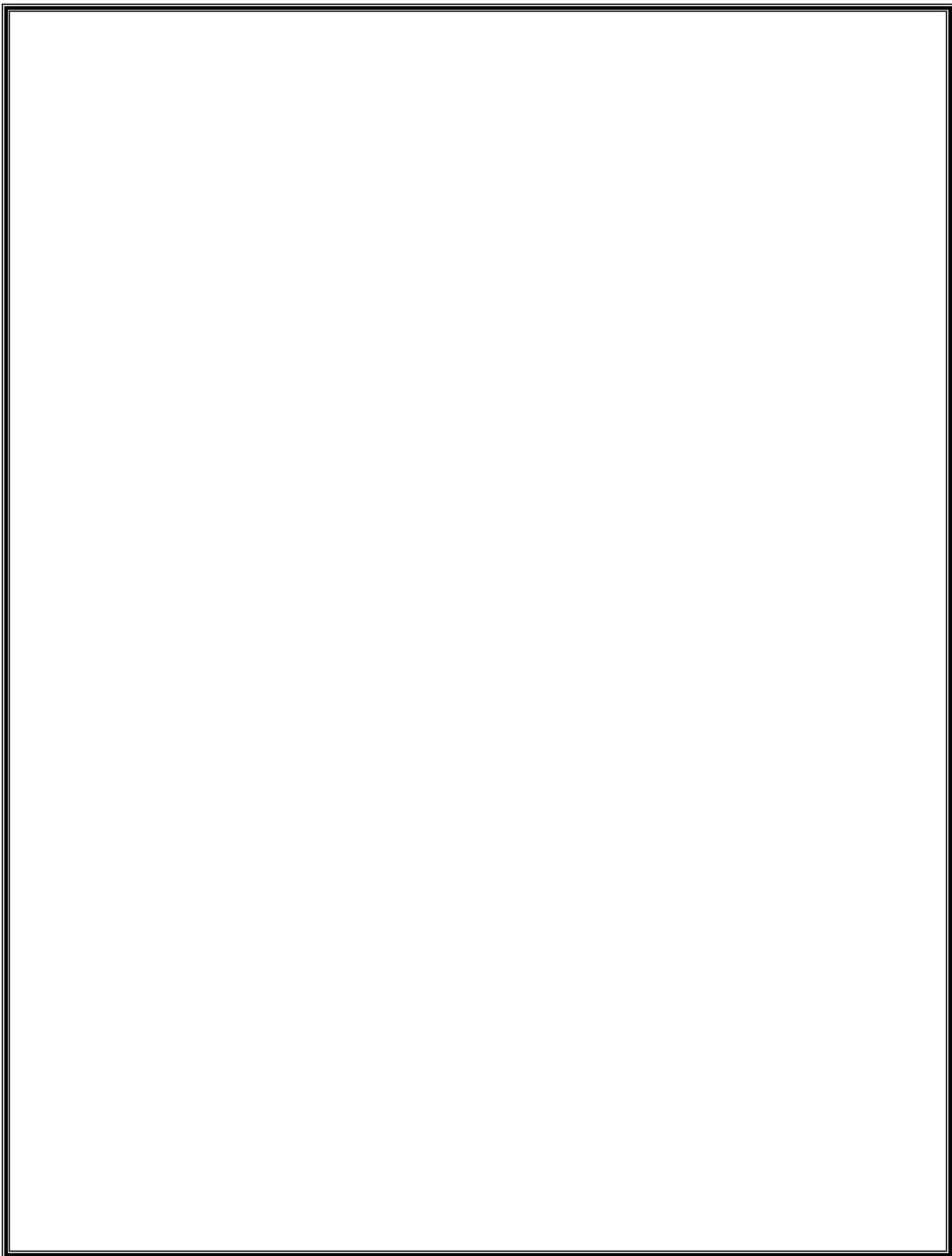




Bartow County School System
Athletic Handbook
2025-2026



(Inside Cover)

A Publication of the

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MISSION STATEMENT

The Bartow County School System is dedicated to providing a comprehensive athletic program emphasizing sportsmanship, moral character, team spirit, self-discipline, individual and team commitment, school loyalty and competitive athletic interaction. The athletic program will be designed to allow for the greatest number of student participants possible while encouraging academic excellence through high academic standards.

