



# Athletics Handbook

## for students grade 7-12



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# Pittsford Schools

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# Message from Director of Athletics

Dear Pittsford Student-Athletes and Families,

On behalf of the Pittsford Central School District, I would like to welcome you to the Interscholastic Athletic Department. Pittsford Central School District offers 140 different athletic teams for students in grades 7-12. This past year 1,828 student-athletes participated in the athletic program. Our coaching staff consists of certified, dedicated professionals who enjoy working with our student-athletes. They are a group of individuals who work very hard and care a great deal about the students for which they are responsible. For students in grades 7-8, we offer 31 modified teams which serve as a training ground for skill development and participation.

The modified program prepares our young student-athletes for the higher levels of high school competition. To participate at the high school level, a higher refinement of skills is necessary, and competition is viewed at an elevated level of comprehension. Our athletic programs strive for success, and practice to produce as efficient a team and individual effort as possible. Pittsford also takes great pride in its commitment to inclusion through our offerings of multiple Unified Sports opportunities.

The Pittsford Athletic Department believes participation in athletics develops skills that students-athletes will use throughout their lifetime. Our Core Values, which are taught and emphasized throughout the student day, encompasses some of these skills such as student-centered, supportive environment for all, continuous improvement, progressive and collaborative.

If you have any questions about [Pittsford Athletics](#) or would like more information on one of our programs, visiting Pittsford Athletics, or reach me at (585) 267-1060 or [patrick\\_irving@pittsford.monroe.edu](mailto:patrick_irving@pittsford.monroe.edu). I look forward to working with you as partners in your student's athletic career at Pittsford Central School District.

Dr. Patrick Irving, CMAA  
Director of Athletics





## Pittsford Mission Statement

The Pittsford Central School District community works collaboratively to inspire and prepare our students to be their best, do their best and make a difference in the lives of others.

## Pittsford Athletic Mission Statement

Student Athletes at Pittsford will experience safe programs that strive toward a commitment of excellence in sportsmanship, integrity, competition and community, in support of their academic rigor.

## Pittsford Core Values

- Student Centered
- Supportive Environment for All
- Continuous Improvement
- Progressive
- Collaborative

## Pittsford Vision Statement

Pittsford Central School District will be the leader in realizing the promise of public education. We will design a transformational partnership among students, families, professionals, and community, based upon a new definition of success for all:

Our students will navigate a journey of self-discovery, leading them to overcome obstacles, pursue balance and wellness, and personalize their education. They will recognize challenges as opportunities for learning and accomplishment. They will have the skills and competence necessary to understand and thrive in a diverse, global society. During and after their time with us, they will be independent, healthy, resilient, and compassionate contributors to our community and beyond.

Our staff will model the joy of learning. The environment of support and collegiality will make our district a magnet for passionate educators. Instead of categorizing students to fit into current structures, we will design systems to meet student needs.

Our families and community will be welcomed and engaged in educational experiences that dissolve the lines between business, society, and schools. Students will not only view adults as resources, but will themselves be recognized as resources to our community, matching their interests with opportunities to create solutions for real needs.

When this vision is realized, every Pittsford student will have access to personalized opportunities, and acquire skills necessary to meet their potential and fulfill their dreams.



