

Port Chester Rye Union Free School District
Athletic Department



Student Athlete/Parent Handbook

Revised 8/2025

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INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETICS MISSION STATEMENT

Interscholastic athletics is a vital component of the health and physical education program and therefore is an integral part of the district's total educational program. Athletics provide the context and the experience in which harmony of mind-body functions is created through striving for physical and mental excellence. This value-building experience is offered to as many students as possible. A well-coordinated athletics program is vitally important to the morale of the school and community.

Each staff member 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 and advisors. Desire, dedication, and self-discipline need to be developed in order to ensure the commitment and personal sacrifice required by athletes. Making such a commitment helps to nurture integrity, pride, loyalty, and overall character. The final 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 student athletes to attain maximum potential is the ultimate goal to this end. The coaching staff must teach student/athletes to prepare their minds and bodies in order to reach maximum potential, and then to be modest in victory while steadfast in defeat.

VARSITY PROGRAM

Varsity competition is the culmination of each sport's program. 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 socio-emotional development is demonstrated. It is possible but rare for a middle school level student to be included on a varsity roster. Athletic placement occurs more frequently in sports commonly classified as "individual" (track, golf, bowling, etc.)

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 be informed of its individual roles in pursuit of the team's goals. 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 a varsity team, as is the realization that a varsity sport requires a six-day-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. Fall sports commence in summer requiring further commitments for some athletes.

The varsity coach is the leader of that sport's program and determines the system of instruction and strategy for that program. The 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.

Typical Varsity/JV Offerings:

Boys

Football
Soccer
Indoor Track
Basketball
Bowling
Wrestling
Baseball
Golf
Outdoor Track
Tennis

Girls

Cheerleading
Volleyball
Indoor Track
Basketball
Bowling
Soccer
Softball
Golf
Outdoor Track
Tennis

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 who are expected to make contributions at the varsity level will be considered for junior varsity participation. Freshmen may be included on a junior varsity roster, as well as middle school students who have satisfied all athletic placement requirements.

At the JV level, athletes are expected to have committed themselves 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 socio-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 realization that practice sessions are important is a premise that 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-day-a-week commitment that is expected at the varsity level. While contests and practices are rarely held on holidays and Sundays, practice sessions are sometimes 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.

Typical Varsity/JV Offerings:

Boys

Football
Soccer
Indoor Track
Basketball
Bowling
Wrestling
Baseball
Golf
Outdoor Track
Tennis

Girls

Cheerleading
Volleyball
Indoor Track
Basketball
Bowling
Soccer
Softball
Golf
Outdoor Track
Tennis

MODIFIED PROGRAM

This program is available to all students in the seventh, eighth and, occasionally, ninth grades. 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, socio-emotional growth, physiologically appropriate demands on the adolescent body, and healthy competition.

At the modified level, cutting of potential players is not district preference. 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, and 4) a safe environment. In cases where 7th and 8th grade students are competing for the same roster spot, 8th graders will get preference since 7th graders will likely have a future opportunity to try out.

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

Exceptional eighth graders may be permitted to try out for a junior varsity or varsity team under the State Education Department Program called Athletic Placement. Criteria that must be met in order to play at an advanced level include coach's recommendation, parental approval, medical approval, appropriate developmental rating, passing athletic performance test scores, and the coach's skill evaluation. Additionally, students must display an advanced degree of socio-emotional maturity before team membership is granted.

Typical Modified Sport Offerings:

Boys

Soccer
Cross Country
Basketball
Wrestling
Baseball
Football

Girls

Volleyball
Cross Country
Basketball
Soccer
Softball

WHAT IT MEANS TO BE A PORT CHESTER STUDENT-ATHLETE

CODE OF ETHICS

The Port Chester School District embraces the code of ethics endorsed by the New York State Public High School Athletic Association (NYSPHSAA).

It is the duty of all concerned with interscholastic athletics to:

1. Emphasize the ideals of sportsmanship, ethical conduct and fair play.
2. Eliminate all possibilities that tend to destroy the best values of the game.
3. Stress the values derived from playing the game fairly.
4. Show courtesy to visiting teams and officials.
5. Establish a happy relationship between visitors and hosts.
6. Respect the integrity and judgment of officials.
7. Achieve a thorough understanding and acceptance of the rules of the game and the standards of eligibility.
8. Encourage leadership, use of initiative and good judgment by players on the team.
9. Recognize that the purpose of athletics is to promote the physical, mental, moral, social and emotional well-being of individual players.
10. Remember that an athletic contest is only a game – not a matter of life or death for player, coach, school, fan or community.

