

ACCESS TO EXCELLENCE (A2E) CHEMICAL HEALTH POLICY

A. PURPOSE

This policy is established for the purpose of setting forth the South Kingstown School Committee's support of State and Federal laws and regulations governing the possession and use of alcoholic beverages and illicit drugs¹ by South Kingstown school student athletes. Further, this policy sets forth the School Committee's expectations in the event such use or possession occurs on and/or off school property, at a school-sponsored activity or event, or is in any way related to the conduct of athletic programs of the South Kingstown School Department.

B. PHILOSOPHY OF ACCESS TO EXCELLENCE

"Among high school athletes the social group dominates as the best predictor of substance use (Underwood, 2009)."

The Access to Excellence Initiative is designed to help keep the youth of our community healthy and safe, this policy stipulates that:

The Town of South Kingstown is committed to keeping the youth of the community healthy and safe. To this end, a diverse group of community leaders has worked together to develop an initiative called "Access to Excellence" which focuses on improving the academic, emotional, and physical well being of our student athletes. This will be accomplished by providing scientific information about the illegal possession, consumption, and distribution of alcoholic beverages and illicit drugs and the effects they have on athletic performance and brain development. Access to Excellence will provide education and guidelines for coaches and athletes regarding the use of illegal possession, consumption, and distribution of alcoholic beverages and illicit drugs. Student athletes will be subject to specific consequences for engaging in behavior that risks his/her own safety and the safety of others.

Access to Excellence is about athletes and coaches being dedicated, focused, and committed to doing what is required to succeed on and off the field. It is about parents who set and support standards which are in the best interest of their children. It is about community leaders who are committed to protecting the health and safety of our youth now and in the future.

Access to Excellence is a comprehensive initiative based on research conducted by the American Athletic Institute. At its core is a set of expectations for all student athletes that is fair and reasonable and will hold student athletes accountable for their decisions.

C. CODE OF CONDUCT FOR STUDENT ATHLETES

1. Expectations for all student athletes

Student athletes compromise their participation in athletics when they use substances. Student athletes who experiment with or possess, consume or distribute alcoholic beverages and/or illicit substances jeopardize program morale, reputation, and success. They do physical harm to themselves and risk personal injury and harm to others. Student athletes *must* make the commitment not to possess, consume or distribute alcoholic beverages and illicit drugs and to refrain from being in the presence of such substances.

In order to ensure the highest possible standards of learning, as well as assuring the maintenance of the highest possible level of safety, health, and well-being for all student athletes, the South Kingstown School Committee endorses a chemical health policy which:

- Provides student athletes with information and activities focused on preventing them from possessing, consuming and distributing alcoholic beverages and illicit drugs. Prevention activities will be centered on instructional programs, guidance and counseling, school climate, and family and community involvement.
- Contains restorative measures.

¹ For the purposes of this document the term "illicit drugs" shall be defined in accordance with the RI Controlled Substance Act (Drug Laws) 21-28-1.01 and shall include the misuse of prescription and over-the-counter medications.

- Takes active disciplinary action when necessary.

THIS POLICY IS SUPPORTED BY THE FOLLOWING RI GENERAL LAWS: 3-8-6; 3-8-9; 3-8-10; 31-27-2; 31-27-2.1; 31-27-2.4; 31-27-2.7; 21-28-1.01.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT WWW.RILIN.STATE.RI.US/STATUTES

2. Cigarette, Cigar, and Smokeless Tobacco

Student athletes who use tobacco products, including but not limited to cigarettes, cigars or smokeless tobacco, will be in violation of school rules whether the infraction occurred during the school day, at a school activity, or on school property. Any student athlete found to be in violation will be subject to school sanctions per the South Kingstown High School Handbook.

3. Drug-Free Zone

The use of, being under the influence of, intoxication, possession, and/or sale/distribution of alcoholic beverages and/or illicit substances and/or paraphernalia associated with substance use is prohibited within the South Kingstown school buildings, in school vehicles or on school grounds at any time, including during school hours and at school-sponsored activities. This policy also affects persons within the established drug-free zones (on school property) during non-school hours, vacations, and all activities on-site, etc.

A drug-free zone has been established by the office of the Attorney General to include any boundaries that mark the end of the school perimeter. It is further stated by the Attorney General's Office, persons convicted of distribution or manufacturing of a controlled substance on public school grounds shall be punished by a term of imprisonment or a fine or both, up to twice the amount as authorized by RIGL 21-284.01(A) or 21-28-4.07. This policy is inclusive and prohibits the use of illicit substances. Due process procedures governing suspension shall be applied.

4. Alcoholic Beverages and Illicit Substances

Student athletes are considered in violation of this Chemical Health Policy if they use, unlawfully possess, consume (including being under the influence of) and/or distribute alcoholic beverages and/or illicit drugs (see Year Round Expectations), whether during school, at any school activity, on school property, or at locations off school property. This policy makes exceptions for situations where alcohol is being consumed as part of a religious ceremony or ethnic custom, and also for student athletes who lawfully use or possess for their own personal use, a medication prescribed for their own use by a physician.

