

TRUCKER TALK



NCSD

Student-Athlete Handbook

- **Please note that due to the COVID-19 pandemic, many rules and regulations may be modified.**

A Guideline to
Rules Of Conduct
and Behavior
2023-2024

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MESSAGE TO PARENTS

FROM THE HIGH SCHOOL PRINCIPAL

Norwalk High School offers a variety of extra-curricular activities designed to enhance the development of its students. This handbook is designed to be a guide for all students who wish to expand their horizons through participation in extra-curricular activities. We encourage all students to be active Truckers. We also encourage all students to be good citizens and to make themselves, their family, their school, and their community proud to be Truckers.

Pat Kania, Principal

FROM THE HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETIC DIRECTOR

Congratulations, your son or daughter has indicated a desire to participate in interscholastic athletics, and you have expressed your willingness to permit him/her to compete. Your family's interest in this phase of our school program is gratifying. We believe that participation in sports provides a wealth of opportunities and experiences, which assist students in personal adjustments.

We, who are concerned with the educational development of boys and girls through athletics, feel that a properly controlled, well-organized sports program meets the student's needs for self-expression, mental alertness, and physical growth. It is our hope to maintain a program that is sound in purpose and will further each student's educational maturity.

Likewise, we feel that you have committed yourselves to certain responsibilities and obligations. We would like to take this opportunity to acquaint you with specific policies that are necessary for a well-organized program of athletics.

It is role of the Department of Athletics to make rules that govern the spirit of competition. These rules need a broad basis of community support, which is achieved only through communication to the parent. It is our hope to accomplish this objective through this athletic handbook for students and parents.

Joshua P. Schlotterer, Athletic Director

PHILOSOPHY OF NORWALK SCHOOLS EXTRA-CURRICULAR PROGRAMS

The Norwalk City School District Athletic Program should provide a variety of experiences to aid in the development of favorable habits and attitudes in students that will prepare them for adult life in a democratic society.

The purpose of athletics in the Norwalk City School District is to provide for the pursuit of competitive excellence in all sports, with the understanding that the pursuit of that excellence is educational in purpose. The prime concern is to develop the student-athlete physically, mentally, socially and emotionally in a positive environment among all coaches, faculty advisors and participants. This means that the physical well-being and overall development of the student-athlete is the first consideration rather than the maximum use which the school or any team can get from his/her abilities.

The interscholastic athletic program shall be conducted in accordance with existing Norwalk City Schools Board of Education policies, rules and regulations. While the Board takes great pride in winning, it does not condone “winning at any cost!” The Board discourages any and all pressures, which might tend to neglect good sportsmanship and good mental health. At all times the athletic program must be conducted in such a way as to justify it as an educational activity. Infractions are all inclusive for disciplinary purposes no matter the nature of the offense.

EXTRA-CURRICULAR PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

1. To maintain the positive image of Norwalk High School and Norwalk Middle School.
2. To strive for excellence that will produce winning teams.
3. To ensure growth and development that will raise the number of individual participants.
4. To provide opportunities where students will learn to cope with problems and handle situations similar to those encountered in the contemporary world. Extra-curricular activities should provide opportunities for:
 - a. Physical, mental, and emotional growth and development.
 - b. Acquisition and development of special skills in activities of each student's choice.
 - c. Students participate with the development of such commitments as: loyalty, cooperation, fair play, and other desirable social activities.
 - d. Directed leadership and supervision that stresses self-discipline, self-motivation, excellence, and the ideals of good sportsmanship.
 - e. A focus of interests on activity programs for student body, faculty, and community that will generate a feeling of unity.
 - f. Achievement of initial goals as set by the school in general and student as an individual.
 - g. Provisions for worthy use of leisure time in later life, either as a participant or spectator.

SCHOLASTIC ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

To be eligible to participate in interscholastic athletics at Norwalk High School, all students will be required to meet **EACH** of the following eligibility standards (1, 2, & 3).

1. OHIO HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION REQUIREMENTS:

All high school student athletes must meet the scholastic requirements of the OHSAA which require that the athlete pass a minimum of the equivalent of five credits toward graduation the immediately preceding grading period in order to be eligible the following grading period.