## Philosophy of Pittsford Athletics

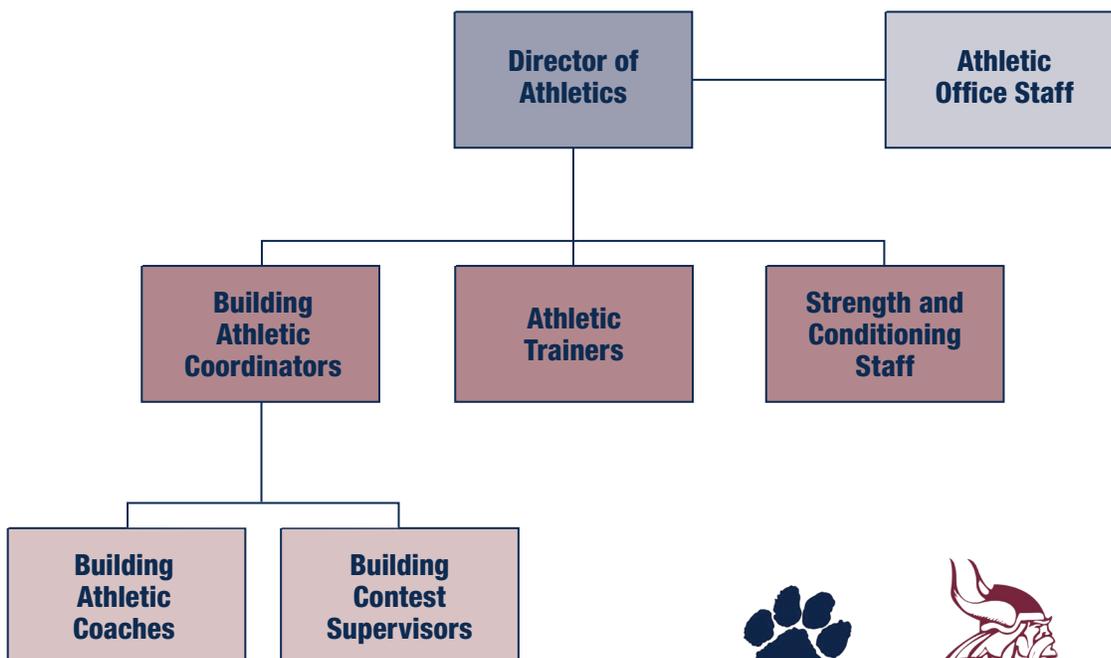
Interscholastic athletics in the Pittsford Central School District is a component of the health and physical education program and therefore is an integral part of the district's total education program. Athletics should be a broadening experience in which harmony of mind-body functions is created through striving for physical and mental excellence. This value-building experience should be offered to as many students as possible. The Athletic Department is constantly evaluating the number of programs offered and the capacity for program evolution. A well-coordinated program is vitally important to the morale of the school and our community.

Everyone involved in the delivery of athletics possesses a unique opportunity to teach positive life skills and values. Therefore, this educational experience demands highly qualified coaches. Desire, dedication, and self-discipline need to be developed to ensure the commitment and personal sacrifice required by athletes. Making such a commitment helps nurture integrity, pride, loyalty, and overall character. The outcome is a better citizenry carrying these values throughout their life.



It is the nature of athletic competition to strive for victory. However, the number of victories is only one criterion when determining a season's success. Guiding the team to attain maximum potential is the ultimate goal. To this end, the coaching staff must teach student athletes to prepare their minds and bodies to reach maximum potential, and then to be modest in victory and steadfast in defeat.

## Athletic Department Organization





# Athletic Program Structure



## Modified Program

The opportunity to participate in a modified sports program is available to all seventh, eighth (and possibly ninth graders depending on program structure). Sport activities offered are determined by the existence of leagues, student interest, and the relationship to the high school program. At this level, the focus is on learning athletic skills and game rules, fundamentals of team play, social-emotional growth, physiologically appropriate demands on the adolescent body, and healthy competition.

It is not our policy to cut students at the modified level. However, if the number of students trying out for a team creates a situation that is difficult to manage, poses a safety problem, or is problematic because of facility considerations, reducing team size may be necessary. Ultimately, the number of teams and size of the squad in any sport will be determined by the availability of:

1. Financial resources
2. Qualified coaches
3. Suitable indoor or outdoor facilities
4. A safe environment

In order for the desired development of the student-athlete and team to occur, practice sessions are vital. The New York State Public Health Athletic Association publishes regulations by which practice sessions are governed. Occasionally, practices or contests will be scheduled for Saturdays. Opportunities for meaningful contest participation for each team member will exist over the course of a season.

Exceptional seventh and eighth graders may be permitted to try out for a junior varsity or varsity team under the State Education Department Program called **Advanced Placement Process**.



## Junior Varsity Program

The junior varsity level is intended for those who display the potential of continued development into productive varsity level performers. Although team membership varies according to the structure of each program, sophomores occupy the majority of roster positions. In certain situations, juniors may be considered for junior varsity participation. Also, freshmen may be included on a junior varsity roster, as well as middle school students who have satisfied all advanced placement process requirements.

