

Lower Merion School District

Policy No.: 555
Section: CLASSIFIED EMPLOYEES
Title: PRIVATE COACHING OR TRAINING OF STUDENTS
BY DISTRICT ATHLETIC COACHES
Date Adopted: 2/13/17

555 PRIVATE COACHING OR TRAINING OF STUDENTS BY DISTRICT ATHLETIC COACHES

In order not to unnecessarily deprive District students of access to the many qualified private coaches who are also District employees, while minimizing the potential for conflict of interest created by District coaches privately coaching their own players, the District permits private coaching or training of District students by District staff pursuant to the requirements set forth below.

District-employed athletic coaches are permitted to privately coach or train present or future members of the team to which the District assigns them subject to any restrictions set forth in the following:

1. the accompanying Administrative Regulation;
2. the District's conflict of interest policy referenced below;
3. any applicable Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association ("PIAA") limitations;
and
4. any applicable state and federal conflict of interest laws.

Definitions

"District Coach" means an individual (1) employed by and paid, in whole or in part, by the District in the capacity of athletic coach whether or not the sport is recognized by the PIAA or (2) designated as a volunteer coach by the Athletic Director whether or not the individual is otherwise employed by the District.

"Private Coaching" means the District Coach administering, directing, or coaching, for a fee, a camp or clinic, league, team, or tournament that is attended by students who are potentially eligible to play for the District school team for which the District Coach is employed to coach in the upcoming athletic season.

"Private Training" means the District Coach providing individual and group instruction for a fee paid to the trainer in the techniques and skills relevant to a particular sport outside of the coaching done on behalf of the District.

The accompanying Administrative Regulations will provide examples of Private Coaching and Private Training.

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Expectations and Limitations

District Coaches shall refrain from engaging in Private Coaching or Private Training with any players eligible to play for the team coached by the District Coach for a fee either individually or in groups during the season in which they are coaching the District team. Further, District Coaches are not permitted to engage in Private Training of District students, incoming 9th grade through 12th grade, for a fee in the sport(s) they coach in the District.

District Coaches shall not direct, coerce or otherwise exert undue influence over a student to participate, or not participate, as a member of a team or as an individual competitor in a non-school league, camp, clinic, or to take private or group instruction or lessons, particularly where the coach conducts or otherwise has a financial interest in the Private Coaching/Private Training. In that regard, team roster selections and playing time decisions for rostered players must be based solely on performance with the District team. Whether or not a student receives Private Coaching or Private Training from a coach shall have no effect on playing time or making the District school team for which the coach is employed.

District Coaches shall receive no preferential treatment whatsoever for District facilities use for their Privately Coached teams, camps, clinics, leagues, or tournaments.

District Coaches who Privately Train students or coach non-District teams will do so on their own time and not on the premises of the District except through the District's facilities use policies and regulations. Arrangements regarding costs and scheduling of the sessions will be done by the District Coach when not engaged in their District employment.

Care must be taken by District Coaches not to directly or indirectly pressure District students to prioritize sport or activity participation over religious observances whether or not the District Coach is coaching the student on a District team or a club team. Students and families should feel encouraged to direct their concerns to the building principal or other building administrator without fear of reprisals or other adverse consequences.

Disclosure Requirement

District Coaches must disclose to their supervising Athletic Director information regarding the Private Coaching/Private Training arrangement including, but not limited to, the names of all District students for whom they provide Private Training or Private Coaching prior to providing Private Training or Private Coaching for the District student. District Coaches shall disclose the names of all District students who are employed by or are a volunteer of the District coach in connection with any Private Coaching or Private Training.

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Violations

Violations of this policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including discharge. Disciplinary actions shall be consistent with Board Policies, Administrative Regulations, applicable collective bargaining agreements, and state and federal laws.

Regulations

The Superintendent shall promulgate regulation which includes procedures for notification/disclosure and complaints.

Cross Reference: Policy No. 713 "Access to School Facilities"
Policy No. 827 "Conflict of Interest"