CODE OF BEHAVIOR

To be a member of a Port Chester athletic team is a privilege! Each student/athlete should strive to perform to the best of his/her athletic and academic potential. We believe that all student/athletes should conduct themselves in a manner that reflects positively upon their school and promotes good health.

ALCOHOL & ILLEGAL DRUGS

Use of alcohol and other drugs prevents the normal development of a healthy mind and body, the following ***Code of Behavior*** has been established

- No student/athlete will possess or consume tobacco products and/or alcoholic beverages at any time or place during the sport season.
- No student/athlete will possess, sell or use illegal drugs at any time during the sport season.
- No student/athlete will use prescription drugs without the consent of a physician and/or parent at any time during the sport season.

To promote a healthy lifestyle, it is recommended that student/athletes adhere to the above Code of Behavior at all times, not just during the sport season.

HAZING & BULLYING– are NOT permitted under any circumstances

It is the position of the Port Chester School District that no person be subjected to harassment while on district property or while involved in a district related activity. All forms of harassment and bullying, such as “hazing” as defined in this policy, are particularly troublesome and deserve special attention. Hazing & Bullying activities of any type are inconsistent with the educational process and are prohibited at all times.

What is hazing & bullying? “Hazing & Bullying” is defined as any behavior exhibited by students or other persons towards students arising in the context of so-called initiation rites for new club or team members, or students new to a school or the district, or activities of a similar nature, whose intent or effect is to degrade, demean, humiliate, place at risk of physical or emotional

harm, cause physical or emotional harm, or place at risk of punishment by school or civil authorities.

Examples of hazing & bullying include, but are not limited to the following:

- a. Any type of physical brutality such as whipping, beating, striking, branding, electronic shocking or placing a harmful substance on the body.
- b. Any type of physical activity such as sleep deprivation, exposure to weather, confinement in a restricted area, rigorous calisthenics or other activity that subjects the student to an unreasonable risk of harm or that adversely affects the mental or physical health or safety of the student.
- c. Any activity involving the consumption of any alcoholic beverage, drug, tobacco product, or any other food, liquid, or substance that subjects the student to an unreasonable risk of harm or that adversely affects the mental or physical health or safety of the student.
- d. Any activity that intimidates or threatens the student with ostracism, that subjects the student to extreme mental stress, embarrassment, shame or humiliation, that adversely affects the mental health or dignity of the student or discourages the student from remaining in school or in the club, team or activity involved.
- e. Any activity that causes or requires the student to perform a task that involves a violation of state or federal law or regulation, or of the school district's policies and/or regulations.

Consequences

A student who hazes or bullies another student may lose the privilege of playing a sport for Port Chester. Any student who is found to have participated in a hazing activity will be subject to suspension for all or part of the sports season in which the incident occurred. In addition, that student may be prohibited from participating in other sports in other seasons.

SUSPENSION FROM SCHOOL

A student on "in-house" suspension (within the school) shall be ineligible for any athletic event (practice, scrimmage, contest, meeting, etc.) on the day of the in-house suspension.

A student on "out-of-school" suspension shall be ineligible for any athletic events (practice, scrimmage, contest, meeting, etc.) during the period of suspension.

Note: Misbehavior as an athlete can result in suspension from school.

Due Process will be afforded to any student-athlete facing disciplinary action

SPORTSMANSHIP/FAIRPLAY

Many groups and individuals share the responsibility for sportsmanship in a school district. Sportsmanship is a result of the philosophy and policy of the Board of Education, the regulations and procedures established by the administration, the directions and programs set by the athletic director, the expectations and teachings of the coach, the modeling and behavior of the athletes, the spirit created by the cheerleaders and the reactions of the spectators. All of the

people involved must continuously keep the development of sportsmanship in the forefront as a primary purpose for interscholastic athletic programs in an educational institution.

Visiting team members, students and adult spectators are guests to be accorded all the courtesy and consideration that a friendly, well-mannered and well-intentioned host would normally give. The visitors, in turn, are to act as invited guests, using the home school's facilities with care and respecting the rules and customs of the home school.

