

# NEW HAMPSHIRE HIGH SCHOOL EQUESTRIAN TEAMS

## DISTRICT CHAIR'S HANDBOOK

### MISSION STATEMENT:

New Hampshire High School Equestrian Teams (NHHSET) is a "not for profit" corporation dedicated to promoting and organizing equestrian competition in high school athletic or activity programs.

NHHSET has as its main goal, recognition in the high schools of the equestrian athlete and to give them an opportunity to achieve that recognition in a fair, positive and educational format. The goals are to encourage team play, peer acceptance and good horsemanship. Competition is to follow sportsmanship guidelines as set down by the State School Activities Association and State School Board, individual participating school activity guidelines and equine sportsmanship guidelines.

### DISTRICT BYLAWS:

Bylaws or fundamental rules that guide the district management should be put into place in accordance with the NHHSET State by laws. District specific rules in the by laws are allowed as long as they are not in direct conflict with the NHHSET by laws. B law rule changes, if any, should happen only once a year with a general membership majority vote. Many districts vote to adopt the NHHSET State b laws verbatim.

### DISTRICT RULES:

District rules are more general rules that may affect season to season management. These rules can be suggested and voted on by the district board at the beginning of each season. For instance, your district bilaws may provide for awards to be given at the end of each season. The district general rules may change from year to year to provide how many awards or addition of a new category of awards. District rules will vary from one area to another based on several geographical and membership statistics. Flexibility in the specific District Rules is accepted as long as rules created at the district level are not in direct conflict with NHHSET State Rules.

### DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION:

New district management represented at State Board meetings should be in place by the June State Board Meeting. Elections and appointments generally happen at the district meetings prior to June. In preparation for these election/appointments, the following information should be available to the District General Membership:

- Job requirements for each position at the district level

- Expectations or job descriptions for each position
  - District Chair – Elected position
  - Vice Chair – (optional) – elected position
  - Youth Council/State representative – elected position
  - Secretary – appointed by chair, approved by district
  - Treasurer – appointed by chair, approved by district
  - Points Manager - appointed
  - Office Manager - appointed
  - Awards - appointed
  - Equipment – appointed

Each district may choose to have more management or less, the important procedure is to have a job description for each position that your district may require.

### **DISTRICT STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES (SOP)**

Standard operating procedures are specific to each district and include but are not limited to the following information:

- Expectations of all officers, appointed positions and coaches
- Assignments for management of:
  - Stalls
  - Camping
  - Matrix development
  - Announcing – cows, drill, awards
  - Hiring and Conferencing with judges
  - Hotel accommodations
- Establish the line of communication throughout the district:
  - General public, high school students
  - Team members, parents, volunteers
  - Coach/Advisor
  - District Executive Board
  - District Chair
  - State Board
- Determine the voting structure of the District – Should be in Bylaws
  - Who votes
    - Officers
      - District Chair – to break ties
      - Vice Chair
      - Secretary
      - Treasurer
      - Points Manager

- Office Manager
  - Team Rep – Coach/Advisor
  - Youth Reps
  - Committee Chairs
  - Point Manager
- Awards
  - Establish district awards or any changes in awards BEFORE the season starts
  - Reconfirm budget for trophies, special awards and banquet
  - Set date
- Determine if District Scholarships will be given and establish (before the season starts)
  - How many scholarships
  - How much the district will spend
- Develop a plan for supporting the State Scholarship Fund
  - How much and when to present the funds
- Distribute a District/Team monthly planner which will
  - Give deadline dates for registration and co-op (see Monthly Planner)
  - Give dates of all competitions
  - Set meeting schedule for all district meeting
  - List holidays and days off
  - Give District deadline dates for documents going to District Secretary
    - Team Registration
    - Team Roster
    - District dues
    - State Dues
    - District Spending Limits (budget)
    - New Member deadlines
    - New Team deadlines
    - Co-op application deadlines

#### **DISTRICT ACCOUNTING PROCEDURES:**

- Establish through the State and use monthly planner for
  - Quarterly reports
  - Reportable fundraising functions
  - State Stall and Camping payment requirements
  - District responsibilities in State-wide fundraising

#### **DISTRICT COMPETITION PROCEDURES:**

- Establish arena rules (practice and competition)
  - Supervision schedule
    - Bareback riding
    - Lunging

- Who is eligible to use arena
  - Practice equipment needed
    - Boots
    - Helmets
    - Numbers
- Establish Eligibility of each athlete
- Scheduling (Matrix)
  - Judges Conference times
  - Add/drop deadlines
    - Maximum 5 individual events per athlete
      - If mistake, first 5 performed count – all others dropped
  - JV allocation
  - Changes from meet to meet
  - Result posting
    - Unofficial
    - Final, official results
- Scribing
  - Proprietary Information
  - Advance training
  - Neatness in writing and accuracy
  - Make sure sheets are signed by judge
  -
- Gatekeeping
  - Keeping arena on time
  - Advance Training
  - Gate sheets calling athletes
  - Check uniforms
- Office Procedures
  - Proper paperwork in office for each team
    - Code of conduct
    - Medical release forms
    - Drill copies
  - Judges returned and signed contracts
    - Agreed fees
    - District evaluation
    - Receipt of drill patterns
  - Timeline for coaches to turn in documentation
  - Timeline for coaches to pick up documentation
  - Guideline on who can enter the office
- Stalls and Camping