At this level, athletes are expected to make a visible commitment to the program, team and continued self development. To this end, increased emphasis is placed on physical conditioning, refinement of fundamental skills, elements and strategies of team play in addition to social-emotional development. Junior varsity programs work towards achieving

a balance between continued team and player development and striving for victory. The outcome of the contest becomes a consideration at this level.

The understanding that practice sessions are important is vital to a successful junior varsity team and player. For all team members, meaningful contest participation will exist over the course of a season, however, a specified amount of playing time is never guaranteed. Participants at this level are preparing themselves for the six-days-a-week commitment that is expected at the varsity level. While contests and practices are rarely held on holidays and Sundays, practice sessions are typically scheduled during school vacation periods. With the goal of becoming a varsity athlete clearly in sight, a high level of dedication and commitment is expected at the junior varsity level.



# Athletic Program Structure



## Varsity Program

Varsity competition is the culmination of each sport's program. Typically, seniors and juniors make up the majority of the roster. Occasionally, a sophomore and infrequently a freshman may be included on the team providing that evidence of advanced levels of physical development, athletic skill and appropriate social-emotional development is demonstrated. It is possible but rare for a middle school level student to be included on a varsity roster. Advanced Placement Process occurs more frequently in sports commonly classified as "individual" sporting events (track, golf, swimming, etc.). The final decision will be made by the Head Coach and the Athletic Director.

Squad size at the varsity level is limited. The number of participants on any given team is a function of those needed to conduct an effective and meaningful practice and to play the contest. It is vital that each team member has a role and knows its importance. Roles on all teams are fluid and can change throughout a season. While contest participation

over the course of a season is desirable, a specified amount of playing time at the varsity level is never guaranteed.

A sound attitude and advanced level of skill are prerequisites for a position on the varsity team, as is the realization that a varsity sport requires a six-days-a-week commitment. This commitment is often extended into vacation periods for all sport seasons. While contests and practices are rarely held on holidays and Sundays, the dedication and commitment needed to conduct a successful varsity program should be taken seriously.

The varsity coach is the leader of that sport's program and determines the system of instruction and strategy for that program. Communication among the modified, junior varsity and varsity programs is the responsibility of the varsity coach. Preparing to win, striving for victory in each contest and working to reach the group's and individual's maximum potential are worthy goals of a varsity level team.



## Unified Program

The Pittsford Schools, together with New York State Public High School Athletic Association and Special Olympics New York, is dedicated to promoting social inclusion through shared sports training and competition experiences. Unified Sports joins students with and without intellectual disabilities on the same team to create athletic teams for training and competition. Participation is rooted in the principle of meaningful involvement which ensures that every player is given an opportunity to contribute to the success of their team through their unique skills. Inclusive activity is among the most conducive ways to break down stereotypes, increase school connectedness and foster relationships.





# Participation in Athletics



## Eligibility

According to the Commissioner's Regulations, a pupil shall be eligible for inter-school competition in a sport during a semester, provided that the student-athlete is a bona fide pupil and enrolled during the first 15 days of the semester. Pittsford Schools further requires that all students take a minimum of five courses (five credits) plus physical education.

Participation in athletics and extra-curricular activities is an honor and a responsibility. The primary purpose for attending school is to obtain a meaningful education that will allow you to realize your ultimate goals.

## Attendance

Students are expected to be in attendance for all scheduled classes on a daily basis. When students are out of the building for an excused absence, they must provide a written excuse from a parent/guardian when they return to school. In order to participate in a scheduled activity (contest or practice) on the same day, all students must be in school by 11:00 a.m. unless they are tardy for an excused or legitimate reason other than illness.

The Pittsford Athletic Department recognizes that students have many activities available to them. While rostered on a Pittsford Athletic team, the expectation is that student-athletes, and their families, will prioritize their participation on the Pittsford team over other non-school organizations when conflicts arise. Our coaches will remain flexible when school events conflict with practices and contests. Student-athletes should report any potential conflicts to their coach as soon as they are aware.