2. NORWALK CITY SCHOOLS GPA REQUIREMENTS:

A student must earn grades in the previous 9 weeks that result in a 1.5 grade point average (GPA) for the 9 weeks when **ALL** grades for the 9 weeks are averaged.

Students who lose their eligibility for having a GPA below 1.5 may regain their eligibility on the day that interim grades are given if their GPA for the 9 weeks to that day is 1.5 or higher. (Requirements 1. and 3. must also be met.)

3. WEEKLY CHECK OF GRADES:

Grades will be checked and an eligibility list will be compiled each Friday from the beginning of the season and until the season is completed (through OHSAA tournament). Any participant receiving two or more "F's" on the weekly eligibility list is automatically ineligible Monday through Sunday of the following week. An athlete who raises a failing grade by Wednesday of the week in which s/he is declared ineligible will be eligible for the remainder of the week.

Provisions may be made to waive requirements 2 or 3 for individual students with special needs and/or extenuating circumstances. An eligibility board made up of the building principal, athletic director, and guidance counselor will review such situations on an individual basis and may waive certain requirements as appropriate. This provision is intended to meet unique situations of students and/or parents in regard to special needs, extenuating circumstances such as long-term illness, and/or appeals regarding eligibility.

4. ECOT/HOMESCHOOLED ATHLETES

It is the responsibility of the parents of an ECOT/homeschooled student-athlete to provide the athletic department with a weekly grade report. These student-athletes will be held to the same standard as the student-athletes in the regular school setting. The students must also be enrolled in 5 credit classes as per OHSAA guidelines.

**STUDY TABLE:
High School Only**

Student athletes will be required to attend study table based on the following requirements:

1. Any team member ineligible because of a G.P.A. below 1.5 must attend 2 times a week.
2. Any team member with 2 or more F's on weekly eligibility must attend 3 times a week.
3. Any team member with 1 F and at least 1 D on weekly eligibility must attend 2 times a week.
4. Any team member with 1 F on weekly eligibility must attend 1 time a week.
5. Any team member with 2 or more D's on weekly eligibility must attend 1 time a week.

Missing a study table session will be considered the same as missing a scheduled team practice and will be dealt with in the same manner by the head coach of that sport.

CODE OF CONDUCT

Rules promote order and safety, and assist participants to reach maximum performance potential. Every participant should adhere to the rules of the school, and conduct him or herself as a "good citizen" of that school and the community at all times. Dedication and personal sacrifice by each participant promotes a sense of group unity and common goals. Compliance with the rules can help each participant learn values that carry beyond the extra-curricular program and into daily living.

It must be remembered that participation in extra-curricular activities is not a right but a privilege that may be regulated. Therefore, all students who participate in interscholastic athletics, extra-curricular, or co-curricular activities must meet all regulations and school rules.

GENERAL REGULATIONS

- 1. A sport packet must be completed and turned into the athletic office before an athlete will be allowed to participate.**
2. Comply with all eligibility requirements of the Norwalk City Schools and any governing agency, such as the Ohio High School Athletic Association, including but not exclusive to those requirements pertaining to age, scholarship, residency, and attendance.
3. Any student expelled, suspended (in-school or out-of-school) or emergency removed from school will be ineligible to participate in extra-curricular activities for the duration of the removal or suspension.
4. Do not engage in criminal activity or civil actions arising out of activity of a criminal nature.
5. Do not use and/or possess tobacco in any form (i.e. cigarettes, cigars, snuff, chewing tobacco, etc.)
6. Do not sell, distribute, use, and/or possess drugs (narcotics, hallucinogenic, intoxicants, or counterfeit drugs), controlled substances, alcohol, other intoxicants, or paraphernalia at any time.
7. Behave in a manner that reflects positively on the school and the activity.
8. Comply with all additional training rules or other requirements set by the coach/advisor of the activity.