- Set costs BEFORE the season
- Create a payment process to be followed
  - Charges
  - Credits
  - **No refunds after last meet**

**DISTRICT FUND RAISING** (Reporting forms in MISC section of rulebook) **\*\*See District Accounting procedures in handbook**

- Each district is responsible for reporting to the State Treasurer DISTRICT fundraising
  - Each team reports to district treasurer the fundraising they have done **IF NOT RUN THROUGH THE SCHOOL**
  - District Treasurer prepares or forwards these reports to the State Treasurer along with the quarterly reports.
    - District Chair should approve all reports before submission

**DISTRICT INSURANCE RESPONSIBILITIES**

- Please note that some time explaining our insurance should be spent with your teams at a meeting. Our insurance is specific to the *spectator*, not the athlete. Some examples of this are:
  - **An athlete falls off horse during barrels. The horse panics and runs out of arena and through the crowd, hitting Jane Doe and knocking her down. Our insurance would cover Jane Doe.**
  - **Our insurance does not cover the athlete**
  - **Our insurance does not cover the judge**
  - **Our insurance does not cover the parent/sibling of athlete trying to catch loose horse**
- Some examples of who is covered are:
  - **Person standing outside arena cheering you on (not family)**
  - **Any coach/advisor listed on your official team registration**
  - **District management**
  - **State management**

**DISTRICT MEMBERSHIP PROCEDURES**

- District Secretary double checks with coach/rosters to ensure
  - Age
  - School attendance
    - Homeschooler
    - Private School
    - Transfer
  - GPA

- Personal Insurance
  - Group number
  - School medical
  - Team special insurance

## DISTRICT RESPONSIBILITIES FOR STATE CHAMPIONSHIP

- Complete required information
- Due to State the first of May (or State Board Meeting)
  - All state qualifiers
  - Alternates
  - Drill patterns for State
  - Stalls reservations should be completed and paid
  - Camping reservations should be completed and paid
- Have delegated responsibilities in writing for district distribution
  - Create a complete list of volunteers and the part they play
  - Educate your scribes and gatekeepers with the State recommended rules
  - Be ready to perform the duties delegated to your district
- Proper documentation turned into state office
  - Code of Conduct for each athlete and adult attending
  - Medical Release form for each athlete
  - Eligibility of each athlete participating

## DISTRICT LEVEL PROBLEM SOLVING:

- Problems should be handled through the lines of communications and in most cases can be resolved by using the rulebook and Code of Conduct.
  - Team business should be handled at that level
    - Athlete issues should be handled with the coach/advisor
      - Discussions may be held with parents/guardians
    - Coach issues should be handled with the District Chair
      - Assistant coaches, advisors or parents may be involved
    - Interaction with the school AD can be left to the Coach/Advisor unless specific circumstance requires District Chair attention
  - NHHSET Code of Conduct can and should be used as a guideline in all instances
  - Coaches/Advisors, volunteers and district management should be held to a higher standard than the athlete (this will be discussed later)
  - District business should be handled through the facilitating District Chair
  - Issues not resolved through these lines should be counseled through the State Chair and in strictest confidence
- **District Stewardship procedures and committee** (See rulebook for State Championship procedure)
  - Set up **your** procedure BEFORE the season starts

- Each team will submit names of persons available to serve
- Committee volunteer list will be on file in the office
- Set minimum number of volunteers for stewardship meeting
- Follow procedure to efficiently handle issue as soon as possible
- Coach/Advisor settles issues at the athlete, team level
- District Chair settles issues at the team, district level
- Team Advisor/Coach requests Stewardship if issue cannot be settled
- District Chair collects information from all parties involved
- District Chair draws from pool of stewardship names to form committee
- District Chair does not use volunteers from team(s) involved
- District Chair calls Stewardship Meeting
- District Secretary is present to record minutes
- Stewardship "requestor(s)" give short explanation of issue
- Requestors leave meeting
- District Chair refers Committee to sections of rule book that apply
- Committee holds open discussion and makes decision
- District Chair advises Coach/Advisor of Stewardship decision
- Steps to be taken if the issue has not been solved at the district level
  - Requestor advises District Chair that the issue needs to go to State
  - District Chair gathers all information and the minutes taken at the stewardship meeting including documentation of initial steps
  - District Chair contacts the State Rules Chair or State Chair
    - State Rules and State Chair will ultimately converse
  - District Chair recaps entire situation and forwards all documentation
  - Rules Chair calls meeting of Rules Committee and makes recommendation
  - State Board hears recommendation and votes yea or nay
  - Rules Chair contacts District Chair of State Board approval of determination
  - Rules Committee rarely overrules the District Stewardship decision
  - District Chair advises all parties involved of the Rules/State Board decision
  - Requestor then has option to send \$50 with notice of presentation to State Board
  - Requestor presents case to State Board and that decision is final. The \$50 stays with the State if the decision of the Board supports the Rules Committee recommendation.

