

Expectations of Social Media Use

The Ashley Athletic Program recognizes and supports its student-athletes' rights to freedom of speech, expression, and association, including the use of online social networks. At Ashley, our best strategy regarding social media is to educate student-athletes on the expectations and inform them about how social media can help them network and communicate the value of educational athletics.

In this context, however, each student-athlete must remember that playing and competing for Eugene Ashley High School is a privilege, not a right. As a student-athlete, you represent the school and you are expected to portray yourself, your team, and this community in a positive manner at all times. Any online postings must therefore be consistent with the team, Federal and State laws, New Hanover County Schools, and the North Carolina High School Athletic Association rules, regulations and policies (Eagle's Respect).

If you participate on a social networking site or use social media, we recommend you keep the following in mind:

- Everything you post is public information – any text or photo placed online is completely out of your control the moment it is placed online – even if you limit access to your site. Information (including pictures, videos, comments, and posts) may be accessible even after you remove it.
- What you post can harm others: respect the privacy and rights of others and your teammates.
- What you post may affect your future. Many employers, college coaches, and school admissions officers review social networking sites as part of their overall evaluation of an applicant. Carefully consider how you want people to perceive you before you give them a chance to misinterpret your information (including pictures, videos, comments, and posts).
- Similar to comments made in person, the Athletic Department will not tolerate disrespectful comments and behavior online, such as:
 - Critical, Derogatory or defamatory language (coaches, administrators, students and/or opponents);
 - Comments that create a serious danger to the safety of another person or that constitute a credible threat of serious physical or emotional injury to another person;
 - Comments or photos that describe or depict unlawful assault, abuse, hazing, harassment, bullying or discrimination; selling, possessing, or using controlled substances; or any other illegal or prohibited conduct, including violating the [New Hanover County Schools Policy 8410 on Student Discipline](#).

Monitoring and Consequences

Each head coach must identify at least one coach ("Team Monitor") who is responsible for investigating and/or monitoring the content of the team members' social media sites and postings if the coach or athletic director receives reports of inappropriate use. The Athletic Department also reserves the right to have other staff members access, monitor, and/or receive reports about student-athletes social media sites and postings.

In addition to reviewing postings according to the Guidelines identified above, Team Monitors will also evaluate postings for information that could indicate a potential violation of NHCS regulations related to Student Discipline.

Any violation of law or of New Hanover County Schools, Ashley Athletics' rules, regulations, or Policies, Student-Athlete Code of Ethics, or evidence of such violation in your online content, is subject to investigation and possible immediate sanction by the Administration at Ashley High School, the NCHSAA, the Ashley Athletic Department, and/or law enforcement agencies. Internal sanctions may include, but not be limited to, notice to remove the posting or photo, disciplinary action by Ashley High School, suspension and/or dismissal from the team, and/or forfeiture of eligibility.