9. Students who miss part of the school day due to illness must be in attendance by 11:00 A.M. in order to play a contest or practice on that date. Students missing school for reasons other than illness must have an excused absence in order to participate. Final authority for infractions of this rule rests with the Principal. Students absent from school on Friday with an event/contest during a weekend or on an official school holiday will be eligible to participate provided the absence is an excused absence by the Principal.
10. Financial obligations resulting from equipment fees, replacement of lost or stolen equipment, and/or unpaid balances from sales projects, must be paid prior to participation in any present or future extra-curricular activity.
11. In activities that require a physical examination, a completed physical examination card must be signed by a physician and parent or guardian. That card must be turned in to the coach/advisor before a student may participate in any activity.
12. All seasons begin with the first day of mandatory practice and end with the awards ceremony.
13. Profanity or illegal tactics will not be tolerated.
14. All participants should strive to be a good student. You must plan your schedule so that you give sufficient time and energy to your studies. Give respectful attention to classroom activities and show respect for other students and faculty at all times. Set the example, **BE A LEADER**.
15. Appearance, expression, and actions always influence people's opinions of students, teams, and your school. Once you have chosen to participate, you have made a choice to uphold certain standards expected in this community. Set the example, **BE A LEADER**.
16. Transportation of all participants to and from all events will be with the advisor/coach by school-approved transportation. (Any exceptions would require prior approval by the coach/advisor. Parents/guardians must notify coaches that their child will not be riding home with the team and provide the coach with written notification. Students are only to be transported by their own parent/guardian.)

CONFLICTS IN EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

An individual student who attempts to participate in several extra-curricular activities will, undoubtedly, be in a position of conflict of obligations.

Students have a responsibility to do everything they can to avoid a continuous conflict. This would include being cautious about belonging to several activities where conflicts are bound to happen. It also means notifying the coaches/advisors involved immediately when a conflict does arise.

When conflicts do arise the coaches/advisors will work together to create a viable solution. If a solution cannot be found, then the principal will have to make the decision based on the following:

1. The relative importance of each event
2. The importance of each event to the student
3. The relative contribution the student can make
4. How long each event has been scheduled

5. Talk with parents

Once the decision has been made and the student has followed that decision, he/she will not be penalized in any way by the coach/advisor. If it becomes obvious that a student cannot fulfill the obligation of a school activity, they should withdraw from the activity.

AWARDS (High School Only)

The requirements for participants to receive any awards are:

1. He or she must be in good standing at the end of the season and be present at the awards ceremony. Students declared ineligible during the season may participate and attend Parent's night, banquets and receive season awards (with approval of the coach). Study table must be attended as directed by the coach, and the student athlete must meet team requirements as directed by the coach. Note: Failure to attend an awards ceremony without an excused absence will result in forfeiture of ALL awards for that activity.
2. Return all issued equipment in clean and proper condition as stated by the coach/advisor. Lost or damaged uniforms/equipment may be charged up to full replacement value of each item.
3. Any awards for participation in interscholastic athletics, which may be accepted by the student from any source, shall consist of those items, which do not exceed \$400 dollars in value.
4. All awards should be worn with dignity and class. Students are to display their awards in such a manner and are expected to behave in an appropriate manner when wearing them. The student represents the team and the school when wearing the award. Actions that detract from a positive image will not be accepted. This will result in denial of awards for any future participation.

STUDENT CONDUCT (ZERO TOLERANCE):

Students are expected to conduct themselves in such a way that they respect and consider the rights of others. Students of the District must conform to school regulations and accept directions from authorized school personnel. The Board has "zero tolerance" of violent, disruptive or inappropriate behavior by its students.

A student who fails to comply with established school rules or with any reasonable request made by school personnel on school property and/or at school-related events is subject to approved student discipline regulations. The Superintendent/designee develops regulations, which establish strategies ranging from prevention to intervention to address student misbehavior.

Students and parents annually receive, at the beginning of the school year or upon entering during the year, written information on the rules and regulations to which they are subject while in school or participating in any school-related activity or event. The information includes the types of conduct, which are subject to suspension or expulsion from school or other forms of disciplinary action. The Board directs the administration to make all students aware of the student code of conduct and the fact that any violations of the student code of conduct are

punishable.

If a student violates this policy or the code of conduct, school personnel and students are required to report and parents should report the student to the appropriate administrator. The administration cooperates in any prosecution pursuant to the criminal laws of the State of Ohio and local ordinances.

QUITTING AND/OR CHANGING SPORTS WITHIN A SEASON

A member of a team has until the first scheduled athletic contest of that team to change sports. After the first scheduled contest, changes may only occur under unusual circumstances and only with the complete agreement of all parties involved. Any athlete who quits a team, without permission, after the first scheduled contest or is dismissed from that team may not join another team playing in the same season.

