



Activities / Athletics Student Handbook 2025-26



NOTICE OF NON-DISCRIMINATION

The Papillion-La Vista School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, religion, age or other protected status in its programs and activities and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups. The following persons have been designated to handle inquiries regarding the non-discrimination policies:

Students: Director of Student Services, 420 South Washington Street, Papillion, NE 68046 (402) 537-6214
(studentservices@plcschools.org).

Employees and Others: Assistant Superintendent Human Resources, 420 South Washington Street, Papillion, NE 68046 (402) 537-6206 (askhr@plcschools.org).

Complaints or concerns involving discrimination or needs for accommodation or access should be addressed to the appropriate Coordinator. For further information about anti-discrimination laws and regulations, or to file a complaint of discrimination with the Office for Civil Rights in the U.S. Department of Education (OCR), please contact OCR at 8930 Ward Parkway, Suite 2037, Kansas City, Missouri 64114, (816) 268-0550 (voice), or (877) 521-2172 (telecommunications device for the deaf), or ocr.kansascity@ed.gov

FORWARD

Although the information found in this handbook is detailed and to the point, it is not intended to be all encompassing or to cover every situation that may arise during the school day or year. The administration reserves the right to make decisions or rule revisions at any time that reflect the well-being of all students that may or may not be covered in this document or of which may be impacted by the enactment of a new state or federal law. Should a situation arise that is not specifically covered in this handbook, the administration will make a decision based on the law and the common good of the students and staff. As circumstances warrant, the administration reserves the right to make decisions or rule revisions to support the well-being of students, staff and the school community.

CHILD FIND NOTICE

The Papillion La Vista Community Schools has an ongoing goal of locating and identifying all children, birth through age 21, who have special needs. The district will provide any child or youth who has a disability an appropriate public education at no cost to the parents of the child. Children or youth with disabilities are those who have developmental delays, hearing impairments or deafness, vision impairments or blindness, emotional disturbance, health impairments, specific learning disabilities, speech and language impairments, intellectual disability, orthopedic impairments, autism, multiple impairments or traumatic brain injuries. In addition, children and youth with any disability which substantially limits a major life activity may receive accommodations to allow them access to an appropriate education (Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, as amended).

Papillion La Vista Community Schools requests your help in locating children and youth with disabilities who are eligible to benefit from Special Education or 504 accommodations. If you know of a child or youth who is a resident of the district, who may have a disability and is not receiving needed services, please contact the Director of Special Services, 420 S. Washington Street, Papillion, NE 68046, (402) 537-6221. Also, if you know of someone who may need this notice translated to another language, given orally, or delivered in some other manner, please contact the same person.

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BOARD OF EDUCATION POLICIES

Specific policies established by the Board of Education may be found at www.plcschools.org. This includes Board policy regarding participation and assignment of athletic teams. Contact your principal/AD if you have questions.

HANDBOOKS

All district handbooks (student & employee) may be found on the district website at: www.plcschools.org or at the building's website. Contact your principal or activities director if you have questions.

EXTRACURRICULAR AND INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETICS AND ACTIVITIES

Extracurricular school sponsored clubs and activities, and interscholastic athletics and activities are an extension of the selected content curriculum and instructional strategies of the Papillion La Vista Community Schools whether or not they occur in a traditional classroom setting.

As an extension of the Papillion La Vista Community Schools education program, and as a result of financial, facility, personnel, and interest limitations and constraints, the number and nature of extracurricular school sponsored clubs and activities, and the number of interscholastic athletics and activities will be restricted to those which meet the criteria of and which are approved according to the procedures specified in Papillion La Vista Community Schools policies and procedures.

Extracurricular activities enhance the overall effectiveness of the education program and student participation in such activities is encouraged. The Superintendent and administrative staff have the responsibility to guide and control such activities and to develop procedures, to govern student participation in these activities.

The Board encourages the development of, and student participation in intramural athletic programs within the bounds of budget limitations, proper staff, student interest and adequate facilities.

The Board also encourages student participation in interschool athletics. All student athletic programs operated by the school district in grades 9-12 and sanctioned by the Nebraska School Activities Association (NSAA) must meet the standards set by the NSAA for student eligibility and conduct. Middle school activities are subject to Nebraska Department of Education – Rule 10.

Student publications are also important elements of the instructional program and the Board supports student newspapers and annuals produced under the supervision of building principals.

Additionally, the Board endorses district-sponsored clubs and other approved school organizations and encourages students to participate in such clubs and organizations.

The Board supports the participation in district-sponsored activities to the greatest extent possible of all eligible residents, private, parochial and exempt home school students, as well as all students entering the District through Option Enrollment.

Activities are considered a part of a comprehensive educational program and all regulations and standards of student conduct applying to the classroom instructional program shall be enforced in activities as well. All activities are optional for student participation.

Student interest will serve as the basic guideline for the creation and/or continuation of any club or organization, within the bounds of budget limitations, availability of adequate staff to provide supervision and adequate facilities. Students interested in participating in co-curricular activities such as class field trips, clubs (i.e. DECA, National Honor Society) or other subject-related events must first be enrolled in the subject area course(s) to which the event is related. Each building principal is responsible for the formulation of written rules governing all clubs and organizations within their school.