## Medically Eligible for Participation

Student-Athletes must have an updated and approved physical from their family physician on file in Family ID and with your building's health office for the start of the season. Physicals that are out-of-date will not be accepted for medical approval to be granted.

## Online Registration

All registrations are processed via the district's central registration system, Family ID. Family ID is a secure registration platform that provides an easy, user-friendly way to register for athletic programs. When families register through Family ID, the system keeps track of your information in your Family ID profile. Families will enter their information only once for each family member per season. Information will be saved for the next sports season with an opportunity to update medical history from season to season, and electronically sign to give permission for your student-athlete to participate.

Registrations will be accepted beginning 30 days from the start of the season. Families may register their student-athlete at [Family ID Registration](#).

Families are strongly encouraged to submit their online registration as soon as it opens.

## Established Team Rules

All student-athletes are expected to comply with the established team rules, procedures and instructions of the coaching staff. Coaches have the authority to suspend an athlete temporarily for failure to comply with the rules and procedures or when the athlete's safety or safety of others requires such action. Permanent removal from the team may occur only after a written recommendation, from the head coach is submitted to the Director of Athletics. The Athletic Director will consult with the building principal, parent(s)/guardian(s) of student(s) and the student(s) involved to make a final determination.

## Suspension from School

Any student suspended from school will not be allowed to participate in practices or contests until their suspension has concluded. In addition, the student will meet with their coach to determine any additional athletic suspension based on their team rules.





# Participation in Athletics



## Expectations for Tryouts

All medically approved student-athletes will be given at least a two-day tryout for their respective sport. Coaches will communicate the purpose of their tryouts and how student-athletes will be evaluated. If a student-athlete does not make a roster, the coaching staff will communicate with that student-athlete in person the reason(s) why they did not make the team and share any other opportunities in their program, or other programs, that the student-athletes can consider.

## Athletic Trainer

Pittsford Athletics employs the services of a certified Athletic Trainer through Rochester Regional Health to oversee the prevention, assessment/evaluation, and treatment of injuries commonly associated with athletes. An athletic trainer has the skills to recognize and treat injuries commonly associated with athletics as well as provide life support in emergency situations. In the event of an injury, this professional will evaluate athletes, give specific instructions for the care of the injury, and follow through by contacting the parent(s)/guardian(s), health office staff and pediatrician, if necessary.

## Establishing Captains

Captains can play a pivotal role in the chemistry of a team. Coaches reserve the right to have captains in each season. The Pittsford Athletic Department supports leadership opportunities for students, especially at the varsity level.

A captain's role is to support the coaching staff in the organization and philosophical approach to the team. Captains can also serve as a communication conduit between the student-athletes and the staff.

## Advanced Placement Process

The Advanced Placement Process was designed for mature and exceptionally skilled student-athletes to advance to an upper level, and for less developed student-athletes to participate at an appropriate lower level that is suited to their development and ability. The program is not to be used to fill positions on teams, provide additional experience, provide a place for middle school student-athletes when no modified program is offered, or to reward

a student-athlete. It is aimed at the few selected student-athletes who can benefit from such placement because of their level of readiness. To qualify to take the Advanced Placement Process fitness exam, recommendation from the respective varsity coach is required.

## Multi-Sport Athletes

The Pittsford Athletic Department supports the notion of multi-sport athletes and recognizes the benefit of students competing in different sports under the leadership of different coaching. All students are highly encouraged to consider participating in multiple programs during their athletic career in Pittsford Schools.

## Dual-Sport Participation

The intention of the dual-sport participation program is for student-athletes to participate in one team sport and one individual sport at the varsity level. The Director of Athletics, along with the respective head coaches, can approve applications. Approval is highly limited.

## Strength and Conditioning

The Pittsford Athletic Department understands the importance of strength development, cardiovascular conditioning and injury prevention through intentional training. We have partnered with Lattimore Strength and Conditioning to support the development of our student-athletes. We have a strength and conditioning trainer in each high school. They are available to coaches for program sessions and individual student-athletes 12 months a year.