Responsibilities Of The Student Athlete

RESPONSIBILITIES OF A BARTOW COUNTY STUDENT ATHLETE

Being a member of a Bartow County athletic team is the fulfillment of an early ambition of many students. The attainment of this goal carries with it certain traditions and responsibilities that must be maintained. A great athletic tradition is not built overnight; it takes the hard work of many people over many years. As a member of an interscholastic squad at a Bartow County School you have inherited a wonderful tradition, a tradition you are challenged to uphold.

Our tradition has been to win with honor. We desire to win, but only with honor to our athletes, our school, and our community. Such a tradition is worthy of the best efforts of all championships.

Competing for your school may mean having to say "no" to pleasures, and not only understanding our traditions, but also being willing to assume the responsibilities that go with them. However, the contributions you make should be satisfying accomplishments to you and your family.

CONDUCT OF AN ATHLETE

The conduct of an athlete is closely observed in many areas of life. It is important that your behavior be above reproach in the following areas:

ON THE FIELD – In the area of athletic competition, a real athlete does not use profanity or illegal tactics and learns fast that losing is part of the game and that you should be gracious in defeat and modest in victory. It is always courteous to congratulate the opponent on a well-played game after the contest, whether in defeat or victory.

IN THE CLASSROOM – In the academic arena, a good athlete becomes a good student. A student athlete is successful on the field and in the classroom. If you are lazy in class, you will be lazy on the practice field or floor and will never reach your full potential. As an athlete, you must plan your schedule so that you give sufficient time and energy to your studies to insure acceptable grades.

In addition to maintaining good scholarship, an athlete should give respectful attention to classroom activities and show respect for other students and faculty at all times. Horseplay and unnecessary boisterousness are not approved habits of behavior. A healthy athlete should have a good attendance record.

ON THE CAMPUS – The way we act and look on campus is of great importance. Athletes should be leaders, and fellow students should respect and follow them.

CODE OF CONDUCT

Effective administration of extracurricular/interscholastic activities requires site-based management of these programs. Each school that offers the opportunity for extracurricular/interscholastic activities will implement a Student Activity Code of Conduct. This Code of Conduct reflects the mores and sensibilities of each individual school community and is consistently applied throughout all extracurricular and interscholastic programs. Every Student Activity Code of Conduct will include an explanation of the Rules of Conduct, Methods of Enforcement, and Dispositions of Infractions. Every Code will include the following:

- A commitment to establishing and promoting a positive image of the program, the school and the school district
- The expectation of sportsmanlike conduct from participants
- Adherence to the Bartow County School District's Discipline Code
- The expectation that students will not be involved in criminal acts or acts of moral turpitude
- The establishment of team/activity rules

Violations of the Student Activity Code of Conduct that are verified through a reliable source (school administrator, teacher, coach/sponsor, staff member, parent of involved student, law enforcement agency, etc.) will be investigated thoroughly by the school administration or designee. The violation(s) may result in disciplinary action and/or suspension from extracurricular/interscholastic activities regardless of whether the offense occurred at a school related or non-school related activity.

Based on the decision of the principal or designee, a participant in extracurricular/interscholastic activities may encounter one or more of the following dispositions for Code of Conduct infractions:

- Extra practice time, lap time, or other forms of conditioning
- Coach/student conference
- Coach/parent conference
- Loss of position
- Loss of awards privilege
- Loss of performance or participation privilege which can include a suspension of part or all of current season, and/or part or all of the next season in which he/she is a participant
- Permanent suspension for all extracurricular/interscholastic programs for the remainder of their school career
- The school reserves the right to permanently dismiss a student from all extracurricular/interscholastic programs for the remainder of their school career upon arrest or conviction of felony crimes or crimes of moral turpitude.