The building principal and/or athletic/activity director of each school shall be responsible for determining the eligibility of any student who wishes to participate in any extracurricular or co-curricular activity. When the number of students allowed to participate in a team or club must be limited, each supervisor/coach shall be responsible for determining which candidates will become members of that team or club.

Student eligibility for participation in NSAA sanctioned activities in grades 9-12 may be limited to specific NSAA requirements. District representatives to any NSAA governing body are encouraged to advocate for changes in these requirements, which will allow equitable levels of eligibility and participation in activities for all students attending Nebraska Schools.

Each athletic/activity director is responsible for annually communicating the current NSAA eligibility standards to parent(s)/guardian(s), students and coaches/sponsors; to monitor students' eligibility status in such programs throughout the school year; and to take necessary actions when students are determined ineligible for such participation. Information regarding NSAA requirement/by-laws may be found at www.nsaahome.org and should be reviewed annually.

ADMINISTRATION OF BUILDING ACTIVITIES

The principal or activities director has the responsibility for implementing the school building activity program within the district guidelines. Buildings will comply with requirements of law

and the NSAA (Nebraska State Activities Association) rules and by laws. Refer to Policy 6304 (Extracurricular Activities).

NSAA GUIDELINES

The Papillion La Vista Community Schools will be in compliance with all NSAA rules. NSAA rules apply to grades 9-12. Each high school has a copy of the most recent NSAA constitution, rules and by-laws. Further reference to NSAA rules can be accessed at www.nsaahome.org. Each high school activities director is a school representative in the NSAA.

EXEMPT SCHOOL AND NONPUBLIC SCHOOL STUDENTS

The school district recognizes the rights of parents and guardians to educate their children and wards in a nonpublic school, in accordance with state law and regulations. The superintendent shall establish such guidelines and procedures to work cooperatively with such nonpublic schools and nonpublic school students as may be required by state and federal law.

Both exempt school and nonpublic school students are eligible to participate in NSAA sanctioned activities if those students meet the guidelines for eligibility established by the NSAA and Board of Education Policy #5001.

STUDENT ATTENDANCE AT HIGH SCHOOL EVENTS

Students must have a school ID to attend high school events (available upon request). All policies and procedures applying to student conduct at school will also be enforced at school events both on and off campus.

MIDDLE SCHOOL ATHLETICS

All middle school athletics will be in compliance with the accreditation rules as found in the Nebraska Department of Education Rule 10. For additional information, contact your building Activities Director.

FEES

The District may require and collect fees or other funds from or on behalf of students or require students to furnish or provide materials, supplies, equipment, or attire consistent with the Public Elementary and Secondary Student Fee Authorization Act. Refer to Board of Education policy #3307 (Student Fees).

EMERGENCY PLANS FOR ACTIVITIES

Each high school and middle school will have written emergency plans on file in the site's activities office and in the office of the certified athletic trainer (high schools). These emergency plans are to be reviewed annually by the schools and its programs. For copies of these plans, or additional details, contact your building administrator.

RECOGNITION OF NON-NSAA SANCTIONED ACTIVITIES

The individual school(s) have the discretion to display or not display any trophies, awards, and/or recognition received by non-NSAA sanctioned extracurricular activities. The high school(s) are not responsible for the maintenance of any trophies, awards, and/or recognition of non-NSAA sanctioned extracurricular activities.

The individual high school(s) have the discretion to include or not include congratulatory recognition received by non-NSAA sanctioned extracurricular activities and/or the students involved in the non-NSAA sanctioned extracurricular activities in school announcements and/or in school sponsored publications, including but not limited to the school yearbook, school newspaper, and/or school newsletter.

The individual school(s) have the discretion to include or not include congratulatory recognition received by non-NSAA sanctioned extracurricular activities and/or the students involved in the non-NSAA sanctioned activities in school sponsored award ceremonies that take place at the school(s), including but not limited to the school assemblies.

The individual high school(s) have the discretion to award students who are members of non-NSAA sanctioned—but school-sponsored extracurricular activities—recognition awards sponsored by the individual high school, including but not limited to athletic/activity letters.

INTRAMURALS

Students may participate in the intramural programs at the school in which they are currently enrolled. Program offerings are determined based on student interest, availability of supervisors, and adequate funding. Students participating in intramurals must follow all school rules and sanctions for infractions and will be in compliance with district and building standards.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF STUDENT/PARENT/COACH

Students, parents, and coaches have a responsibility to honor the philosophy of the district's extracurricular activities program. The philosophy supports the idea that extracurricular activities are a part of the learning opportunities and experiences that will add to the education of our students.

The responsibility guidelines for students and coaches provide the expectations that the district has for the students and coaches who participate in the extracurricular activities program in order to honor the philosophy of the district's extracurricular activities program.

Board of Education Policy #1401 (Public Participation in the Schools) provides the expectations that the district has for people in their role as spectators of our extracurricular activities program to honor the philosophy of the district's extracurricular activities program.