5. Being “In the Presence of” Illegally Possessed, Consumed or Distributed Alcoholic Beverages and/or Illicit Substances

If a student is in a situation where alcohol and/or illicit substances are being illegally dispensed and/or consumed, the student must leave the location immediately or risk being subject to the related restorative and corrective measures of this chemical health policy. This policy makes exceptions for student-athletes who are lawfully in the presence of alcohol while accompanied by a parent or legal guardian; student-athletes who are in the presence of alcohol while in a public place where alcohol is being lawfully served to adults; and student-athletes who lawfully use, or possess for their own personal use, a medication prescribed for their own use by a physician. This policy makes exceptions for situations where a student athlete is in the presence of alcohol as part of a religious ceremony or ethnic custom.

6. Year-round Expectations

The chemical health policy in South Kingstown School District is in effect year round, in and out of season, on and off the field, in and out of uniform for all student athletes. There is a reason for this . . . *we care about the welfare of our student athletes*. We expect this commitment from student athletes if they want to be involved in South Kingstown athletics.

D. INVESTIGATION

1. Reporting a violation

Chemical health policy violation(s) may be reported orally or in writing to the principal or to an assistant principal, athletic director, teacher, coach, or school nurse. Anyone receiving a report of violation must inform the principal and athletic director immediately.

2. Process

The investigation process will transpire as follows:

- The SKHS Athletic Director and the SKHS administrative team will notify the parent/guardian of the student athlete of the suspected violation and seek their cooperation in the investigative process.
- Any suspected violations of this Chemical Health Policy will be investigated as thoroughly as possible in order to ensure fairness to the student athlete involved. In the event that a student athlete comes under investigation it is expected that he/she will be honest, truthful, forthcoming with information, and will cooperate fully with the investigation.
- The SKHS Athletic Director and the SKHS administrative team will interview the student athlete regarding the conduct in question, establish awareness, and will seek his/her cooperation in the investigation.
- The SKHS Athletic Director and the SKHS administrative team will look into any evidence including, but not limited to, statements from other students, statements from a school administrator, coach or teacher to determine whether or not there is sufficient cause to investigate the incident further.
- The SKHS Athletic Director and the SKHS administrative team may seek to obtain information of the violation in question by interviewing other student athletes who have first hand knowledge of the behavior under investigation.

3. Confirmation of Violation

Confirmation of the student athlete's violation of the Chemical Health Policy may be provided by, but not limited to, any one of the following:

- An admission by the offending student athlete.
- Substantial and credible evidence with eyewitness support.
- The coach's evaluation of signs, symptoms and/or actions demonstrated by the student athlete that would support the reasonable conclusion of a violation with the support of other substantial and credible evidence or any eyewitness support.

E. RESTORATIVE AND CORRECTIVE ACTION FOR POLICY VIOLATIONS

Student athletes who fail to comply with the South Kingstown Chemical Health Policy will be subject to the procedures as outlined in this section and may be subject to school sanctions (if applicable) per the South Kingstown High School Handbook. *Penalties will be served concurrently when violation occurs on school property or at school sponsored events.* All violations will be cumulative.

1. Restorative and Corrective Action for Being "In the Presence Of" Illegally Possessed, Consumed or Distributed Alcoholic Beverages and/or Illicit Substances

A. First Offense:

- The student athlete and parent/guardian will meet with his/her coach and the Athletic Director about the breach of SK's Chemical Health Policy.
- The student athlete will meet with the Student Assistance Counselor regarding the nature of the violation.
- The student athlete and parent/guardian will re-sign the Athletic Code.

B. Second Offense:

In addition to the actions listed for the First Offense the student athlete will also be required to:

- The student athlete will forfeit his/her captaincy (if applicable).

- Forfeit one game in the season. (He/she may continue to attend practices, scrimmages, and team meetings.) The game suspension will be completed during the athlete's current season. If there is not sufficient time remaining in that season to complete the suspension, it will be carried over to the next interscholastic sport season in which that student participates.
- Meet with the School Resource Officer to discuss his/her policy violation.
- Submit a personal reflection on the importance of this particular section of SK's Chemical Health Policy (i.e. why it is important to avoid situations where alcohol and illicit substances are being illegally dispensed and/or consumed) and what actions he/she specifically can take to prevent this in the future.
- The student athlete will be given the opportunity to apologize to his/her team.

The student athlete will be reinstated when all of these requirements are met.

C. Third Offense:

For a third violation (and for any such violations thereafter), the student athlete will be subject to the actions listed in the section entitled "RESTORATIVE AND CORRECTIVE ACTION FOR ILLEGALLY POSSESSING, CONSUMING OR DISTRIBUTING ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES AND/OR ILLICIT SUBSTANCES (E-2), commencing with the requirements outlined for the first such offense and continuing forward within that section for all subsequent offenses.

