

Personnel

CERTIFIED EVALUATION, TERMINATION, AND NON-RENEWAL OF ATHLETIC COACHES

4115.3 (a)

I. Evaluations

Pursuant to state law, the Board requires that an athletic coach employed by the Board be evaluated on an annual basis to be conducted by the athletic director or the coach's immediate supervisor. An athletic coach shall be provided with a copy of any such evaluation within 30 days of the evaluation, at the time of the face-to-face conference.

The purposes of evaluation are:

1. To provide a systematic process whereby coaches may increase the effectiveness of their services to the athletic program utilizing the available professional resources.
2. To provide an opportunity for coaches to analyze their strengths and weaknesses, and to discuss objectively the contributions they have made to the athletic program.
3. To provide an opportunity for the administrative staff to analyze the strengths and weaknesses of individual coaches, and to utilize this knowledge to develop supervisory service to assist individuals in developing their competence.
4. To provide an effective means by which administrators may make recommendations concerning the continued employment of personnel, the granting of increments, and/or other recommendations to the Board of Education.

It is the responsibility of all administrators, coaches and other professional staff members to recognize that the district schools intend to seek and maintain the best qualified staff to provide quality coaching for student athletes. In keeping with this goal, all personnel are expected to participate fully in the appraisal process. An integral part of this process is self-appraisal. The self and administrative appraisals include: knowledge of sports area, coaching skills and techniques, attitudes, behavior patterns, values and ethics. The coach will submit a self-appraisal at least 10 days prior to the scheduled meeting.

It is the policy of the Fairfield Board of Education that an athletic coach employed by the Board shall:

1. adhere to all Board policies, rules and regulations;
2. conduct himself or herself in a professional manner;
3. serve as a role model for students; and
4. demonstrate competence and proficiency in his or her role as an athletic coach of a particular sport.

For purposes of this policy, the term "athletic coach" means any person holding (and required to

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hold) a coaching permit issued by the Connecticut State Department of Education who is hired by the Fairfield Board of Education to act as a coach for a sport season. This term "athletic coach" under this policy shall include only coaches who have direct responsibility for one or more teams, (including assistant coaches if they serve as a coach to another team (e.g., JV) and the term shall not include volunteer coaches.

For purposes of this policy, the term "athletic director" means an individual responsible for administering the athletic program of a school or school district under the jurisdiction of the Board, and who is responsible for the supervision of athletic coaches.

II. Employment of an Athletic Coach

- 1.. Athletic coaches' employment in their specific coaching positions may be non-renewed or terminated at any time, subject to the provisions set forth below which apply to athletic coaches who have served in the same position for three or more consecutive years.
2. If the Superintendent or his/her designee terminates or non-renews the coaching contract of an athletic coach who has served in the same coaching position for three or more consecutive school years, the Superintendent, or his/her designee, shall inform such coach of the decision within ninety (90) calendar days of the end of the athletic season covered by the contract. In such cases, the athletic coach will have an opportunity to appeal the decision of the Superintendent in accordance with the procedures set forth below in Section III.
3. Notwithstanding any rights an athletic coach may have to a hearing, nothing prohibits a Superintendent or his/her designee from terminating the employment contract of any athletic coach at any time, including an athletic coach who has served in the same coaching position for three or more consecutive school years:
 - a) for reasons of moral misconduct, insubordination, failure to comply with the Board's policies, rules and regulations; or
 - b) because the sport or team level has been canceled.

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4. If a decision to terminate a coach's employment is made during the athletic season, the Superintendent or his/her designee shall remove the coach from duty during the pendency of any hearing conducted pursuant to section III of this policy. In such case the hearing will be expedited to within 10 calendar days of notice to the coach.

III. Appeal Hearing Procedures

An athletic coach who has served in the same coaching position for three or more consecutive years may appeal any such non-renewal or termination decision (except if such decision was due to cancellation of the sport) to the Board of Education in accordance with the following procedures:

1. The athletic coach must file a written appeal with the Board within ten (10) calendar days of the Superintendent's written notification of non-renewal or termination. Such appeal shall set forth the basis on which the athletic coach seeks review of that decision, and a copy of said appeal shall be sent to the Superintendent. Failure to submit a timely written appeal shall constitute a waiver of said appeal opportunity.
2. Within 30 calendar days of its receipt of a written appeal of the Superintendent's decision, the Board shall conduct a hearing to consider such appeal. Notice of the time and place for such hearing shall be issued to the athletic coach as soon as the hearing is scheduled. If a decision to terminate a coach's employment is made during the athletic season, the Superintendent or his/her designee shall remove the coach from duty during the pendency of any hearing conducted pursuant to this section of this policy. In such case the hearing will be expedited to within 10 calendar days of notice to the coach.
3. At the hearing, the athletic coach shall have an opportunity to present facts and evidence in support of renewal and/or reinstatement; the Superintendent and the Athletic Director shall have the opportunity to present facts and evidence in support of the decision of non-renewal and/or termination. The athletic coach may call witnesses to testify if there is a clear need for witnesses to present factual information (rather than simply expressing an opinion on the skill or competence of the athletic coach). Cumulative or redundant testimony shall not be allowed.

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4. The decision of non-renewal or termination shall be affirmed unless the Board determines that the decision is arbitrary and capricious. The coach shall bear the burden of proof on this point.

5. At the conclusion of the hearing or within 10 calendar days following the hearing, the Board shall determine whether the Superintendent acted in an arbitrary and capricious manner in making the decision not to renew and/or to terminate and shall provide a written decision to the coach. Upon reversal of the decision to renew and/or to terminate, the coach's position shall be reinstated. The decision of the Board shall be final.

Legal References: Conn. Gen. Stat. § 10-222e

Adopted: 5/28/2024