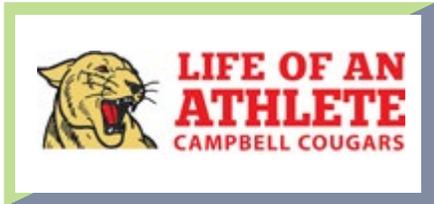


CODES OF CONDUCT

A Case Study



Principal of Campbell High School (CHS) Laurie Rothhaus first heard about Life of an Athlete (LoA) when the regional prevention network coordinator from her area gave an overview of the program at a meeting. Laurie immediately was impressed with the program's comprehensive approach. Looking at the policy component of LoA, Laurie knew right away the program should be brought to the New Hampshire Interscholastic Athletic Association (NHIAA), which maintains the rules for high school interscholastic competition. Having just been elected to the NHIAA council, Laurie worked with her regional prevention network

coordinator to connect the New Hampshire Charitable Foundation (NHCF) and the NHIAA so the program could be rolled out statewide.

As a result, the NHIAA hired staff to coordinate LoA. This included work on the policy component. It allowed staff to assess local school policies and present recommendations on a policy that meets in the middle between too punitive and too permissive. By moving towards a developmentally appropriate, education-based policy, schools are better able to serve their students.

A situation came up where the athletic policy was challenged. A student athlete was arrested out of town for allegedly dealing drugs just prior to the start of the season. Due to the fact that the season hadn't started and the school policy was not a year-round policy, the school district found itself dealing with concerned and frustrated parents. This is when the school district realized the policy needed to be updated. Superintendent of Schools Elaine Cutler and the school board, directed school administration to form a committee made up of community members, administrators, students and coaches to review recommendations and establish a 21st century policy that represents the core values of CHS: character, courage, respect, and responsibility.

The committee met two to three times per month for six months. Through passionate debate, they were able to dissect the recommendations, which led to a co-curricular policy that holds everyone to the same standard. It created an equitable policy that put athletes on par with all co-curricular students such as band, theater, chess club and other programs. After all the hard work, they were able to present a policy to the school board that fit with

LoA and honored the core values of CHS. Laurie was struck by the help NHIAA provided. "I very much appreciated the outstanding resource of the NHIAA going through this transitional time. All of the support the NHIAA provided the district made the transition smoother." she said. The LoA staff at the NHIAA was organized and responsive while being flexible enough to gain the local buy-in needed to move policy forward.

"After getting an education-based, consistently and equitably enforced policy in place, we went on to win five championships because of the commitment these kids made to hard work and core values."

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Once the policy was in place, it was immediately tested. After a violation by a star player, the principal and athletic director had to meet with the player, parents and coach to discuss the co-curricular policy and explain that the student athlete would miss the championship game due to a Level One offense. The player was instrumental in getting the team to that point and as a result had difficulty accepting the consequence. The parents and the player were very upset but had to accept it because they had signed the policy stating they had knowledge, understanding and agreement.

In the end there were many lessons learned:

- The player texted everyone on the team to wish them luck the day of the game, ultimately putting team first and doing the right thing.
- The coach was grateful the policy was followed. He felt the administration backed him up when there was a problem.
- Other students learned to take CHS's core values seriously and worked hard to live up to the code.

Ultimately, that team won the state championship with a back-up player. CHS won five championships that year!