RULES AND REGULATIONS

Minor infractions will be the coach's responsibility to handle before referral to the Athletic Director for repetitive infractions of the rules.

1. Participant shall regularly attend all scheduled practice sessions, scrimmages, and matches unless excused by the coach.
2. In an effort to promote team unity and a team image the following dress code will be enforced:
 - a. Hair must be neatly trimmed and must be of natural color without excessive ornamentation and must not hamper ability to perform.
 - b. Any beard or sideburns must be neatly trimmed. The coaches and administration reserve the right to decide what is "neatly trimmed".
 - c. No visible body piercing per OHSAA regulations.
 - d. Any tattoo that is inappropriate (obscene gestures, gang symbols, nudity, or for any other reason is deemed inappropriate) must be covered. The coaches and the administration reserve the right to decide what is or is not appropriate.
 - e. Appropriate dress for away travel.
3. All participants shall comply with all school rules and specific training rules and regulations for their sport distributed to them by their coach at the beginning of the season.
4. Curfew hours during the athletic sport season is determined by local ordinances (11:00 p.m.). These curfew hours may vary but may not exceed 11:00 p.m.
5. Profanity will not be tolerated.
6. Middle School students are only permitted to participate in 1 sport per season (fall, winter, spring)

The school administration has the authority to make the final interpretation of what is acceptable in regards to minor infractions.

MAJOR RULES AND REGULATIONS

Major infractions shall be referred to the Athletic Director.

1. A team member shall not possess or use any tobacco product.
2. A team member shall not possess, use, transmit, or be under the influence of any narcotic drug, hallucinogenic drug, stimulant, steroids, amphetamine, barbiturate, marijuana, alcoholic beverage, or intoxicant of any kind. Use of a drug as authorized by a medical prescription from a registered physician shall not be considered a violation of this rule.
3. A team member shall not intentionally cause or attempt to cause damage to private or school property, including but not limited to athletic equipment, uniforms, and supplies.
4. A team member shall not use any form of abusive or profane language or gestures toward a coach, teacher, administrator, authorized participant, official, or spectator.
5. A team member shall not intentionally cause or attempt to cause physical injury or intentionally behave in such a way as could reasonably cause physical injury to a coach, fellow participant, teacher, administrator, official, another student or spectator.
6. A team member shall not repeatedly engage in willful insubordination toward any coach, teacher, administrator, or official.

Use of Tobacco, Drugs and Alcohol

The tobacco, drugs and alcohol section of the major rules and regulations will be in effect for all student athletes twelve months a year. The penalties associated with the “use of tobacco, drugs and alcohol” will carry over to the next school year and/or next sports season(s).

Violation	1 st Offense	2 nd Offense	3 rd Offense
Tobacco	*25% of season – scheduled contests	*Denial of Participation for the remainder of the season and the next two seasons	Permanent denial of participation in athletic program
Electronic/Vapor-Cigarettes (with or without nicotine)	*25% of season – scheduled contests	*Denial of Participation for the remainder of the season and the next two seasons	Permanent denial of participation in athletic program
Drugs/Alcohol	*25% of season – scheduled contests	*Denial of Participation for the remainder of the season and the next two seasons	Permanent denial of participation in athletic program
Misdemeanor Conviction	*25% of season-scheduled contests	*Denial of Participation for the remainder of the season and the next two seasons	Permanent denial of participation in athletic program
Felony Conviction	Permanent denial of participation in athletic program		
Vandalism	*50% of season – scheduled contests	*Denial of Participation for the remainder of the season and the next two seasons	Permanent denial of participation in athletic program
Physical Menacing	*50% of season – scheduled contests	*Denial of Participation for the remainder of the season and the next two seasons	Permanent denial of participation in athletic program
Insubordination	*50% of season – scheduled contests	*Denial of Participation for the remainder of the season and the next two seasons	Permanent denial of participation in athletic program
Ejection from Contest	OHSAA Rules** ++	OHSAA Rules** ++	OHSAA Rules** ++
Abusive Profanity	10% of Season – scheduled contests	Considered at Insubordination Level violation	Considered at Insubordination Level violation

*An individual disciplined for these violations must participate in a counseling assessment and possible counseling before they will be allowed to participate in any athletic activity. Denial of participation includes any awards ceremonies and /or banquets.

** The OHSAA rule for each sport is contained in the OHSAA Handbook

++Depending on the severity of the offense, the school may enact punishment beyond the OHSAA rule.

First Offense – Denial of participation may be reduced to 10% of the season for the individual if the student completes 25 hours of community service (School district approved).

Second Offense – Denial of participation may be reduced to the equivalent of one full season for the individual if the student completes the assessment process and participates in an acceptable drug/alcohol counseling program (School district approved). Additionally, the student must complete 35 hours of community service (School district approved). The student must submit to random drug/alcohol testing (arranged by the school district) and cost is the responsibility of the parent or guardian of the student athlete.

The Discipline Process

When an alleged major rules violation has occurred, the administration shall investigate the incident and the administration shall meet with the student athlete to determine the appropriateness of the discipline associated with the violation. All coaches are required by policy to report any incident involving a potential violation by a student athlete to the athletic director or administration within 24 hours of discovering the potential violation.

Athletic violations are not subject to an appeal process because athletic participation is considered a privilege and not a "right". The privilege of participation is not guaranteed by the Ohio Revised Code; however, the Norwalk School District is required to treat participants of the athletic programs on an equal basis which is protected by law.

SUSPENSION FROM NORWALK OR EHOVE SCHOOL DISTRICTS

Any student athlete who receives an out of school suspension after signing the Athlete's Responsibility Creed will be subject to the following penalties: *

1. First suspension in a school year - the student will miss a minimum of one (1) contest including any missed during the suspension.
2. Second suspension in a school year - the student will miss a minimum of two (2) contests including any missed during the suspension.
3. Third suspension in a school year - the student will be suspended from all participation for the remainder of the school year.

*Non-participation will begin with the next scheduled contest.

IN SCHOOL SUSPENSION

Any student athlete who receives an in school suspension will be allowed to practice and participate in contests.

THE DISCIPLINE PROCESS

When an alleged major rules violation has occurred, an administrator will investigate and recommend the appropriate discipline. The matter will then be turned over to the Athletic Director for implementation. A coach is required to report to any high school administrator any knowledge they have concerning any major rules violation. Coaches should report the incident within 24 hours.

ADDITIONAL ATHLETIC ELIGIBILITY RULES

AGE LIMITATIONS

Due to a change in the OHSAA regulations (2015) students may participate at the age of 19. Once the student turns 20, the student becomes ineligible to participate in high school interscholastic athletics.

If a student enrolled in grade 7 or 8 attains the age of 15 before August 1, the student shall be ineligible to participate in 7-8 grade interscholastic athletics for the school year commencing in that calendar year.

A student shall become eligible for high school athletics when the student attains the fifteenth birthday before August 1, or when the student attains ninth grade standing. The student is eligible at the school where the student is expected to enroll at the ninth grade level.

PARTICIPATION ON INDEPENDENT TEAMS

If during the school year and while a member of a school team or squad, the student participates on an organized team engaged in the same sport, he shall be ineligible for any further participation in that sport for the remainder of that season.

RESIDENCE REQUIREMENTS

A student is eligible at the school located in the Ohio school district where the parent or legal guardian resides when all other eligibility standards are met. If your parent/legal guardian lives outside of Ohio, you are not eligible unless you meet one of the exceptions to the residency bylaws of the OHSSA.

TRANSFERS

The OHSAA receives more inquiries about eligibility in terms of the transfer bylaw than any other aspect of eligibility.

The basic transfer bylaw is quite simple. If a student transfers (changes) high schools at any time after establishing eligibility as a ninth grader (either by attending a school for five days or playing in a fall sport prior to the beginning of school), the student is **INELIGIBLE** at the new high school for the first fifty percent (50%) of the maximum allowable regular season contests in those sports in which the student participated during the twelve(12) months immediately preceding this transfer. **NOTE:** For purposes of this bylaw, a student is considered to have participated in a sport if he/she has entered, if for only one play, a scrimmage or contests at any level of competition/contests (e.g. freshman, junior varsity and varsity). No ruling is required from the Commissioner's Office, and no paperwork is necessary if a student transfers and cannot meet an exception to the transfer bylaw. Understanding that basic rule is fundamental to dealing with transfer students.

Of course, in our society today, students do indeed change schools for various reasons. To deal with those limited scenarios our member schools have adopted six exceptions, one of which **MAY** apply to a student who changes high schools. The use of the word **MAY** is instructive since not all transfer students can meet one of these exceptions and for each of these exceptions, the transfer student is **INELIGIBLE** until ruled eligible by the OHSAA Commissioner's Office. For a student to avail herself/himself of one of these exceptions, action on the part of the Athletic Director as well as the OHSAA staff is required.

For exceptions to the transfer rule see the OHSAA transfer bylaw booklet or see the Athletic

Director.

SEMESTERS OF ELIGIBILITY

When you enroll in grade 9 the first time, you have eight semesters of athletic eligibility taken in order of attendance whether you participate or do not participate.

COLLEGE RECRUITMENT POLICY

In the event an athlete should be contacted personally by a college recruiter, he/she has an obligation to work through his/her coach and the athletic department. Inform your coach of such a contact as soon as possible. College recruitment information is available in the Athletic Office.

Norwalk City Schools
Athletic Department
Athletic Participation Fees

By order of the Norwalk Board of Education, we will be collecting a sports fee to help cover the cost of athletics at Norwalk High School and Norwalk Middle School.

Each Norwalk High School student athlete's participation fee will be \$150 per sport. There is a \$350 cap per family per year, which includes fees from the high school and middle school.

Each Norwalk Middle School student athlete's participation fee will be \$75 per sport. There is a \$350 cap per family per year, which includes fees from the high school and middle school.

The participation fee **DOES NOT** guarantee any student/athlete playing time.

This fee must be turned into the coach or the athletic office **prior to the first game or match** of the season. Athletes that have not paid their fee will not be permitted to participate in games or matches.

Fees are non-refundable with the following exceptions:

1. A sport or activity is cancelled due to insufficient numbers.
2. The student does not make the team.
3. A student suffers a season-ending injury prior to the first game.
4. The student moves out of the district prior to the first game.
5. The student becomes academically ineligible before the first mandatory practice set by the OHSAA.

PARENT ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

APPENDIX B

I understand that there are high expectations for my child as they participate in extra-curricular activities. I have discussed the responsibilities with my child and fully support the rules as written. I also realize and support that this is a year round commitment.

The academic success of my child is more important than extra-curricular activities. I will actively participate to ensure my child’s academic success. I thoroughly understand both state and local eligibility requirements for extra-curricular activities and will seek additional assistance when problems arise.

I support a substance free environment for my child. The use of tobacco, alcohol or any illegal substances by any student will not be tolerated. Norwalk High School will offer assistance to those families who seek counseling and/or treatment.

There are consequences for inappropriate behaviors that may mean limiting participation or removal from a team. Conflicts or problems will attempted to be resolved with the coach(es) initially. If there is no amenable resolution, the parent may contact the Athletic Director and/ or the building principal.

I understand that my student-athlete’s image will be part of the team photo and will appear in a yearbook, school website, and/or newspaper stories.

I understand that these rules and regulations are explained in the Norwalk High Student Activities Handbook: A Guideline to Rules of Conduct and Behavior 2015-2016 also known as the “Trucker Talk” found online at the Norwalk High School and Middle School websites.

Parent/Guardian

Date

PARTICIPANT ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

As a participant in extra-curricular activities at Norwalk High School, I understand that there are high expectations for my personal conduct and academic achievement and that my participation is a privilege. These expectations apply throughout the year and are not confined to any specific sport and/or season.

I am responsible to set a proper example for my peers and community, because I accept the responsibility of a positive role model. I will abide by policies of the school and refrain from the use of tobacco, alcohol, and/or illegal substances. I will treat others with dignity and respect in the school and athletic planning fields. School property and athletic equipment will not be abused.

My academic success is the most important aspect of my high school career. I will make my best effort to succeed in class and will seek assistance when problems arise. I understand both state and local eligibility requirements and realize that disruptive behavior will not be tolerated.

There are consequences for inappropriate behaviors, which may include progressive discipline and/or possible removal from the team. If I should encounter any conflict with another person, I will seek assistance from a parent or staff member.

Participant

Date