# Student-Athlete and Family Expectations



## Code of Conduct

Athletes are expected to exemplify good citizenship in both school and the community at large. The athlete will display good behavior both in practices and games. Athletes will allow officials to deal with abusive opponents during game play. Under no circumstances will an athlete provoke or otherwise engage in verbal or physical confrontations outside the rules of the game. It is expected that athletes maintain excellent class attendance. Absences, cutting and lateness to class can result in the student-athlete being removed from a team roster. Student-athletes are encouraged to participate in other school activities and to respect the abilities of all students in the school. "Hazing" activities are prohibited. "Hazing" includes any action or situation, which recklessly or intentionally causes embarrassment to another individual or group, endangers another's mental or physical health, or involves the forced consumption of food or other matter, alcohol, or drugs by an individual for the purpose of initiation into an association with an organization or a team.

Participation in athletics is both a privilege and a responsibility. Athletes earn recognition for their achievements as representatives of their school, team, student body, and the community. When an athlete accepts the privilege, they must live up to a code of conduct beyond that of the general student body on and off school property during the athletic season and off-season.

Please review the [Pittsford Code of Conduct](#) for expectations and processes for all involved in our community and athletics.



## NCAA Eligibility



All interested student-athletes and families should communicate with their child's school counselor their interest to be NCAA eligible upon graduation. The selection of specific NCAA approved courses are required to be eligible for competition at the Division I and Division II levels.

The Pittsford Athletic Department is committed to celebrating student-athletes who have been invited to continue their athletic careers at the college level. The Pittsford Athletic Department provides three season recognition ceremonies for student-athletes in Pittsford Athletic programs. Students can register to be recognized with their Building Athletic Coordinator.

### Multiply 4 x 4 to meet the 16-course requirement

**GRADE 9**

- (1) English
- (1) Math
- (1) Science
- (1) Social Sciences and/or additional

**4 CORE**

**GRADE 10**

- (1) English
- (1) Math
- (1) Science
- (1) Social Sciences and/or additional

**4 CORE**

**GRADE 11**

- (1) English
- (1) Math
- (1) Science
- (1) Social Sciences and/or additional

**4 CORE**

**GRADE 12**

- (1) English
- (1) Math
- (1) Science
- (1) Social Sciences and/or additional

**4 CORE**

# Student-Athlete and Family Expectations



## Transportation for Athletics

All student-athletes are expected to travel to and from all contests with school-sponsored transportation. Families must communicate with the child's head coach prior to the day of a contest if their child will not be utilizing school-sponsored transportation for an excused reason.

## Vacations and School Breaks

When parents and student athletes choose to take family vacations during sport seasons, it must be understood that time missed by the student-athlete can affect team chemistry and personal conditioning. Student-athletes who miss practices or competitions for any reason may have their position or playing time adjusted. Coaches shall make every effort to inform parents/guardians and student-athletes of the season's schedule as far in advance as possible.



The expectation at all levels of competition is that student-athletes are in attendance for all scheduled practices and contests, this includes during breaks when events are scheduled.

If a concern or issue arises, one should use the proper channels to seek assistance. Our program coaches should be communicated with first so the matter can be addressed. At no time will coaches address playing time or game strategy with non-student-athletes. The Pittsford Athletic Department highly encourages student-athletes, especially at the high school level, to remain in contact with their coach on their role and opportunities to change their role when desired.

If a concern or issue is not addressed in a timely manner, the Director of Athletics should be notified.

Equipment and uniforms must be returned at the end of the season to the head coach of the team.

## Volunteer Coaches

On occasion, there are people who volunteer to assist with coaching. This is a commendable attitude, and their desire to support is appreciated. The Director of Athletics must approve all volunteer coaches, along with the respective varsity head coach, before they are invited to practices and contests. All volunteer coaches are required by the New York State Education Department to be certified coaches and approved by the Board of Education. A volunteer is to be always under the direct supervision of the head coach.



## Communication with Coaches

The proper chain of command is as follows:

- Assistant Coaches, J.V., Modified
- Head Coach
- Building Athletic Coordinator (for non-personnel issues)
- Director of Athletics





# Community Engagement



## Game Schedules

[Game schedules](#) are posted on the district website. Additionally, families and community members can utilize the Activities Scheduler App, available for iOS and Android, for real-time updates and notifications about game times and locations.