Reporting Suspensions

- Parent/guardian will be notified of the student's suspension.
- A suspension report will be filed with the school's Principal/Athletic Director.

Duration

This policy will be in effect year-round.

In addition to the above minimum guidelines, students will abide by all standards and guidelines established in the Georgia High School Association Constitution and By-Laws and the Bartow County Athletic and Activities Handbook.

Each student participating in an extracurricular/interscholastic activity will be given a Code of Conduct that has been approved by the principal and meets minimum guidelines set forth in this policy. This Code of Conduct must be signed by both the student and parent/guardian and returned to the Coach/Sponsor prior to participation.

Students removed, suspended, or dismissed from activities because of violations of Bartow County Discipline Code and/or Local, State, or Federal Laws will not regain eligibility by transferring to another Bartow County School. Concerns related to these types of actions may be specifically addressed to the Principal/Designee.

COMMUNITY SPONSORED ACTIVITY GROUPS

- All activities not sponsored by the school or school based organizations will be considered a community-sponsored activity. The school and/or school district are not liable for these activities. Groups sponsoring these activities must comply with the facilities use guidelines and any required lease agreements that will include insurance coverage required by the facilities use contract.
- All financial accountability, including collection and disbursement of monies by community sponsored groups, must be handled independently of the school district, school, booster club, and/or any group representing the school.

GROOMING AND DRESS POLICY

A member of an athletic team is expected to be well groomed. "He shows up best who shows off least." Appearance, expression and actions always influence people's opinions of athletes, the team and the school. Once you have volunteered to be a member of a squad, you have made a choice to uphold certain standards expected of athletes in this community.

In order to further good sportsmanship, maintain good health habits, good performance, respect for rules and authority, establish leadership, team pride, and discipline; eliminate disruptive influences and disturbances in the locker rooms, on the practice fields and gymnasiums, or trips.

TRAINING RULES AND REGULATIONS

It is the overwhelming opinion of health educators and coaches that athletes perform best when they follow intelligent training rules, which include restrictions on tobacco(vapes, E-Cigs, etc), alcohol and drugs. Medical research clearly substantiates the fact that use of tobacco, alcohol and any type of mood modifying substances produce harmful effects on the human body.

The coaches of Bartow County, concerned with the health habits of the student athletes of this community, are convinced that athletics and the use of these substances are not compatible. It is also

a fact that when students have strong interest to participate in athletics, their desire to use the substances is greatly reduced.

QUITTING OR TRANSFERRING SPORTS

Quitting is an intolerable habit to acquire. There is not a place in athletics for quitters. On occasion however, an athlete may find it necessary to drop a sport for a good reason. If this is the case, the athlete should:

- A. Talk with your immediate school coach and then the head coach.
- B. Report your situation to the Athletic Director.
- C. Check in all equipment issued to you.

Failure to follow this procedure in dropping a sport will result in the loss of your privilege to begin another sport until the one you quit has finished. Under adverse conditions you could receive special permission from the coach whose sport you quit, if both coaches agree and the principal agrees that this is in the best interest of the athlete and the programs involved. The principal has the final call.

EQUIPMENT

School equipment checked out by the student is his/her responsibility. He/She is expected to keep it clean and in good condition. Loss of any equipment is the athlete's financial obligation.

MISSING PRACTICE

An athlete should always consult his/her coach before missing practice. Missing practice or a game without good reason will be dealt with severely. Sudden illness or some other emergency would be a good reason for missing a practice or game.

TRAVEL

All athletes must travel to and from athletic contest in transportation provided by the school's athletic department. Athletes will remain with their squad and under the supervision of a coach when attending away contest. All regular school bus rules will be followed including: food, noise, remaining in seats, care and respect for equipment. Dress appropriately and in good taste.