HAZING

Hazing — Hazing shall be defined as any activity by which a person intentionally or recklessly endangers the physical or mental health or safety of an individual for the purpose of initiation into, admission into affiliation with, or continued membership with any group or activity operating under the sanction of the school district. Such hazing activity shall include, but not be limited to the following whipping; beating; branding; forced and prolonged calisthenics; prolonged exposure to the elements; forced consumption of any food, liquor, beverage, drug, or harmful substance not generally intended for human consumption; prolonged sleep deprivation; harassing by exacting unnecessary or disagreeable work, banter, ridicule, or criticism; or any brutal treatment or the performance of any unlawful act which endangers the physical or mental health or safety of any person. Consent to the hazing by the student(s) shall not be a defense to hazing. Hazing will not be tolerated in any school district activity or program. All incidents of hazing shall be reported to the building principal. If the incidents of hazing involve clubs or extracurricular activities and athletics, those incidents also shall be reported to the Director of Student Services. Refer to Board of Education Policy #5203 (Bullying & Harassment).

TRAVEL AND TRIPS WITH STUDENT GROUPS

The coach or club or activity sponsor will have emergency contact information on all participating students during the trip. Refer to Board of Education policy #6501 (Transportation for Activities and Field Trips).

PHYSICAL EXAMINATIONS

All students who are participating in NSAA sanctioned activities must have on file, with the activities director, a clearance form from a medical professional who performed a physical prior to any participation. This form must state in the opinion of the examining physician that the student is cleared and fully able to compete in the activities listed.

- The physical examination is required annually and must be completed within the State of Nebraska.
- The physical examination must be given prior to participation in the sports activities program (includes tryouts, practice, and participation in a game or contest).
- The physical examination for participation during the following school year shall be given on or after May 1.
- The physical examination form and screening form are desired, but not required, to be submitted to the Activities Director. Proof that the student has been cleared to participate is required.

NSAA By-Law 3.4.1.1: The individual giving a physical examination for the purpose of certifying a student is physically fit to participate in athletic activities should be licensed to diagnose, treat, or recommend treatment in the areas covered by the recommended physical

examination form. The individual giving a medical opinion must do so within the scope of his/her training and within the limits defined by state statutes as to services which can be legally performed by the field of practice to which the individual belongs.

STUDENT INSURANCE

The school district does not carry an accident insurance policy to cover injuries sustained in the athletic programs offered by district schools. Accident insurance is the responsibility of the parents or guardians of the students.

DOCTOR'S RELEASE

When a student involved in activities is treated by a medical professional for an injury that occurred during the season, a written release from that licensed medical professional must be received by the school's athletic trainer or Activity Director prior to participation in any practices or games. For this requirement (doctor's release) a medical professional is defined as a physician or physician's assistant licensed to practice medicine in Nebraska.

Note that the concussion management policy has its own protocol for return to play/learn and that protocol is addressed later in these guidelines. Refer to Board of Education policy #6207 (Concussions).

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE ON GAME OR PERFORMANCE DAYS

Classroom attendance on the day of a performance, contest, or game is required. Exceptions to this rule must be approved by the administration. This shall be interpreted to mean that a student will attend all classes unless excused by an administrator (illness, staying home to rest, or "sleeping in" are examples of unexcused absences for extracurricular participation).

ELIGIBILITY OF TRANSFER STUDENTS, ENROLLMENT OPTION STUDENTS, OPEN ENROLLMENT STUDENTS, AND STUDENTS ATTENDING LEARNING CENTERS

All transfer students and as well as Option Enrollment or Open Enrollment students are subject to NSAA by-laws and interpretations to gain eligibility. See www.nsaahome.org for the most up-to-date rules and regulations. In-district transfers (a student who transfers from one Papillion La Vista high school to another Papillion La Vista high school) also are subject to NSAA by-laws and interpretations to gain eligibility. These students must be cleared by the site Activities Office prior to participation in activities governed by NSAA by-laws.

In general, any student who transfers from one high school to another after May 1st of the preceding school year without changing his/her residence will be ineligible for varsity competition for a period of 90 school days. Any exceptions to this application deadline will

require a Hardship Approval from the NSAA. For specific details regarding deadlines and eligibility requirement dates, contact your building Activities Director.

When a contact is made to the school by someone inquiring about a student enrolling into a high school by means other than a bona-fide change of domicile, the site activities director should be informed about that inquiry as soon as possible. Coaches and sponsors are not to engage in discussions with students and/or the parents of students not enrolled in the school without the prior approval of the school's Activities Director.

The following NSAA by-laws apply to any student who is enrolled in a learning center and desires to participate in interschool activities:

- The learning center must be located within the school district served and must be a part of the school district's system.
- The member high school which the student previously attended, elected to attend, or was assigned to attend is the school the student must represent in interschool competition, for it shall be considered the student's designated home school.

Any change of a student's designated high school shall be governed by the NSAA domicile and transfer rule.

The activities director must verify eligibility before allowing these students to participate.

NSAA By-laws relating to semester eligibility may be found at www.nsaahome.org.

CONTROLLING ILLNESS AND INFECTIONS

As you may be aware, there has been considerable attention given to the drug resistant strain of staphylococcus (staph) known as MRSA. Staph is one of several health issues to which athletes, coaches and trainers must pay attention. Other health issues common in athletics are tinea pedis ("athlete's foot"), tinea cruris ("jock itch") and tinea corporis or tinea capitis ("ringworm"). We must take appropriate steps to prevent these health issues from preventing athletic participation.