It should be mandated that specific protocol be part of the process:

- Chain of Communications are followed
- Every possible effort is made for solution BEFORE the stewardship process is put into place
- Every possible effort is made for solution BEFORE the State Rules or State Chair is contacted
- All processes have followed the District and State rules.
- The State Board rarely, if ever, overturns the State Rules Committee decision

**STATE STEWARDSHIP PROCESS:** Please refer to Rulebook

**DISTRICT MANAGEMENT OF NHHSET CODE OF CONDUCT: Please refer to State By-laws,  
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- It should be noted that “**member**” means that every person signing the Code of Conduct understands and agrees to abide by the stipulations of this by-law. Direct reference to athlete (or school procedure) would be in those instances where the high school varsity participant is in violation. In general terms, all members of NHHSET are responsible to the Code.
- Coaches, Advisors, Managers and elected officials should be held to a higher Code of Conduct than athletes and should adhere to the NHHSET Code of Conduct regardless if the Coach/Advisor is appointed by the school. **\*\*It should be noted here that interaction with the school most likely will result in reference to the School District’s Code of Conduct.**
  - For example: A coach would be held to the Code of Conduct for infractions to the State/District Rules or By-laws. The coach would also be held negligent for placing team rules that are in direct conflict with State/District rules.
  - District Chairs in violation of the State mandates would also be considered breaking the Code of Conduct.. Intentionally ignoring the State Rules or Bylaws would be in direct conflict with the meaning of the Code.
- A copy of the School Districts’ Code of Conduct should be on file in the office for reference since the NHHSET Code is in support of that when dealing with the athletes and coaches representing the schools.
  - **Parental and Coaching issues should be handled in the manner recommended by the school. Districts may refer to these practices when handling a situation that involves a school coach/advisor that has reached the District level.**
- **Districts may set additional Code of Conduct Standards but this should be done BEFORE the season starts or be an addition to the District Bylaws**
  - Establish for your District Rules and By-laws the following and how each circumstance should be handled.
    - A athlete is reported as breaking the NHHSET code of conduct
    - A parent is reported as breaking the NHHSET code of conduct
    - A athlete is reported as breaking the NHHSET code of conduct
    - A coach is reported as breaking the NHHSET code of conduct
    - An advisor, office staff or Executive Board member is reported as breaking the NHHSET code of conduct.

In all cases the School, State Rules, Code of Conduct and By-laws should be your model. You may add to but not change or delete the criteria set by the above mentioned models.

#### **DISTRICT EMERGENCY PROCEDURES:**

Emergency procedures should be gone over at a District Meeting before the start of the new season

- If an athlete is hurt and the parent or guardian is present
  - The parent/guardian is responsible for decision regarding the athlete
  - Complete history of accident and results should be documented and signed by parent and coach
  - Proper accident report form should be filled out and medical release secured from District Secretary
  - Recommend that 911 be called before moving athlete
  - If parent/guardian indicates athlete is ok, make sure the paperwork is complete and there is more than one person present
  
- If an athlete is hurt and the parent/guardian is not present
  - Call 911
  - Documentation of exactly what happened should be done by management
  - Make sure more than one person is present to assist
  - Do not move the athlete until help comes
  - Do not evaluate the situation on your own

#### **STARTING NEW TEAMS IN YOUR DISTRICT:**

- Interested parties (athletes, parents, coaches, district management) canvas schools
- Flyers, lunches, meetings are advertised and scheduled
- NHHSET presentation on the program is available to show and explain the program
- Signups are taken and meetings are scheduled
- School officials are contacted regarding a high school varsity sport/activity
- Signatures are secured to start the team
- Coaches/Advisors are elected or selected by the school
- District Chair sets up meeting with new coach/advisor
- District sets up training for new coaches/advisors
  - Rule books, handbooks and general NHHSET information is distributed
  - District Secretary advises coach of requirements for documentation

#### **DISTRICT CO-OP PROCEDURES:**

- **Use all State Board resources available to you for assistance when needed**
  
- District Chair is notified that a small team desires to co-op with a large team because:
  - School will not allow a team

- There is no coach/advisor for the team
- District Chair reviews the Co-op procedure in Rule book to make sure
  - The school has been canvassed for members in the correct manner
  - The team has approached the school and school board according to rulebook
  - There is no possibility of a coach/advisor stepping up to the plate
- District Chair then researches to see which school the applying team can/may contact
  - School applied to must be 9 members or smaller
  - School applied to must be the closest school offering NHHSET to the applying school
  - School applied to must be willing to sign and support the NHHSET applying team
- Application for co-op must be submitted to District Secretary for district approval
- District must vote to approve the co-op
- District presents co-op application fully filled out and signed to Co-op Chair
- Co-op Committee approves co-op
- Co-op Committee finds an irregularity and refers co-op approval to State Board
- **All co-ops should be approved by the State Board by January 15<sup>th</sup> or the closest State Board meeting to that date, usually the 3rd Sat. in January.**