sidelines. Parents need to exercise self-control and not publicly question an official or referee's judgment or integrity.

OUTSIDE COMPETITION

Players are all to be reminded of the outside competition rule at the beginning of each season.

An athlete may receive private instruction (not group) in the same sport from non-school employees during the athletic season. A group is defined as two or more individuals.

Rule 22

OUTSIDE COMPETITION

Violation of this rule shall make a student ineligible for the remainder of that sport or scholars' bowl or debate season, unless he or she is reinstated by the Executive Board.

Section 1: General Regulations (apply to grades 7-12)

Art. 1: A student who is a member of a school athletic, scholars' bowl or debate squad effective Tuesday following Labor Day through Friday preceding Memorial Day may not participate as a member of an outside team or as an independent competitor in the same sport, scholars' bowl or debate activity. *(Exception: See Rule 4, United States Olympic Committee-Sponsored National Trials and Competitions.)*

NOTE: Informal participation on the part of the student athlete, such as that experienced on the black top (concrete), in the park, local "Y", etc., is not considered a violation of this rule, provided it was not formally called or organized, no coaching takes place, where no official score is kept, time kept, officials used, etc.

Intra non-school youth group athletic participation is not considered a violation of this rule. Inter non-school youth group athletic participation is a violation.

Art. 2: A student shall not be prohibited from competing on a special team within his or her own school such as an FFA team, etc. All members of such teams must be bona fide students, however, and eligible under the rules of the Association.

Art. 3: A student becomes a member of a school's athletic squad, scholars' bowl or debate team when he or she first participates in a practice session.

A student ceases to be a squad member after his or her last contest for the school's athletic squad, scholars' bowl or debate team or when the membership on a squad is terminated. *(See Rule 14-1-1, Bona Fide Student and Rule 30-2-2, Seasons of Activities.)*

ATTENDANCE POLICIES

Rule 15

ENROLLMENT/ATTENDANCE

Section 1: General Regulations (apply to grades 7-12)

Art. 1: A student shall have been regularly enrolled and in attendance at some school not later than Monday of the fourth week of the semester in which he or she participates.

Art. 2: A student who attends one class after enrolling is considered in attendance. Attending a class the opening day of school which is called for the purpose of organization or assignment, counts as attendance. If a student transfers to a new school, enrolls and attends one class, as indicated above, and then goes back to the former school, the student may not become eligible until after eighteen weeks, in accordance with the provisions of the Transfer Rule. *(Exception: See Rule 18-1-9, Transfer.)*

Art. 3: If a student repeats subjects previously passed and is not enrolled in at least five new subjects (those not previously passed) of unit weight, or its equivalency, then that semester does not count as a semester of attendance under provisions of the Semester Requirements Rule and would not be considered a last semester of attendance, as noted in the Scholarship Requirements Rule. (Such a student is not eligible to represent a school in interschool activities during a repeat semester.) *(See Rule 13-1-3, Scholarship Requirements.)*

Art. 4: Students who must attend eighteen weeks to become eligible shall not participate until after they have attended classes on Monday (or the first day of school) in the nineteenth week.

Art. 5: Special education students attending special education programs are to be eligible for any and all activities at either their home base or their attendance center as determined by the two principals involved. In the event the two administrators of the schools disagree as to where the student is eligible, the matter shall be resolved by the Executive Board.

In addition, hearing impaired and visually impaired students attending a KSHSAA member school other than Olathe-Kansas School For The Deaf or Kansas City- Kansas State School For The Blind, that have an Individual Education Plan (IEP) written related to their handicap, are eligible for activities at the Olathe-Kansas School For the Deaf and Kansas City-Kansas State School For The Blind, subject to the approval of both principals.

Students attending a KSHSAA member magnet/alternative high school which does not offer athletic activities are to be eligible for non-athletic activities only at either their home base or their magnet/alternative school as determined by the two principals involved. In the event the two principals disagree as to where the student is eligible, the matter shall be resolved by the superintendent(s). In the event the superintendents disagree, the matter shall be resolved by the Executive Board.

The magnet/alternative member school for non-athletic activities, will not be classified. However, in post-season non-athletic competitive activities, the magnet/alternative member school will compete in the classification level derived by averaging the participating team members' home school enrollments as determined by the KSHSAA.

Art. 6: HARDSHIP—This rule applies only to those students who, because of illness or other justifiable emergencies, are not in attendance in some school by Monday of the fourth week of the semester in which the student participates.

a. These situations may be referred to the Executive Board for evaluation.

b. If the Executive Board declares the student eligible under the foregoing circumstances, he or she shall be eligible upon notification.

(Submit HARDSHIP request details on school letterhead to KSHSAA.)