While our custodial staff, coaches and certified athletic trainers have been directed to address these health issues as part of their job responsibilities, there are also interventions that can be implemented by the athletes. *The key to controlling illness and infections is prevention.*

The Papillion-La Vista School District health and athletic officials are recommending the following guidelines to athletes and their parents to help prevent illness and infections from affecting athletic participation. Efforts that athletes and parents can take may seem daunting, but these common sense precautions can help reduce the risk to athletes:

- ✓ ***Wash and dry all athletic clothing after each use.*** Clothing should be laundered in hot water with antiviral soaps or chlorine bleach.
- ✓ ***Do not use the same bag to transport dirty clothing used after practices and games that you use to bring clean clothing to school.*** The dirty clothing transported in the bag may contaminate the bag, which then might contaminate the clean clothing placed in that bag.
- ✓ ***Wash hands frequently with soap and water.*** Careful hand washing remains the best defense against germs. Scrub hands briskly for at least 15 seconds, and then dry them with a disposable towel.
- ✓ ***Do not share personal items*** towels, clothing, soap, deodorant, razors, etc.
- ✓ ***Keep cuts and abrasions clean and covered until well healed.*** This should be done immediately after a cut or abrasion occurs, using clean and sterile dressing to cover the wound. Always apply antiseptics to the dressing, not to the cut or abrasion, before covering the cut or abrasion.
- ✓ ***Clean your gear with a disinfectant cleaner after every use.*** This would include items such as wrestling headgear and shoes, football helmets and shoulder pads, etc.
- ✓ ***Shower immediately after every practice and game.*** Use a liquid antibacterial soap if possible. Do not share soap or towels with other athletes and be sure to a clean towel after each shower.
- ✓ ***Check your skin frequently (everyday) for cuts, abrasions, and lesions.*** This includes areas that you cannot readily see, such as the back of the neck and the back of your upper body. Notify your parents, coach, and certified athletic trainer about any skin sores.

The school district is committed to maintaining a safe and healthy environment for your athletes. Showers are available for use by the athletes. Athletes have daily access to a certified athletic trainer. The well being of our athletes is our primary concern. Please know that we are taking all necessary precautions at our schools. If you have concerns about the cuts, abrasions or other breaks in the skin of your child, please consult the certified athletic trainer at your school and/or your physician.

CONCUSSIONS

Training

The Superintendent or designee shall make available training approved by the chief medical officer of the State on how to recognize the symptoms of a concussion or brain injury and how to seek proper medical treatment for a concussion or brain injury to all coaches of school athletic teams and designated activity sponsors.

Education

The Superintendent or designee shall require that concussion and brain injury information be provided on an annual basis to students and the students' parents or guardians prior to such students initiating practice or competition. The information provided to students and the students' parents or guardians shall include, but need not be limited to:

- A. The signs and symptoms of a concussion;
- B. The risks posed by sustaining a concussion; and
- C. The actions a student should take in response to sustaining a concussion, including the notification of his or her coaches or sponsors, or certified athletic trainers.

Response to Concussions

Removal. A student who participates on a school athletic team shall be removed from a practice or game when he or she is reasonably suspected of having sustained a concussion or brain injury in such practice or game after observation by a coach, certified athletic trainer, or a licensed healthcare professional who is professionally affiliated with or contracted by the school.

Return to Play. A student who has been removed from a practice or game as a result of being reasonably suspected of having sustained a concussion or brain injury shall not be permitted to participate in any school-supervised team athletic activities involving physical exertion including, but not limited to, practices or games until the student:

- A. Has been evaluated by a licensed healthcare professional
- B. Has received written and signed clearance to resume participation in athletic activities from the licensed healthcare professional trained in concussion management and
- C. Has submitted the written and signed clearance to resume participation in athletic activities to the school accompanied by written permission to resume participation from the student's parent or guardian.

The school may require that the student's return to full activities be on a stepwise progression back to full participation or otherwise establish conditions for return to participation that are more restrictive than those defined by the licensed health care professional if the school reasonably deems such to be appropriate.

Parent Notification. If, after observation, a student is reasonably suspected of having sustained a concussion or brain injury and is removed from an activity per the concussion protocol, the parent or guardian of the student shall be notified by the school of the date and approximate time of the injury suffered by the student, the signs and symptoms of a concussion or brain injury that were observed, and any actions taken to treat the student.

Return to Learn. The school shall develop a return to learn protocol for students who have sustained a concussion. The return to learn protocol shall recognize that students who have sustained a concussion and returned to school may need informal or formal accommodations, modifications of curriculum, and monitoring by health or academic staff until the student is fully recovered.

Responsibility of Coaches and Activity Sponsors

Coaches and activity sponsors shall comply with this policy and apply their safety and injury prevention training. A coach or sponsor who fails to do so is subject to disciplinary action, including but not limited to termination of employment.

Students and Parents

It is recognized that coaches and sponsors cannot be aware of every incident in which a student has symptoms of a possible concussion or brain injury. As such, students and their parents have a responsibility to honestly report symptoms of a possible concussion or brain injury to the student's coaches or sponsors on a timely basis whether or not such injury happened during a school activity or incident outside of school.