2. RESTORATIVE AND CORRECTIVE ACTION FOR ILLEGALLY POSSESSING, CONSUMING OR DISTRIBUTING ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES AND/OR ILLICIT SUBSTANCES

A. First Offense:

- The student athlete will be suspended from 20% of the games in the season; however he/she may continue to attend practices, scrimmages, and team meetings. The game suspension will be completed during the athlete's season. If there is not sufficient time remaining in that season to complete the suspension, it will be carried over to the next interscholastic sport season in which that student participates. Students who are subject to Social Probation must also satisfy those requirements prior to regaining eligibility.
- The student athlete will be required to forfeit his/her captaincy for that athletic season.
- The student athlete will meet with the Student Assistance Counselor three times.
- The student athlete will perform five hours of community service, the nature of which must be approved (in writing) by the Athletic Director prior to the commencement of said service.
- As a condition for reinstatement, the student athlete and parent/guardian must meet with the Student Assistance Counselor, Athletic Director and coach to review their commitment to the South Kingstown Chemical Health Policy and to athletic participation. He/she will submit a letter of apology for violating the Chemical Health Policy at this meeting.
- The student athlete and parent/guardian must acknowledge his/her transgression and re-sign the code of conduct in front of teammates and the coaching staff. The student athlete will also be given the opportunity to apologize to his/her team in person or in writing.

The student athlete will be reinstated when all of these requirements are met.

B. Second Offense:

- The student athlete will be suspended from 50% of the games in the season. After ten (10) calendar days, the student may return to the team for meetings or practices/scrimmages only. This suspension will be completed

during the athlete's season. If there is not sufficient time remaining in that season to complete the suspension, it will be carried over to the next interscholastic sport season in which that student participates. Students who are subject to Social Probation must also satisfy those requirements prior to regaining eligibility.

- The student athlete will be required to forfeit his/her captaincy and will be ineligible to serve as captain for any athletic team in the future.
- The student athlete will meet with the Student Assistance Counselor a minimum of three times. The Student Assistance Counselor may recommend that the student seek additional independent substance abuse services.
- The student athlete will perform ten hours of community service, the nature of which must be approved (in writing) by the Athletic Director prior to the commencement of said service.
- The student athlete will submit a 500 word reflective essay on the effects of his/her policy violation and related lessons learned to the Student Assistance Counselor.
- As a condition for reinstatement, the student athlete and parent/guardian must meet with the Student Assistance Counselor, Athletic Director and coach to review their commitment to the South Kingstown Chemical Health Policy and to athletic participation. The student will share his/her reflective essay at this meeting.
- The student athlete and parent/guardian must acknowledge his/her transgression, must re-sign the code of conduct in front of teammates and the coaching staff, and will be given the opportunity to apologize to the team for his/her actions, either in person or in writing.

The student athlete will be reinstated when all of these requirements are met.

C. Third and Subsequent Offense(s):

- The student athlete will have his/her athletic eligibility suspended for 365 days (one calendar year) from the time of violation.
- Conditions for reinstatement are as follows:
- Student athlete will be required to participate in a substance abuse evaluation (by a licensed substance abuse practitioner) or program at no cost to the School. The Student Assistance Counselor, at the student athlete's (or parent/guardian's) request, may supply a list of referrals. Upon completion of this evaluation and/or program, the student athlete must provide the Student Assistance Counselor with a report of the student athlete's completion of said evaluation/program.
- Completion of 20 hours of community service, the nature of which must be approved (in writing) by the Athletic Director prior to commencement of said service.
- Submission of a 1,000 word personal reflection which describes how his/her policy violations have impacted three of any of the following; his/her team; SK High School; his/her family; his/her friends; the SK community; or himself/herself.
- Student athlete may request (in writing) a review to be reinstated (after serving the 365 day suspension) by the Reinstatement Committee (which shall include, but not be limited to, the Athletic Director, a School administrator, the Student Assistance Counselor, and coach).
- The aforementioned criteria for reinstatement shall be reviewed in total by the Reinstatement Committee.
- The student and parent/guardian will meet with the Reinstatement Committee to discuss its decision.

F. APPEAL PROCESS

Students and/or parents who feel aggrieved because of action taken as a result of any section in these regulations may appeal said action to the school administration level at which the action was taken. Further appeals may be taken to the Superintendent of Schools and finally to the School Committee. Further appeals after the School Committee decision may be taken through the process as defined in Title 16 of the General Laws of Rhode Island.

G. REVIEW AND REPORTING

This policy shall be reviewed in accordance with the school committee policy review process. The Superintendent shall annually provide a report of the A2E data to the School Committee on or about June 30th.

First Reading: February 23, 2010

Second Reading/Adoption: March 29, 2010