ATTENDANCE FOR STUDENT-ATHLETES AND STUDENT SPECTATORS

1. Students must be in “regular attendance in order to engage in practice, participate in a contest, or attend a contest as a spectator.
 - a. Students may still attend or participate in practices or games if they miss classes due to an excused absence such as a school trip.
 - b. Excused absences other than school trips **MUST NOT** result in more than half of the student’s classes being missed in order to eligible for attendance or participation in a game or practice.
 - c. If the student should arrive past 11:00 for any reason other than the aforementioned, he/she will be ineligible to compete, practice, or attend any athletic competition or practice that day.
2. Student-athletes are expected to be at ALL practices and games unless absent from school
3. Student-athletes may be dismissed from a team due to excessive absences, excessive tardiness, or after a pre-set limit by an individual coach.

TRANSFER RULES

Rule 18

TRANSFER

PURPOSE—The purpose of the Transfer Rule is to protect, not inhibit students. The purpose of the Transfer Rule is to protect students from being displaced by those who change schools for interscholastic activity reasons. It is devised to eliminate “school shopping” after a student has initially chosen the school of his/her choice. This avoids transfers when the motivation is for activity purposes and prohibits recruitment. Students transferring who do not meet the criteria or one of the exceptions listed in Sections 1, 2 or 3, would otherwise be taking the place of a student in interscholastic competition who has met those requirements.

NOTE: In addition to the transfer rule, the student must meet all other rules and regulations, such as Age, Scholarship, Bona Fide Student in Good Standing, etc.

A student is eligible transfer-wise if:

- **BEGINNING SEVENTH GRADER**—A seventh grader, at the beginning of his or her seventh grade year, is eligible under the Transfer Rule at any school he or she may choose to attend.
- **BONA FIDE MOVE**—If a student’s parents, or legal guardian in case neither parent is living, make a bona fide move to a new permanent residence in the vicinity of the new school to which the student transfers, the student is then immediately eligible. If the parents’ move occurs during the school year, see Sec. 1, Art. 9, for other timing factors.
- **Guardianship Definition**—The term “guardianship,” while either parent is living, is not recognized for eligibility purposes. Only those appointed by the courts to a full personal and estate guardianship are recognized if both parents are deceased.
- **Vicinity Definition**—The term “vicinity” is when a student continues to reside with his or her parents and commutes daily to and from school.

A student is ineligible if:

- **CHANGE IN SCHOOL IS MADE WITHOUT AN ACCOMPANYING MOVE ON THE PART OF THE STUDENT’S PARENTS**—If students change schools without an accompanying move on the part of their parents, they will be ineligible for interschool extracurricular activities for eighteen weeks, beginning with the first day of their attendance.
- **INDEPENDENT STUDENTS**—A student who is “on his or her own” and not dependent upon parents or a guardian for a home and who transfers from one school to another, is required to attend eighteen weeks before becoming eligible.

FOR EXCEPTIONS AND ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

REFER TO SECTIONS 1, 2 and 3.

Section 3: Middle/Junior High School Regulations

Art. 1: **BEGINNING SEVENTH GRADER**—A seventh grader, at the beginning of his or her seventh grade year, is eligible at any school he or she may choose to attend.

Art. 2: **CHANGING SCHOOLS AFTER INITIAL YEAR**—After a student is eligible as a seventh grader or in his or her initial year of middle/junior high school, he or she may not change middle/junior high schools without forfeiting eighteen weeks of eligibility, unless there is a bona fide move on the part of the student’s parents to a permanent residence in the vicinity of the new school to which the student transfers.

TRANSGENDER PARTICIPATION IN EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

- 1) The student and/or parents shall contact the school principal or athletic director at the KSHSAA member school notifying them that the student has a different gender identity than listed on the student's school registration records or birth certificate and that the student wishes to participate in athletics/activities in a manner consistent with their gender identity. Gender identity of the student must be bona fide and not for the purpose of "gaining an unfair competitive advantage."

It is recommended schools review the following in making their decision regarding participation:

- a. Gender identity used for school registration records
 - b. Medical documentation (length and duration of hormonal treatments, sexual re-assignment surgery; psychological counseling, medical records, etc.)
 - c. Gender Identity related advantages to the student if participation would be approved
- 2) The school is responsible to determine the appropriate gender team for participation by the student. Once this determination is made, the school is responsible to notify the KSHSAA if a student intends to participate on a team opposite their birth gender. Notification must be given prior to entering the student in the KSHSAA eligibility system and allowing participation.
 - 3) Once a student is identified as transgender and elects to participate, they will participate in that gender category in all sports, for the remainder of their scholastic eligibility in grades 7-12. Annual renewal is not necessary.
 - 4) KSHSAA Mixed Team Rule 23, does not eliminate a school's opportunity to maintain a boys and girls team if a transgender student participates on a team opposite their birth gender.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

In the event of inclement weather, the activities coordinators will make a decision by 1:00 P.M. concerning the cancellation of practice or games/matches

Every effort will be made to play games as long as the weather does not jeopardize the safety of athletes, coaches, officials, and spectators.

KSHSAA GUIDELINES FOR LIGHTNING SAFETY

1. When thunder is heard within 30 seconds of a visible lightning strike, or cloud-to-ground lightning is seen, the storm is close enough to pose a lightning risk. Suspend play and take shelter immediately.
2. Once play has been suspended, wait at least 30 minutes from the last sound of thunder or lightning strike witnessed before resuming the activity.
3. Any subsequent thunder or lightning strike during the 30 minute waiting period resets the clock, and a new 30 minute waiting period begins.

ANYTIME LIGHTNING CAN BE SEEN OR THUNDER HEARD, RISK IS PRESENT!

HEAT ILLNESS AND HYDRATION

Heat illness in athletes is a serious situation, and if not handled properly can have catastrophic consequences. Because of the wide variance of situations in which heat illness and hydration becomes an issue, and because of the need for local individualized judgment, absolute wide ranging rules regarding heat illness related matters may not be the best or most effective approach. At the same time, heat illness is a very serious matter and the Kansas State High School Activities

Association wishes to provide its member schools information that may be useful in establishing or refining an individualized heat acclimation plan or policy. One such piece of information is the **Heat Acclimatization and Heat Prevention Position Statement** authored by the National Federation of State High School Associations and its Sports Medicine Advisory Committee. The substance of the position statement provides as follows:

Heat Acclimatization and Heat Illness Prevention Position Statement

National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS)

Sports Medicine Advisory Committee (SMAC)

Exertional Heatstroke (EHS) is the leading cause of preventable death in high school athletics. Students participating in high-intensity, long-duration or repeated same-day sports practices and training activities during the summer months or other hot-weather days are at greatest risk. Football has received the most attention because of the number and severity of exertional heat illnesses. Notably, the National Center for Catastrophic Sports Injury Research reports **that 35 high school football players died of EHS between 1995 and 2010.** EHS also results in thousands of emergency room visits and hospitalizations throughout the nation each year.

This NFHS Sports Medicine Advisory Committee (SMAC) position statement is the companion piece to the NFHS's online course *A Guide to Heat Acclimatization and Heat Illness Prevention*. **This position statement provides an outline of "Fundamentals" and should be used as a guiding document.** Further and more detailed information can be found within the NFHS on-line course, the 4th Edition of the NFHS Sports Medicine Handbook, the NFHS SMAC "Position Statement and Recommendations for Hydration to Minimize the Risk for Dehydration and Heat Illness" and the resources listed.

Following the recommended guidelines in this position statement and A Guide to Heat Acclimatization and Heat Illness Prevention can reduce the risk and incidence of EHS and the resulting deaths and injuries in high school athletics. The NFHS recognizes that various states and regions of the country have unique climates and variable resources, and that there is no “one-size-fits-all” optimal acclimatization plan. However, it is recommended that all of the “Fundamentals” be incorporated into any heat acclimatization plan to improve athlete safety. In addition, **A Guide to Heat Acclimatization and Heat Illness Prevention should be required viewing for all coaches.**

Heat Acclimatization and Safety Priorities:

- Recognize that EHS is the leading preventable cause of death among high school athletes.
- Know the importance of a formal pre-season heat acclimatization plan.
- Know the importance of having and implementing a specific hydration plan, keeping your athletes well-hydrated, and encouraging and providing ample opportunity for regular fluid replacement.
- Know the importance of appropriately modifying activities in relation to the environmental heat and stress and contributing individual risk factors (e.g., illness, obesity) to keep your athletes safe and performing well.
- Know the importance for all members of the coaching staff to closely monitor all athletes during practice and training in the heat, and recognize the signs and symptoms of developing heat illnesses.
- Know the importance of, and resources for, establishing an emergency action plan and promptly implementing it in case of suspected EHS or other medical emergency.

CONCUSSIONS - Sports Head Injuries

The KSHSAA offers the following guidelines and recommendations for compliance with the Kansas Act and for implementation of the NFHS playing rule related to concussions:

1. If a student suffers, or is suspected of having suffered a concussion or head injury during a sport competition or practice session, the student: (1) must be immediately removed from the contest or practice and (2) may not again participate in practice or competition until a health care provider has evaluated the student and provided a written clearance for the student to return to practice and competition. The National Federation and the KSHSAA recommend that the student **should not** be cleared for practice or competition the same day the concussion consistent sign, symptom or behavior was observed.

2. What are the “signs, symptoms, or behaviors consistent with a concussion”? The National Federation rule lists some of the signs, symptoms and behaviors consistent with a concussion. The U.S. Department of Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has published the following lists of signs, symptoms and behaviors that are consistent with a concussion:

SIGNS OBSERVED BY OTHERS	SYMPTOMS REPORTED BY ATHLETE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Appears dazed or stunned ● Is confused about assignment ● Forgets plays ● Is unsure of game, score, or opponent ● Moves clumsily ● Answers questions slowly ● Loses consciousness ● Shows behavior or personality changes ● Cannot recall events prior to hit ● Cannot recall events after hit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Headache ● Nausea ● Balance problems or dizziness ● Double or fuzzy vision ● Sensitivity to light or noise ● Feeling sluggish ● Feeling foggy or groggy ● Concentration or memory problems ● Confusion

These lists may not be exhaustive.

3. What is a “Health Care Provider”? The Kansas Sports Head Injury Prevention Act defines a health care provider to be “a person licensed by the state board of healing arts to practice medicine and surgery.” The KSHSAA understands this means a Medical Doctor (MD) or a Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine (DO).

4. Return to Play or Practice Clearance Requirements:

- A. The clearance must be in writing and signed by a health care provider.
- B. The National Federation and the KSHSAA recommend the clearance should not be issued on the same day the athlete was removed from play.
- C. The National Federation and the KSHSAA recommend that a student who has been removed from a practice or competition because the student suffered, or was suspected of suffering, a concussion or head injury **should complete a graduated return to play protocol following medical clearance before returning to unrestricted practice or competition.** The National Federation has included the following graduated protocol in its Suggested Guidelines for Management of Concussion in Sports. In most cases, the athlete will progress one step each day. The return to activity program schedule **may** proceed as below **following medical clearance**:

Step 1: Light aerobic exercise- 5 to 10 minutes on an exercise bike or light jog; no weight lifting, resistance training, or any other exercises.

Step 2: Moderate aerobic exercise- 15 to 20 minutes of running at moderate intensity in the gym or on the field without a helmet or other equipment.

Step 3: Non-contact training drills in full uniform. May begin weight lifting, resistance training, and other exercises.

Step 4: Full contact practice or training.

Step 5: Full game play.

If symptoms of a concussion re-occur, or if concussion signs and/or behaviors are observed at any time during the return to activity program, the athlete must discontinue all activity and be re-evaluated by their health care provider.

This is simply a suggested protocol. The appropriate health care provider who issues the written clearance may wish to establish a different graduated protocol.

5. Parents and students **ARE REQUIRED** to complete a Concussion & Head Injury Information Release Form and turn it into their school prior to the student participating in any

athletic or spirit practice or contest each school year. Schools are required to have such form on file before a student may participate in a practice or competition.

EQUIPMENT AND UNIFORMS

- Uniforms (and sweats) are property of Topeka Public Schools Middle Schools.
- Uniforms (and sweats) should be worn on game days only.
- All uniforms shirts will be tucked in when being worn to school or during a game, unless it is tailored otherwise.
- Students must pay for any lost or damaged equipment and uniforms.
- Uniforms for the next season will NOT be issued until lost or damaged uniforms are paid in full.
- Grades, transcripts, and diplomas may be held until all uniforms are turned in or paid for if lost or damaged.

TRANSPORTATION

- Only athletes, coaches, and managers are permitted to use school transportation.
- Students must travel to all athletic contests with the team.
- Students are encouraged to travel back to school with the team.
- Student may ride home with their parents from an away contest provided the individual coach does not adopt a policy that requires team travel from away contest. Students riding home with parents must provide a written permission or the parent may speak to the coach before or after the contest.
- Be on time to pick up your child. Coaches or activities coordinator are required to stay at the school until all students have been picked up. Please be considerate.

Some students will also qualify for activity bus transportation to morning practice or home from after school practice on a daily basis. Transportation home after games is also provided to these students. Students must be at practice or playing in a game to ride the activity bus.

ADMISSION TO GAMES

All Middle school Volleyball and Basketball games at the six middle schools have an admission fee of \$2.00 for all spectators 5 years old and older.

All events at Hummer Sports Park have an admission fee of \$2.00 for all spectators 5 years old and older.

The Volleyball Classic and the Basketball Classics at the area high schools also have an admission fee of \$2.00 for all spectators 5 years old and older.

TPS Middle schools do not belong to to the Centennial League so their passes are not accepted for admission to any TPS Middle School Events.

STUDENT INSURANCE

Topeka Public Schools does not provide insurance for student athletes.