CONFLICTS IN EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

An individual student who attempts to participate in too many extra-curricular activities will, undoubtedly, be in a position of conflict of obligations. The athletic department recognizes that each student should have the opportunity for a broad range of experience in the area of extra-curricular activities; and to this end, will attempt to schedule events in a manner so as to minimize conflicts. Students have a responsibility to do everything they can to avoid continuous conflicts. This would include being cautious about belonging to too many activities where conflicts are bound to happen. It also means notifying the faculty sponsors/coaches involved immediately when a conflict does arise. When conflicts do arise the sponsors/coaches will get together and work out a solution so the student does not feel in the middle. If a solution cannot be found, then the Athletic Director/Principal will have to make the decision based on the following:

- A. The relative importance of each event
- B. The importance of each event to the student
- C. The relative contribution the student can make.
- D. How long each event has been scheduled
- E. Talk with parents.

A student is not to be penalized once a decision has been rendered and the student has complied with that decision. If it becomes obvious a student cannot fulfill the obligations of multiple school activities, he/she should re-consider their participation goals.

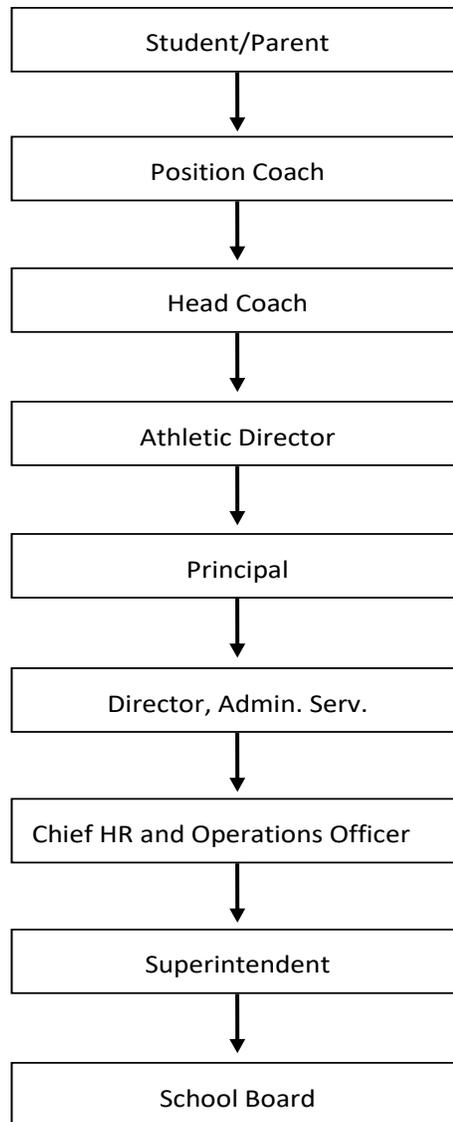
ISSUES NOT SPECIFICALLY COVERED BY WRITTEN POLICIES

These issues will be handled at the discretion of the principal, athletic director, and the head coach of the specific sport.

STUDENT/PARENT COMPLAINT PROCESS

Bartow County School System for:

1. Information
2. Voice your opinion
3. Equipment needs
4. Facility Issues
5. Conflicts



If you follow a different path, you jeopardize finding the quickest, easiest, and most productive solution to your issue. All coaches, athletic directors, and administrators are DIRECTED to follow this chain of command.

GENDER EQUITY

The Bartow County School District does not discriminate on the basis of gender in its athletic programs. The Sports Equity Coordinator for this school district is the Director of Student Support. Inquiries or complaints concerning sports equity in this school district may be submitted to the Sports Equity Coordinator.

Director of Administrative Services
Michael Nelson
2220 Joe Frank Harris Pkwy, Bldg B
Cartersville, GA 30120
770-606-5800 ext. 2415

Gender Equity in Sports

It is the policy of the Bartow County Board of Education to prohibit discrimination based on gender in its athletic programs. As a part of achieving this goal, the Bartow County School District annually shall notify all of its students of the name, office address, and office telephone number of the employee(s) who coordinate efforts to comply with and carry out the provisions of state law. This notification shall be included in a student handbook containing the code of conduct and distributed to all students.