Signs Observed by Staff	Signs Reported by Student	Signs Observed by Parent(s)
Appears dazed or stunned	Headache	Appears dazed or stunned
Is confused about assignment	Nausea	Appears confused
Forgets plays	Balance problems or dizziness	Forgets known items
Is unsure of game, score, or opponent	Double or fuzzy vision	Is unsure of name, usual surroundings
Moves clumsily	Sensitive to light or noise	Moves clumsily
Answers questions slowly	Feeling sluggish	Answers questions slowly
Loses consciousness	Feeling foggy or groggy	Loses consciousness
Shows behavior or personality changes	Concentration of memory problems	Shows behavior or personality changes
Can't recall events prior to hit on the head	Confusion	Can't recall events prior to hit on the head
Can't recall events after the hit on the head		Can't recall events after the hit on the head

PRACTICES AND ACTIVITIES ON INCLEMENT WEATHER DAYS

As a general rule, if school is canceled by the Superintendent due to inclement weather and/or if inclement weather occurs during the school day, practices and contests will be postponed. Activities directors will verify the allowance of any activities with the Superintendent (or assistant superintendent) prior to allowing practices or contests to occur.

The activities director will determine if practices and/or contests may occur by 1:00 p.m. on the day of cancellation, with the approval of the Superintendent. Any extracurricular sport and/or

activity scheduled to travel out of the metro Omaha area must be approved by the Superintendent prior to that sport and/or activity leaving the school and/or departure location.

NSAA “wet bulb” guidelines will be followed on extremely hot or humid days. Please see this NSAA link for more information:

<https://nsaa-static.s3.amazonaws.com/textfile/spmeds/wbgtchart.pdf>. The activities director, through discussions with the Superintendent will make a determination on a case-by-case basis if such practices/activities are to be held.

TRANSPORTATION REGULATIONS

Students are expected to follow established rules of conduct when using district transportation. Those include complying with the directions of the driver, coaches/sponsors, and/or any supervisory staff.

All participants are expected to use school-provided transportation if it is provided. Exceptions are noted below:

- Parents/legal guardians may request the use of alternative transportation to and from the site of any or all away events or games by their son/daughter.
- Such requests shall be in writing directly to the coach or activities director and shall acknowledge the voluntary release of the district from the obligation or responsibility of providing transportation. Such requests may be for specific games or events or may be for a specific period of time.
- The use of alternative transportation by any student/participant must be approved by the school administration prior to the day of the game or event. Otherwise, the student must use the transportation provided by the district.

The district is not responsible for providing transportation to any practice session which may be held on or off district property. Parents/legal guardians shall be responsible for providing any transportation necessary for the attendance by their son/daughter at all practices.

All participants are expected to use school-provided transportation to and from the site of all away events when such transportation is provided. Parents/legal guardians and students may request an exception from the use of school-provided transportation. Parent permission must be provided for the affected students to use alternative transportation.

As a reminder, a parent or student may request the use of alternative transportation--- even when the school is providing transportation to and/or from an event. However, the school must always approve the use of alternative transportation whenever alternative transportation is requested. How the sites inform coaches, sponsors, parents and students that alternative transportation has been approved will be determined by the administrative teams at those sites.

If a student misses school-provided transportation for an activity: Coaches/Sponsors will inform student of departure time. Except for unusual situations, transportation will not wait for late students.

Coaches/Sponsors and/or schools must establish the following consistent policy when a student misses school-provided transportation and consistently enforce the policy. Those may include:

- Students will not be able to participate in the event, or
- Students may be able to participate in the event if they can find approved alternative transportation.

Summer and/or Over Night Travel: Teams and/or school groups that travel or participate in overnight trips during the summer must follow the guidelines established in Board of Education Policy #6501 (Transportation for Activities and Field Trips) and will have emergency contact information on all participating students during the travel and/or trip.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF PARTICIPANTS

Participation in the athletics programs of the school district is a privilege, not a right. When you make the commitment to participate, you are agreeing to abide by the policies and procedures established by the NSAA, District, your school, and your coaches.

- Respect the rules of the school, teachers, coaches, and administrators.
- Respect and follow all school rules.
- Follow all training rules, school district eligibility requirements, and NSAA eligibility rules. Students are responsible for maintaining their own eligibility.
- Strive to perform to your best ability in the classroom. Understand the importance of an education. Students will think of themselves as students first and participants second.
- Support all school activities to the best of your ability.
- Promote good sportsmanship and character.
- Model respectful behavior and demonstrate your duty to ensure that your teammates refrain from disrespectful conduct, including verbal abuse of opponents and officials, profane or belligerent trash talking, taunting, and inappropriate celebrations.
- Exemplify good behavior, appearance, and conduct at all times. Respect others and their property. Theft and destruction of any school's property and/or any individual's equipment or property will not be tolerated.
- Follow the expectation to dress neatly on all trips, follow trip guidelines established by the coach/sponsor, and to ride the transportation provided by the school to and from the site of the event unless prior arrangements have been made and approved by site administration and all appropriate forms are signed and returned to the school.
- Honor the traditions of the sport.
- Abide by and respect the decisions of event officials.
- Attend all classes the day of any contests or activities.

- Condition properly so that you can safely and adequately meet the physical demands of the activity.
- Complete all eligibility paperwork/requirements and submit any participation fees prior to participating in any tryouts, practices or games, activities, or receiving any equipment or awards.
- Understand that substance abuse in any form while participating in high school activities may result in forfeiture of eligibility.
- Return all equipment and uniforms issued to you after the completion of any activity or after dropping out of that activity. Students shall pay for all items not returned.
- Follow all district and school transportation guidelines.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF PARENTS/GUARDIANS

Participation in the athletics programs of the school district by your children is a privilege, not a right. When your child makes the commitment to participate, your child is agreeing to abide by the policies and procedures established by the NSAA, district, your school, and your coaches.

- Provide positive support, care, and encouragement to your child and his/her team, coaches, and school.
- Provide positive support and encouragement to the visiting team, their coaches, and school.
- Maintain positive behavior and attitude at all athletic contests.
- Respect the position and professionalism of the game official.
- Refrain from the use of foul or inappropriate language.
- Refrain from yelling criticism at your child and his/her coaches or team during athletic events.
- Refrain from interfering with the coach.
- Allow the coach to be responsible for your child during practices, games, and team related activities.
- Refrain from making derogatory comments to players, other parents, game officials, or school administrators during athletic events.
- Follow all district guidelines and regulations dealing with transportation to athletic activities.
- Sign and submit, with accurate information, all required participation forms to the activities office.
- Follow the chain of communication guidelines when concerns arise.
- Will not circumvent any rules or guidelines of the school, district, and/or NSAA.
- Refrain from interfering with practices or games.
- Respect and accept with dignity the final decision of officials.

ATHLETIC & ACTIVITY TEAM SELECTION AND CUTTING GUIDELINES

1. Choosing the members of athletic teams is the sole responsibility of the coaches and sponsors for those teams or clubs.
2. Lower-level coaches and sponsors must take into consideration the policies established by the head varsity coach or sponsor in that particular program when selecting final team rosters.
3. A student who is suspended from school during the designated tryout period does not automatically retain the right to resume the tryout upon his/her return to school. Coaches, in consultation with the Activities Director, are to clarify their policy regarding the resumption of tryouts for a student suspended during any portion of the designated tryout period. This policy must be included in the information provided to students trying out for the team prior to the first practice and/or prior to the start of the first practice.
4. If a coach or sponsor anticipates that team selection will include cutting, the coach or sponsor will provide the following information to all students trying out for the team prior to the first practice and/or prior to the start of the first practice:
 - a. The number of days allotted for the try-out period.
 - b. The team policy regarding resumption of a tryout for students suspended from school during any portion of the tryout period.
 - c. The *specific* criteria being used to select the team. These criteria must include that attendance at pre-season and/or post-season conditioning is not a requirement to make the team and that attendance at pre-season and/or post-season conditioning does not guarantee a position on the team.
 - d. The number of players that the coach plans to keep. The coach may adjust this number based upon the evaluation of athletes during the try-out period.
 - e. The length of the season if the students make the team. For the varsity team this should include district and state tournaments.
 - f. The practice commitment if the students make the team.
 - g. The game commitments if the students make the team.
5. The coach or sponsor must provide the cutting policies and the absolute last day that an athlete would be accepted on the team to the Assistant Principal for Activities prior to the first practice date for the sport. Exceptions to the last day for acceptance on a team require the prior approval of the activities director.
6. At the discretion of the head varsity coach or head sponsor, individuals may be excluded from team tryouts and membership due to past violations of team requirements and expectations as well as past violations of school and/or district policies. Prior to initiating the use of this activities policy, the head varsity coach or sponsor must meet with the activities director. Students and parents to whom this requirement applies have the right to appeal the application of this requirement to the activities director. If a coach anticipates using this policy, the coach must announce this requirement to the parents and students to whom this requirement will affect prior to the first day of try-outs.

7. When cutting becomes a necessity, the process used by the coach or sponsor making the cuts must include at least these three important elements:
 - a. Each student must have competed in a minimum of two practice sessions during the time set aside for try-outs.
 - b. If the student inquires, they should be given the reason or reasons for the cut.
 - c. Cut lists are not to be posted.

Coaches and sponsors also should note the following:

1. Coaches and sponsors should discuss alternative possibilities for participation on the team or other areas of the activities program. Students can be recruited as managers, statisticians, or, other duties needed by the team that students could fulfill.
2. If a coach or sponsor anticipates difficulties arising as a result of squad selection, he or she should discuss the situation with his or her immediate supervisor in the activities department.

In the event an athlete wished to appeal the selection process, the appeal must establish that the policies stated above were not followed by the coach or sponsor. The appeal is made to the activities director who will decide on the validity of the appeal. Not being selected to a team does not, by itself, establish the validity of an appeal. If the appeal is valid, the activities director MAY grant up to two additional days of tryout. The activities director, however, does not determine whether or not the athlete is selected for the team. The activities director will discuss the decision with the coach or sponsor involved prior to the additional try-out day.

NOTE: For teams that do not cut, the coach or sponsor must provide the absolute last day that an athlete would be accepted on the team or club to the activities director prior to the first practice date for the sport.

SPECTATOR/FAN CONDUCT

As a spectator attending a school district athletic event or activity:

- I recognize that the goal of this event is to provide young people with the opportunity for healthy competition in the spirit of sportsmanship and camaraderie.
- I recognize that I have a role to project a positive and supportive attitude and to show respect toward all of the participants, including the officials, coaches, and student-athletes as well as other spectators and game management staff.
- I recognize that my words and behavior have a powerful impact on those around me and that I have a role to behave in a mature and dignified manner. I will not say, make, or promote profane comments, obscene gestures, offensive remarks, trash-talking, or taunting of any participant or spectator during the event. I should support and cheer for my team and not cheer against the other team or game officials.
- I recognize that I should exhibit good character and provide a positive role model for all spectators and participants.

- I recognize that attendance at an athletic event is a privilege, not a right, and that I am expected to represent my child, my team, my community, and myself with honor.
- I recognize that for the orderly management of this event, I have a role to follow the directions of school, officials and the game management staff.
- I recognize that if my conduct during an event is not conducive to a positive environment (as determined by site administration and staff) for any of the participants, spectators, school officials, or game management staff, I may be asked to leave the event and I may be barred from attending future events.

PARENT & STUDENT NOTIFICATION – STEROID USE

Nebraska state law prohibits possessing, selling, dispensing, or administering a steroid in a manner not allowed by state law. Nebraska state law also provides that the increase of muscle mass, strength, or weight; or the improvement of physical appearance or performance in any form of sport through use of a steroid is not a valid medical purpose. Nebraska state law requires that only a medical doctor may prescribe a steroid for a person. Any violation of state law concerning steroids is punishable by long-term suspension, exclusion, or mandatory reassignment.

Health consequences associated with anabolic steroid use include:

- *In boys and men*, reduced sperm production, shrinking of the testicles, impotence, difficulty or pain in urinating, baldness, and irreversible breast enlargement (gynecomastia).
- *In girls and women*, development of more masculine characteristics, such as decreased breast size, deepening of the voice, excessive growth of body hair, and loss of scalp hair.
- *In adolescents of both genders*, premature termination of the adolescent growth spurt, so that for the rest of their lives abusers remain shorter than they would have been without the drugs.
- *In males and females of all ages*, potentially fatal liver cysts and liver cancer; blood clotting; cholesterol changes, and hypertension, each of which can promote heart attack and stroke; and acne. Although not all scientists agree, some interpret available evidence to show that anabolic steroid abuse- particularly in high doses-promotes aggression that can manifest itself as fighting, physical and sexual abuse, armed robbery, property crimes such as burglary and vandalism. Upon stopping anabolic steroids, some abusers may experience symptoms of depressed mood, fatigue, restlessness, loss of appetite, insomnia, headache, muscle and joint pain, and the desire to take more anabolic steroids.
- *In injectors*, infections resulting from the use of shared needles or non-sterile equipment, including HIV/AIDS, hepatitis B and C, and infective endocarditis, a potentially fatal inflammation of the inner lining of the heart. Bacterial infections can develop at the injection site, causing pain and abscess.

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR PARTICIPANTS – ACTIVITIES & ATHLETICS

Statement of Beliefs:

This Code of Conduct is intended to promote responsible student behavior, which reflects positively upon the students, the school district, and the community. It applies to all students involved in co-curricular activities, which are defined as activity and athletic programs sponsored by and through the school district.

Disciplinary Code:

The school district has established training and behavioral rules for the guidance and development of students who are involved in co-curricular activities. These rules are set out in the Code of Conduct, and any student who violates the provisions of the Code or receives a citation by law enforcement for a criminal offense shall be subject to the consequences set forth herein. Students involved in activities or athletics are expected to cooperate fully with school officials and law enforcement officers conducting an investigation into any possible violation of this Code of Conduct. Students under out of school suspension cannot practice or participate in activities or athletics until the day after that suspension has been completed.

Category I:

Category I involves behaviors during the school year, from the first day of the fall NSAA practice period until the regular school year ends in May. The following are prohibited:

- The use, possession, or being under the influence of any drug, drug paraphernalia, drug look-alike, controlled substance, nicotine products, electronic cigarettes/vaporizing devices, or alcohol whether on or off school grounds, including citations for MIP, DUI and DWI.
- The use of anabolic steroids, or other performance enhancing drugs which have not been prescribed by a physician.
- Behavior deemed by school administrators to have caused or be likely to cause a material and substantial disruption of school activities.
- Any other misconduct punishable under Nebraska law, other than a minor traffic violation.

Category I Consequences:

The first Category I violation will result in suspension from an activity or athletic event for two weeks or two contests, as determined appropriate by the administrator. The student must continue to participate in all practices required by the activity's sponsor or coach during this suspension period, and the activities director or athletic director may require a conference with the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) before the student is reinstated to the activity. Consequences for the first Category I violation will be imposed only during the school year in which the violation occurred.

A second Category I violation within the same school year will result in suspension from all activities or athletics for the remainder of the semester or a complete activity or athletic season, whichever is longer. Consequences for a second Category I violation will be imposed only during the school year in which both violations occurred.

A third Category I violation within the same school year will result in suspension from participation in all activities or athletics for one calendar year from the date of the third violation.

Category II:

Category II involves serious criminal behavior for which consequences will be applied if the violation occurs at any time during the calendar year, including out-of-season and summer months. The following behavior is prohibited:

- The possession and transmittal, with the intention to sell it, of any drug, controlled substance, or alcohol.
- Driving under the influence of alcohol (DUI), or driving while intoxicated (DWI), in which serious property damage or bodily injury occurs to others.
- Receiving a second citation for DUI or DWI within a 12-month period.
- Other offenses punishable under Nebraska law, which are not specified in this listing but are deemed by school administrators to be serious criminal offenses.

Category II Consequences:

The first Category II violation will result in suspension from all activities or athletics for the remainder of the semester or the activity or athletic season in which the violation occurs, whichever is longer.

The second Category II violation within a 12-month period will result in suspension from all activities or athletics for one calendar year from the date of the second violation.

In-Season Misconduct (Category I and II):

If the violation occurs when the student is participating in an activity or athletic event, the consequence will begin immediately upon the determination that there is reasonable cause to believe that the student engaged in misconduct that violates this Code.

Out-of-Season Misconduct (Category I and II):

If the violation occurs when the student is not participating in an activity or athletic event, the consequence will begin on the first day of approved practice, competition and/or performance for the next co-curricular activity or athletic event in which the student chooses to participate.

Administrative Procedures:

When a District employee has reasonable cause to believe that a student has violated the Code of

Conduct, they shall notify the activities director or athletic director. The appropriate director will initiate an investigation. As part of the investigation, the director or a designee will confer with the student. If the director determines that there is reasonable cause to believe that the student violated the Code of Conduct, they will inform the student of the decision. The director will provide a written communication to the parent(s)/guardian(s) that will include notice of the charge; the findings; the decision; the consequences to be imposed; and the appeal process. In cases where the decision involves removing a student from a team or for the remainder of a season, the activities director and/or athletic director will also provide the building principal and the Director of Student Services with a copy of the written notice sent to the parent(s)/guardian(s).

The student and the student's parent/guardian may appeal to the principal the activities director's decision in writing within five (5) working days from receipt of the decision. The principal will investigate as the principal deems appropriate and upon completion of the investigation, will inform the student and the student's parent/guardian of the principal's decision within ten (10) working days from receipt of the appeal. Working days shall mean: (i) days when school is in session for students during the school year; and (ii) all weekdays when school is in recess for summer vacation, excluding any national holidays.

Additional appeals may be sought and will be addressed through the appeals process found in Board Procedure 2102(B)(4).

PARENT/GUARDIAN & STUDENT NOTIFICATION

Harassment / Hazing: Abusive or humiliating harassment or hazing is strictly prohibited within the school district. These are unacceptable practices in any athletic, extracurricular, or academic endeavor. Students who engage in any type of harassment and/or hazing can expect to be disciplined under the school district's Code of Conduct for Extracurricular Activities. I understand that hazing is a crime in the state of Nebraska and that I should report any hazing incidents to school officials as soon as possible. I understand the letter and spirit of the information printed above, and will not be involved in any type of harassment and/or hazing.

Team Rules: Coaches are permitted to have team rules, guidelines, policies, procedures and/or constitutions applicable to the student-athletes on the team. The code of conduct is included in this handbook. NSAA rules may be found at www.nsaahome.org.

Sportsmanship Standards: The school district regards its athletic programs as a means of educating students in values of discipline, teamwork, and respect for rules. Schools and their athletic teams are authorized to adopt codes of conduct for team members. Parents and spectators are also required to act in an appropriate manner during athletic events and the school district does have a spectator code of conduct. A spectator code of conduct banner hangs in every high

school gymnasium. Violations of a conduct standard may result in disciplinary action, including dismissal from further athletic participation by the athlete and/or future attendance by a spectator.

Controlling Illness and Infections: This information provides the student-athlete and parent/guardian with information as to what actions they can take to minimize the risk of illness and infection while participating in athletics. Studies have shown that by following the recommendations in the letter the risk of missing practice and/or game time can be significantly reduced.

Steroid Notification Form: This information provides the student-athlete and parent/guardian of the student-athlete with information regarding the dangers of steroid abuse and that the school district may apply consequences to the student-athlete if that student-athlete is found to be using steroids to enhance athletic performance.

Concussion Information for Parents and Concussion Information for Students: This information provides information for the parent/guardian regarding concussions as well as what parents should look for and what actions parents should take if they suspect that their child may have a concussive injury. This provides information for the student regarding concussions, what the student should look for, and what actions the student should take if they suspect that they may have a concussive injury. It also explains the risks associated with not addressing a concussive injury

*** * * * * COMPLETED ELECTRONICALLY * * * * ***

Receipt of Student/Parent Activities/Athletic Handbook

As a student athlete and parent/guardian of a student athlete, we acknowledge, understand, and agree that we have read and understand the contents of the Activities-Athletics Student Handbook. We also understand that we may access this handbook and/or Board of Education policies online at the district website (www.plcschools.org).

Name of Student (Print) _____

Student Signature _____ Date: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature _____ Date: _____

APPENDIX: District Title IX Policy

It is the policy of the school district that no person shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subject to discrimination under any of the school district's programs or activities. See [Board Policy 5208 \(Title IX\)](#) for additional information and [Policy 2102 \(Complaint Procedure\)](#) for detailed reporting procedures.