Such goals for fundraising efforts by sports booster clubs include, but are not limited to:

1. Senior recognitions
2. Banquet expenses
3. Apparel for program participants
4. Rental of facilities when not traditionally supported by the athletic department
5. Single season championship banners

Participation on a sports booster club is voluntary. Accurate financial records must be maintained and available. Sports booster clubs interested in sponsoring a camp, clinic or other competitive activity must provide insurance to the District prior to approval. All [fundraising](#) efforts require the Director of Athletics and Superintendent's approval. The District's tax exempt status cannot be used by a sports booster club. Sports booster clubs can gain tax exempt status by filing 501c3.

Thank you to all the volunteers that continue to help our athletics programs.

## Streaming Contests

Pittsford Athletics is proud to be able to stream contests featured on Ordiway Field, Thornell Farm Park and our middle school and high school gymnasiums. Links to these can be found on Activity Scheduler App, and also, on the [Section V Broadcasting Network](#).

## Social Media, Promotion and Morning Announcements

Follow @PCSDAthletis on X and Instagram for updates, highlights and news from the Athletic Department. Teams interested in creating, or maintaining, a team social media account should consult with the Director of Athletics.

All head coaches have access to submit morning announcements in each respective school. The expectation is that coaches will highlight their team and individuals often through the use of morning announcements.

## Roles and Responsibilities of a Sports Booster Club

Sports booster clubs are a valuable resource for the athletics department and community. The Pittsford Central School District acknowledges how fundraising develops a sense of volunteerism, personal responsibility and accomplishment. All sports booster clubs must be approved by the Board of Education and follow:

Board Policy 3260, Board Policy 5230 and Regulation 3260R.

Violations to District policies may result in dissolution of the sports booster club.

Sports booster clubs are expected to work in conjunction with the coaching staff of their respective sport. The sports booster club's role includes supporting the program for the advancement of department and program goals.

## Media Coverage and Photographs

Please note that anytime a student participates in a sporting event that is open to the school community and/or public, the district has no control over photographs or videos taken by the media, or parent/guardians or community members in attendance.

However, the Pittsford Athletic Department issues sideline passes for a designated team photographer by sport and supported by the head coach. The team's head coach can request a sideline pass to gain access at contests to take team generated photographs.



# Community Engagement



## Official Online Apparel Store

Pittsford Athletics is proud to offer three program stores for the purchase of team and program apparel and gear. Most items can be personalized for the respective sport. Please take a moment to review this [online resource](#) and purchase items for the upcoming season.

## Become an Official

Local athletic programs are in need of new officials in all sports. Please consider becoming part of your favorite sport(s) by becoming an official today. Learn how to [become an official](#) and start the process now.



## Additional Resources

### Monroe County Public School Athletic Conference

The Monroe County Public School Athletic Conference (MCPSAC) is a collection of 23 schools that make up the majority of our athletic contests. The MCPSAC works collaboratively to create safe and welcoming contests, while establishing competitive contests. Use the [MCPSAC](#) website as a resource for more information.



### Section V

Section V Athletics provides oversight and organization for interscholastic athletic programs in a large region of New York State, extending across 12 counties. Section V is a member of the New York State Public High School Athletic Association.



The [Section V](#) website is a resource to review sport-specific information, sectional tournament updates, watch contests and more.

Pittsford Athletics fully endorses the Section V mantra for all involved in athletics of "be loud, be proud and be positive."

### New York State Public High School Athletic Association

The New York State Public High School Athletic Association, Inc. (NYSPHSAA) is a non-profit, voluntary, educational service organization composed of public, parochial, and private



schools dedicated to providing equitable and safe competition for the students of its member schools. Membership is open to secondary schools providing interschool athletic activities for boys and girls in grades 7-12.

The [NYSPHSAA website](#) is a resource to review updates on New York State Education Department which pertain to athletics, eligibility, and so much more.



*Thank you to the student-athletes, coaches and community members that assisted in the development of this document. We look forward to utilizing this handbook to bring uniformity and consistency across all programs. The athletic department will review the Athletic Handbook annually.*



# Pittsford Schools