An equity in sports grievance procedure is hereby adopted which provides for prompt and equitable resolution of written student complaints, including those brought by a parent or guardian on behalf of his or her minor child who is a student, alleging any action which would be a violation of the pertinent Code section. The grievance procedure shall be as follows:

1. The employee designated as the person who coordinates efforts to comply shall render his or her decision in writing no later than 30 days after receipt of the complaint, and such decision shall set forth the essential facts and rationale for the decision.
2. A copy of such decision shall be provided to the complainant within five days of the date of the decision: and
3. A complainant shall have a right to appeal such decision to the local board within 35 days of the date of the decision.
4. A complainant may appeal a decision of the Board in accordance with the procedures specified in O.C.G.A. §20-2-1160.

The design of the system athletic program shall take into consideration the following:

1. Whether the selection of sports and levels of competition effectively accommodate the interests and abilities of both sexes.
2. The provision of equipment and supplies.
3. Scheduling of games and practice time.
4. Provision of locker rooms, practice and competitive facilities.
5. Publicity.

Separate locker rooms and shower facilities shall be provided and shall be of comparable quality. Separate practice and/or playing fields may be used if deemed necessary but shall be of comparable quality.

GENDER EQUITY IN SPORTS – GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

It is the policy of the Bartow County Board of Education (“Board”) to prohibit discrimination based on gender in its elementary and secondary school athletic programs, in accordance with the Georgia Equity in Sports Act. The following grievance procedures are used to provide for prompt and equitable resolution of written student complaints, including those brought by a parent or guardian on behalf of his or her minor child who is a student, alleging any action which would be a violation of the Georgia Equity in Sports Act.

1. The student, parent, or guardian must submit a complaint on the Gender Equity in Sports Grievance Form and submit the completed form to the sports equity coordinator. The sports equity coordinator will date-stamp the complaint when received. (See BCSS Student Handbook)
2. The sports equity coordinator will take all reasonably necessary steps to ascertain the essential facts regarding the circumstances surrounding the complaint. The sports equity coordinator may obtain additional information from the complainant and/or other individuals that may have knowledge of the circumstances surrounding the alleged violation. The confidentiality of any information obtained will be maintained in accordance with federal and state law and the School District’s policies on confidentiality of student and employee information
3. The sports equity coordinator will render a decision in writing no later than 30 calendar days after receipt of the complaint, and such decision will set forth the essential facts and rationale for the decision.
4. A copy of such decision will be provided to the complainant within five calendar days of the date of the decision, by either certified mail or hand delivery to the address provided by the complainant on the grievance form.
5. A complainant has the right to appeal such decision to the Board within 35 calendar days of the date of the decision. The request for appeal must be submitted by the complainant in writing to the Superintendent. The Superintendent’s office will date-stamp the complaint when received.
6. The Board will review all materials related to the matter and render a decision in writing no later than 30 calendar days or at the next regularly scheduled Board meeting after receipt of the appeal, whichever is later, and such decision will set forth the essential facts and rationale for the decision.
7. A copy of such decision will be provided to the complainant within 5 calendar days of the date of the decision, by either certified mail or hand delivery to the address.
8. A complainant may appeal a decision of the Board to the State Board of Education in accordance with the procedures specified in O.C.G.A. § 20-2- 1160.

Gender Equity in Sports Grievance Form

It is the policy of the Bartow County Board of Education to prohibit discrimination based on gender in its elementary and secondary school athletic programs. Any student or student's parent or guardian may file a complaint with the following form if he or she feels that the school system has violated the Georgia Equity in Sports Act.

.....
(Please print all information)

Date: _____	Date received by sports equity coordinator: _____
Name of individual filing	_____
Address of individual filing	_____ _____
Telephone number of individual filing	_____
Name of School	_____
Name of Parent	_____
Name of Student	_____

ALLEGED ACTION BY SCHOOL SYSTEM IN VIOLATION OF GEORGIA EQUITY IN SPORTS ACT:

