



EXCEL
ACADEMY CHARTER SCHOOLS

Excel Academy Charter High School

401 Bremen Street · East Boston, MA 02128

www.excelacademy.org

Student Athlete Handbook

Sportsmanship is defined as:

- *playing fair*
- *following the rules of the game*
- *respecting the judgment of referees and officials*
- *treating opponents with respect*

Good sportsmanship is thought of as the "golden rule" of sports — in other words, treating the people you play with and against as you'd like to be treated yourself. You demonstrate good sportsmanship when you show respect for yourself, your teammates, and your opponents, for the coaches on both sides, and for the referees, judges, and other officials.

But sportsmanship isn't just reserved for the people on the field. Cheerleaders, fans, and parents also need to be aware of how they behave during competition. Sportsmanship is a style and an attitude, and it can have a positive influence on everyone around you. Above all else, Excel Academy values sportsmanship, the rest is merely commentary...

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EXCEL ACADEMY ATHLETICS

Purpose

The purpose of this handbook is to acquaint the athlete, parents, coaches, faculty and administration with information pertaining to athletics at Excel Academy Charter High School. Additionally it attempts to define a common set of policies to which each athlete can adhere. Our hopes are that it will lead to a well-organized and productive athletic program.

Undoubtedly, we cannot cover all situations in this publication. The intent is to supply guidelines for solving incidents and problems, which may arise. It will be the Athletic Director's responsibility to enforce these policies. However, only through the mutual cooperation, understanding and familiarization of these policies by athletes, coaches, parents and administrators can we more cooperatively incorporate a consistent and successful athletic program at Excel Academy Charter High School.

Athletic Goals and Philosophy

Excel Academy Charter High School Athletics has the following goals for all athletes:

- Develop a healthy outlook on competition: strive to win but do not define oneself by the outcome
- Develop skills specific to the sport
- Develop tactical skills and strategy relating to the sport
- Improve physical conditioning
- Develop confidence
- Develop respect for coaches, officials, teammates and opponents
- Increase capacity for responsibility and dedication
- Develop effective communication skills, both verbal and non-verbal
- Learn and abide by the rules of the sport
- Learn to work as a team member in striving to meet common goals

The role of athletics at Excel Academy Charter High School is to provide educational experiences in the framework of competitive athletics. The program produces many benefits difficult to achieve in other areas of education or life. By focusing on educational outcomes and student learning, athletics can provide avenues for physical, emotional, social and intellectual growth.

The athletic program strives to develop team and school loyalty, sportsmanship, and a healthy competitive spirit in every student athlete. The athletic program provides an environment, which encourages leadership, commitment and self-motivation. All athletes, coaches and parents at Excel Academy Charter High School are expected to display proper ethical conduct and fair play, and to show respect to officials, opponents, spectators and fellow teammates.

Athletic Offerings

| Fall Sports | Winter Sports | Spring Sports |
|-----------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Boys Soccer | Boys Basketball | Track and Field (Co-ed) |
| Girls Soccer | Girls Basketball | Baseball |
| Girls Volleyball | Dance | Softball |
| Cross Country (Co-ed) | Wrestling (beginning 2017-18) | Boys Volleyball |
| Flag Football (Co-ed) | | |

RESPONSIBILITIES

Student – Athletes and Parent Responsibilities

Excel Academy Charter High School has an established athletic code. In it, the responsibilities of the student-athletes and parents are defined. Each owes it to themselves and their team, to develop those qualities of leadership and behavior that contribute to the team's success; and eliminate all the traits and behaviors that tend to damage the best values of the game.

STUDENT-ATHLETES

1. Attend all practices, contests, and team activities. Arrive on time and be prepared mentally, physically, and emotionally to participate at their highest level. If the athlete must miss any team event or practice, they are responsible for notifying their coach or captain(s) at least 24 hours in advance where possible.
2. Respect the integrity and judgment of the officials, coaches, and teammates.
3. Show cordial courtesy to visiting opponents, and establish a positive relationship with visitors.
4. Athletes are in command of themselves at all times and understand that their appearance and actions reflect on the school and our community.
5. Adhere to the rules of good sportsmanship and promote school spirit.
6. Achieve a thorough understanding and acceptance of the games rules and standards of eligibility.
7. Athletes must use school-approved transportation and are not permitted to transport themselves or teammates to and from athletic contests. The only exception to this rule is through the transportation release form, or if specified by the Athletic Director.
8. Demonstrate proper school behavior and conduct while traveling to and from athletic contests.
9. Care for all gear/uniform issued to the athlete by the coach or team representative(s) and return all in good condition. Understand that you and your parents will be charged for the replacement value for any lost or damaged gear and/or indefinite suspension from athletic competition may result.
10. Maintain grades and attendance to the best of their ability.

PARENT/GUARDIANS

1. Encourage your student-athlete to fulfill their responsibilities as a team member and to maintain grades and school attendance at their highest levels.
2. Support your player and the team by making your best effort to attend events.
3. Respect the integrity and judgment of the officials, coaches, and athletes; adhere to the rules of good sportsmanship.
4. Support the team's ability to properly function by assisting with team duties/responsibilities when and if needed.
5. Along with your student athlete, assume responsibility for the care of all gear/uniform issued to the athlete by the coach or team representative(s) and return all in good condition. Understand that you and your athlete will be charged for the replacement value for any lost or damaged gear and/or indefinite suspension from athletic competition may result.

GOVERNANCE ASSOCIATION

Excel Academy Charter High School is a member of the Massachusetts Charter School Athletic Organization. This organization was established for the primary purpose of promoting selected interscholastic activities among member charter schools and the assurance of such advantages as may be gained by a union of effort.

The organization was established to encourage member charter schools to improve their co-curricular program in athletics. The organization membership facilitates the arranging of schedules, equalizing competition, and conducting league meets and determining league championships. The organization provides Excel Academy Charter High School the opportunity for competition without excessive travel and with schools of similar size and athletic philosophy. Membership implies abiding by conference schedules, rules and regulations.

Any policy not specified within this handbook, relating to athletics, will follow the MCSAO policy as listed on their website (www.mcsao.org).

PARTICIPATION/ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Physical Examination

Every student athlete must have a current valid Physical Form from a physician on file with the school nurse. The physical exam must be performed within 13 months of the season start date. For your records, Fall Season Sports start on September 1st, Winter Season Sports start on December 1st, and Spring Season Sports start on March 15th.

Student and Parent Acknowledgment

Prior to the start of each season, all students and parents may be invited to a pre-season meeting. This will be a chance to meet the coaches, other parents and athletic administration staff. During this meeting, all students will be presented with this handbook containing all the necessary forms and information for participating in athletics. Each parent/guardian and athlete shall read all of the enclosed material and certify that they understand the athletic eligibility rules and policies of the school. This signed document will be filed in the Athletic Directors office. Parents who do not attend the pre-season meeting will need to follow up with the Athletic Director to obtain a copy of this handbook, which will need to be read, and the appropriate forms returned before their son/daughter is eligible to participate in athletics.

Emergency Medical Form

Each athlete's parents shall complete an Emergency Medical Form, giving permission for treatment by a physician or hospital when the parent (s)/guardian(s) are not available. A copy of this form shall reside in the school nurse office, with the athletes coach at every game, and in the Athletic Directors office.

User Fees

Each sport season, when teams are selected, athletes may be assessed a small fee as established by Excel Academy Charter High School to help maintain the high quality of the athletic program. Scholarships will be available on a means basis.

ACADEMIC/ATHLETIC ELIGIBILITY

Student athletes and parents should recognize that participation in the athletic program is not a right of all students, but rather a privilege to those selected individuals who possess the ability, attitude, disposition, cooperative spirit, and desire to represent Excel Academy Charter High School in a positive way.

As with all school privileges, it is important to remember that the school reserves the right to revoke the privilege of any participant who does not conduct himself/herself in an acceptable manner.

While athletics take place, for the most part, after school hours, it is still imperative that a student-athlete remember that his/her main priority is to be the best student they can possibly be. Student-athletes are seen as leaders in the school community and should act in a way that represents not only themselves, but also the team and school, which they represent. It is imperative that both student-athletes and their parents are aware of the following rules:

- Student-athletes must be present and on time to participate in practice or a game that day. If the game is held over the weekend, then that student must be present and on time on the Friday morning preceding that weekend. If a student is absent on Friday they will not be allowed to play over the weekend.
- Student-athletes will not be allowed to participate in practice or a game that day if he/she is dismissed from school, unless they return to school prior to the end of the school day.
- Only the Athletic Director or Administrator can consider any exceptions to the above rules.
- If a student is suspended from school for any reason, he/she will be ineligible to participate in sports from the end of school on the day the suspension is given until the day he/she returns to school from their suspension.
- Students are excused for being late to practice if they have been receiving extra help from a teacher or are making up work. Each student should bring a note/pass from the teacher to his/her coach.
- A student must notify their captains or their coach 24 hours in advance of missing a practice where possible. If a student misses practice without a solid reason or notifies the coach the day of practice that student is subject to being ineligible for the next game.
- No student-athlete will be required to attend practice on Sundays or religious holy days.

In addition to the above mentioned rules, to participate in athletics a student-athlete must meet the following academic requirements:

- Be passing all classes (70 and above) and thus avoid being on Academic Warning (AW). Student athletes are ineligible to participate in athletics whilst on AW.

TEAM SELECTION, CAPTAINS, AND PLAYING TIME

Team Selection

The coach is responsible for selecting squad members. There are many factors involved when selecting students for an athletic team. They include, but are not limited to, the following traits as demonstrated during the try out period, and if applicable previous competition: sport specific skill and ability, commitment, effort, general athletic ability, conditioning level, support of others, etc.

Team Captains

Individual coaches will determine the policy for the selection of team captains (will not apply to all sports). They may be elected by the team, appointed by the coach, or some combination of the two. Team captains are expected to be leaders and undertake responsibilities provided to them by their coach. Serving as a team captain is an honor that comes with significant added responsibilities. Each coach will designate how their captains will serve in this critical student leadership role.

Playing Time

It is the responsibility of the coach to determine playing time for each player. His/her assessment of an athlete's skill level, attitude, commitment as well as an assessment of the level of competition will all be determining factors. Team coaches also need to consider the age and size of the competition. Playing time can be a sensitive topic for players and their parents/guardians, and it is the nature of competitive sports that not everyone will be satisfied with their playing time. If a player is unhappy s/he should approach the coach and express his/her feelings. The coach will be able to communicate why the player is receiving his/her current playing time and what s/he can work on to potentially improve playing time for the future. It is important to remember that every individual on a team is an invaluable, contributing member regardless of his/her playing time.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Coaches make decision based on what they feel is best for the team and for all individual athletes involved, yet the season may not always unfold in a manner envisioned by a particular student and or parent. If there are concerns, it is best to communicate with the coach in an appropriate manner so the issue can be addressed. It is not appropriate to approach the coach to discuss such issues as team strategies, play calling, or team members that are not your own children.

As we emphasize the importance of responsibility at Excel Academy Charter High School, taking ownership for addressing problems is important. In the event that a student-athlete or parent/guardian has a concern about policies or procedures outlines in this manual, the concern should be brought to the attention of the following staff members in the order which they are listed.

1. The student approaches his/her coach personally to discuss the matter. If this is too difficult for the student, s/he may ask the team captain to accompany him/her, or have them approach the coach on his/her behalf.
2. If this initial discussion does not solve the issue, the student/and or parent may contact the Athletic Director. In the case where the Athletic Director is also the coach, students can move the number 3.
3. If contacting the Athletic Director failed to reach a resolution, the student and/or parent should contact a member of the administration.

The following times should be avoided when contacting the coach with a concern:

- Just before, during, or directly after an athletic contest
- During a practice session
- When other students are in close proximity and would likely overhear a conversation of a personal nature.

The best way to contact a coach is by email. All Excel Academy Charter High School coaches have email addresses, and these will be made available to all team members and parents at the pre-season meeting. Should email not be your preferred method of communication, then each coach will also have a phone number that will be made available to team members and parents at the pre-season meeting. Please leave a coach a message, and they will get back to you within 48 hours. If the coach does not get back to you within 48 hours, please reach out to the Athletic Director.

CONCUSSION POLICY

Massachusetts Concussion Requirements

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts Executive Office of Health of Human Services requires that all schools, grades 6 – graduation, adhere to the following:

Student-athletes and their parents, coaches, Athletic Directors, and school nurses must be educated about the consequences of head injuries through training programs and written materials. This is accomplished through the completion of one of two free online concussion awareness courses. Links to both of these sites is provided in the *Concussion Awareness Form*, to be signed by both the students and parent/guardian after successful completion of the course, and can be found in the pre-season packet to be handed out at the pre-season meeting. Student-athletes, who participate in more than one sport, will only have to complete this training once per school year.

The law also requires that student-athletes and their parents/guardians notify their school about any history of prior head injuries before the start of each season, even if those injuries occurred within school based activity or athletic competition. This is done through the completion and submission of a *Pre-Participation Head Injury Awareness Form*, which is also provided in the pre-season packet and located in both the school nurse office and the Athletic Directors office.

If a student becomes unconscious or is suspected of having a concussion during a practice or game, that student must be removed from the practice or game, and will not be permitted to return until a *Post Sports Related Head Injury Medical Clearance Form* has been completed by a licensed medical professional and is filed in the school nurse's office. This form will also be located in the Athletic Directors office.

INJURY POLICY

Excel Academy Charter High School does not have an Athletic Trainer, but when possible an EMT will attend home games. Coaches are trained annually in first aid and CPR. Athletes should report all injuries to the coach immediately. If a student is prevented from participating in a practice or game due to an injury s/he may not return to play until they provide their coach with a doctor's note stating that s/he are able to return.

The coach and other athletic personnel should be prepared to do the following if an injury or accident takes place during a practice or game.

- If the EMT or School Nurse is present, that particular individual will immediately respond to the injury or accident.
- If the above mentioned individuals are not present, the coach (First Aid Certified) will be the one to respond.
- In the event of an emergency, the coach will call 911 and request ambulance transportation to the nearest hospital. S/he will; notify the parent that the student has been transported to the hospital with a member of school personnel. If the parent is not available, a member of school personnel will remain with the student until they arrive.
- Under no circumstance will an injured student-athlete be left alone or transported without a competent adult accompanying him/her. If necessary, the game will be forfeited, and remaining students will be dismissed with parents.
- If the accident requires hospital treatment, the coach will contact a member of the administration, the Athletic Director and the School Nurse as soon as possible.
- The coach will submit an *Accident/ Incident Report Form* to the School Nurse the next school day. Forms may be obtained from the School Nurse or the Athletic Director.
- When a student-athlete has received medical attention for an injury, s/he needs to submit a *Return to Athletic Participation Form*, signed by his/her physician to the School Nurse's office before returning to practice or play.

TRANSPORTATION POLICY

Transportation to Games

Students will be transported to all games that take place outside of the East Boston and Chelsea communities (home or away) via bus, 15 seated passenger van or parent/coach car pool. Parents should check the season schedule for specific information regarding pick up times and locations. If a contest is taking place in East Boston or Chelsea, then students will be required to make their own way to and from the location.

At the conclusion of athletic contests, students will be transported back to Excel Academy Charter High School, 401 Bremen Street, East Boston, Ma, 02128.

Pick up times for game days are listed in the schedule which is distributed at the beginning of the season. Keep in mind that these times are estimates and every game runs for a different amount of time based on a variety of factors. Traffic conditions vary as well and are difficult to predict; whenever possible it is best to have your child contact you when s/he is on the way back to the school in order to give you a more accurate arrival time.

When a bus has been rented for a game all team members must ride on it from the school to the game. An Excel Academy Charter High School coach will be on the bus for all trips. Students are expected to meet appropriate standards of behavior on the bus and failure to do so may result in disciplinary action from the coach and/or school.

Dismissal From Athletic Contests

The period of time after the conclusion of a game can be a hectic one, and it is essential that a coach is able to track the whereabouts of all student athletes.

All student athletes must travel back to Excel Academy together. The only exemptions to this rule are:

- Parents have submitted written notification 24 hours in advance, specifying which alternative method of transportation their student athlete will be taking. This notification must be in possession of the coach or Athletic director.
- Parents have submitted a season long waiver at the start of the season, specifying the methods of transportation that their student athlete is permitted to use following an athletic contest.

Written notification is the only way for a coach to effectively track the location of all players not on the bus. The parent must also present themselves to the coach before leaving the game location with their child.

If a student is getting a ride home with the parent of a friend, s/he must also provide a note to the coach from their parent 24 hours before the game.

EQUIPMENT/UNIFORM

Athletic Equipment

The athletic equipment used during the course of each season is the property of Excel Academy Charter High School, and it is important that it is treated with respect in order to ensure its safe use and longevity. Any equipment that is issued to any student-athlete is the responsibility of the student athletes, and s/he will have to pay for the equipment in full if returned in an unusable state.

Team Uniform

All uniforms are the property of Excel Academy Charter High School. Each team member will be issued a uniform to use for the season. If the uniform is not returned at the end of the season the student's parents/guardians will be responsible for the entire cost of the uniform.

Students are also responsible for ensuring that their uniforms remain clean throughout the season, and are returned in clean condition.

At different times throughout the season, a team's coach may designate a particular "Team Spirit Day" when team members will be allowed to wear their jersey to school, but not the complete uniform. Jerseys may only be worn to school on these designated "Spirit" days.

Return of Equipment and Uniform

1. Student-athletes must return all issued equipment and uniforms at the conclusion of the season to their coach, or to the Athletic director. All equipment should be intact and clean.
2. Student-athletes must reimburse the athletic department for the replacement of any equipment or uniforms not returned.
3. Student-athletes who do not return issued equipment and uniforms or do not reimburse the athletic department will not be allowed to participate in any other sports. At the conclusion of the school year, student-athletes still owing equipment or uniforms will have report cards and transcripts withheld until all items are paid for or returned.

Team Gear

Student-athletes and their families may have the opportunity to purchase sport specific gear during the course of the season. The Athletic Director will distribute specific information when it becomes available. Team gear may only be worn during the school day if it meets the dress code standards outline in the student handbook.

PARENT AND COACH COMMUNICATION

Both parenting and coaching are extremely difficult vocations. By establishing an understanding of each position, we are better able to accept the actions of the other and provide greater benefits to student-athletes. As parents, when your children become involved in our program, you have a right to understand what expectations are placed on your child. This begins with clear communication from the coach of your child's program.

The team coach will go over the following information at the pre-season meeting:

- philosophy of the coach;
- expectations the coach has for your child as well as all the players on the squad;
- locations and times of all practices and contests;
- team requirements, i.e., practices, special equipment;
- procedure followed should your child be injured during participation; and

Communication between a coach and parent is important. It should be always done in the appropriate manner and at the appropriate time. One aspect of communication with the coach should follow the "48 hour rule". Communicating with the coach immediately before or after a game is not in the best interest of anyone involved. The coach is either concentrating on pregame or post-game situations, as well as trying to take care of the team and its members. As a parent, you may have an issue that demands more time than the coach can adequately give to you. If you wait 24 hours to discuss an issue, particularly one that may be as emotionally involved as it can be when it concerns your son/daughter; the coach most likely will be able to give better attention to your concerns. Scheduling a time to meet or discuss an issue will work best for all involved. There are situations that may require a conference between the coach and the parent. These are to be encouraged. It is important that both parties involved have a clear understanding of the others position.

Communication coaches should expect from parents:

- concerns expressed directly to the coach;
- notification of any schedule conflicts well in advance; and
- Specific concerns with regard to a coach's philosophy and/or expectations.

As your child becomes involved in athletic at Excel Academy Charter High School, they will experience some of the most rewarding moments of their lives. It is important to understand that there also may be times when things do not go the way you or your child wishes. At these times, discussion with the coach is encouraged.

Appropriate concerns to discuss with coaches:

- the treatment of your child, mentally and physically;
- ways to help your child improve; and
- Concerns about your child's behavior.

Coaches are professionals! They make judgment decisions based on what they believe to be best for all students involved. As you have seen from the list above, certain topics can be and should be discussed with your child's coach. Other topics must be left to the discretion of the coach.

Issues NOT appropriate to discuss with coaches:

- Playing time
- Team strategy
- Play calling
- Other student-athletes

STUDENT-ATHLETE AND PARENT ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF ATHLETIC POLICIES

It is important that you read and review the contents of the Handbook for Student-Athletes. Please sign and return this page to indicate that you have read and reviewed the handbook.

Student Acceptance:

I understand and acknowledge receipt of the Handbook for Student-Athletes. I have read and reviewed the contents and I agree to the provisions contained therein.

Student Name (print)

Student Signature

Date

Parent Acceptance:

I understand and acknowledge receipt of the Handbook for Student-Athletes. I have read and reviewed the contents and I agree to the provisions contained therein.

Parent Name (print)

Parent Signature

Date

STUDENT PARTICIPATION PERMISSION

Participation in competitive athletics may result in severe injury, including paralysis, or death. Improvement in equipment, medical treatment and physical conditioning, as well as rule changes, have reduced these risks, but is impossible to totally eliminate such occurrences from athletics. I hereby give my consent for the above-named student to represent his/her school in athletic activities, including team travel for local or out-of-town trips.

In consideration of the child's participation in this activity, I agree (on behalf of myself, my heirs, executors, administrators, and assigns) to release, discharge, waive and relinquish Excel Academy Charter High School (or its officers, agents, employees and volunteers) from any and all liabilities, claims, or actions for personal injury, property damage, or wrongful death which may arise out of the child's participation.

Parental/Guardian Consent: I certify that I am the parent or legal guardian of the above participant and that I am entitled to his or her custody and control and I do hereby give permission for the Child to participate in the above activity. I further certify that the Child is in good health and has no physical or other impediment which would endanger him or her while participating in this activity. I realize that by participating in this program, the Child will be exposed to a risk of injury or death. I understand the dangers incidental to participating in the program and the need for safety precautions, and I have discussed the dangers of the program and the need for safety precautions with the Child. I hereby execute the above Agreement Waiver, and Release on his/her behalf.

Student's Signature

Signature of Legal Parent/Guardian

Date

Relationship to Student

EMERGENCY MEDICAL FORM

STUDENT'S NAME _____ GRADE _____ DATE OF BIRTH _____

STREET ADDRESS _____ CITY _____

PARENTS' NAMES _____ CELL PHONE _____

HOME PHONE _____ WORK PHONE _____

EMAIL _____

In the event the parents cannot be contacted, please contact:

_____ at phone # _____

INSURANCE: Individual or Group Health/Accident insurance: _____
COMPANY NAME POLICY NO.

EMERGENCY MEDICAL TREATMENT PERMISSION AND INFORMATION

I hereby authorize the school to obtain, through a physician of its own choice, any emergency care that may become reasonably necessary for the student in the course of athletic activities or travel. Payment of all charges incurred for medical treatment is guaranteed by me or the insurance company providing coverage for above-named student.

(1) Facts concerning the child's medical history including allergies, medications being taken, and any physical impairment to which a physician should be alerted:

(2) Date of last Tetanus shot _____ (3) Family Physician _____ Phone _____

I understand this authorization will only be enforced when I cannot personally be contacted and provide for immediate treatment.

Signature of Legal Parent/Guardian Date Relationship to Student

Player Sportsmanship Agreement

I agree to:

- Treat coaches, teammates, opponents, referees and spectators with courtesy and respect.
- Play to win but always fairly and with good sportsmanship.
- Accept the decisions of referees without gesture or argument.
- Control my temper and not use inappropriate, derogatory or vulgar language.
- Never criticize the play of others and never blame them for making mistakes.
- Follow the instructions of my coach (es) regarding playing time and position.
- Work hard, concentrate, cooperate and sacrifice for the good of the team.
- Be responsible for arriving on time and to notify my coach (es) ahead of time if I am going to be late or miss practices and/or games.
- Obey all team rules.

I understand that failure to comply with the above agreement may result in removal from the team.

Students Name:

(Please Print)

Students Signature:

Date: _____

Parent/Guardian Sportsmanship Agreement

I understand that:

- The use of alcohol and tobacco products by parents or other spectators is prohibited during practices and/or games

I agree to:

- Not coach or give instructions to players including my own child during practices and/or games.
- Never openly express criticism for players of other teams.
- Never openly criticize referees during a game.
- Never confront the coach (es) with emotional issues in front of the players.
- Never use inappropriate, derogatory or vulgar language during a practice or game.
- Ensure my child has the means to arrive and be picked up on time for practices and games.
- Be a positive role model for others to follow.

I certify that I have read, understand and agree to adhere to the above athletic policies set forth by the Excel Academy Athletic Department.

Parent/Guardian Name:

(Please Print)

Parent/Guardian Signature:

Date: _____