Officials are the proper authorities to make decisions regarding rules and their interpretation; these decisions should be accepted. Spectators, coaches and student/athletes must recognize that their conduct plays an important role in establishing the reputation of their school and that their positive actions can relate directly to the success of their teams. Remember that an athletic contest is only a game -- not a matter of life and death for player, coach, school, official, parent(s), fan, or community.

Students learn immeasurable unique lessons through interscholastic sports participation. Educators universally agree, of all the goals established as outcomes for secondary students involved in school sports, sportsmanship is primary. Students, parents, coaches and spectators who learn to value and practice sportsmanlike behavior are developing the characteristics of good citizenship. Honesty, generosity, self-discipline, concern for others, ethical behavior and a commitment to fair play are all demonstrated in sportsmanship.

Sportsmanship

1. Sportsmanship is **accepting the rules** of the game or a difficult situation
2. Sportsmanship is **cheering for your team** – especially when they are losing
3. Sportsmanship is smiling sincerely at the referee who just called a foul on you even though you didn't foul anyone
4. Sportsmanship is a **coach leading by example** and displaying sportsmanlike behavior him/herself
5. Sportsmanship is **caring about your teammates** more than yourself
6. Sportsmanship is going to practice every day and **working as hard as you can** every minute

Being A Good Sport!

The Coach: Coaches are in a position to have a positive influence on the youth in a community. The coach has an obligation to develop the best possible personality and character of each student-athlete. Since coaches are admired and imitated by young people, the examples set by a coach are of extreme importance. The character-building potential of athletic participation is directly related to the model established by an athlete's coach.

Responsibilities:

1. Always set a good example for players and spectators
2. Teach the value of honest effort in conforming to the spirit as well as the letter of the rules
3. Instruct players in their sportsmanship responsibilities
4. Discipline players who display unsportsmanlike behavior – if necessary, forfeit their privilege to represent the school

5. Be a perfect host to all opponents – treat them as guests
6. Respect the judgment of officials and the interpretation of the rules
7. Publicly shake hands with officials and opponents before & after each contest

The Student-Athlete: A student-athlete is second only to the coach in accountability for sportsmanship. Because players are admired and respected, they exert a great deal of influence on the actions and behavior of the spectators.

Responsibilities:

1. Treat opponents with respect as guests and fellow human beings
2. Respect the judgment of officials and interpretation of the rules – never argue or make gestures indicating a dislike for a decision
3. Accept both victory and defeat with pride and composure – never be boastful or bitter. Exercise self-control at all times
4. Congratulate opponents in a sincere manner following either victory or defeat
5. Cooperate with coach and fellow players in trying to promote sportsmanship
6. Accept the responsibility & privilege of representing the school & community

The Spectator: Schools have a tremendous challenge to instill a pride in sportsmanlike behavior among spectators. The greatest peril to interscholastic athletics is the overzealous fan. School leaders should establish procedures for continuously communicating sportsmanship messages to spectators. Spectators should be put on notice that school officials will not tolerate improper behavior from any fans; students, recent graduates, parents or residents of the community. Spectators must be included as members of the team to promote sportsmanship.

Responsibilities:

1. Learn the rules of the game so that you may understand and appreciate why certain situations take place
2. Remember that you are at a contest to support and yell for your team and to enjoy the skill and competition; not to intimidate or ridicule the other team and its fans. Respect the school property and authority of school officials
3. Do not heckle, jeer or distract members of the opposing team
4. Do not applaud errors by opponents or penalties inflicted upon them
5. Avoid profane language, disrespectful gestures or obnoxious behavior
6. Censure fellow spectators whose behavior is unbecoming
7. Respect the judgment and strategy of the coach – don't be a second guesser
8. Show respect for an injured player when he/she is removed from a contest

The Port Chester Public Schools has a specific Policy on Fan Behavior ([BOE Fan Behavior Policy](#))

Good Students Are Good Sports!

SPORT SEASON SIGN-UPS & REGISTRATION

ARBITER SPORTS REGISTRATION

30 days prior to the first practice/tryout in each school building of each season, Arbiter Sports online registration will open. Parents/Guardians are to visit the registration portal and sign their

student up for the sport they are interested in playing. All information with a RED asterisk must be filled in. The parent/guardian must fully read the attached policies and electronically sign their name in the agreements section at the bottom of the registration form.

Be advised that any student, parent or family member that is identified as having forged a signature, the student in question will be immediately suspended from participation in athletics. These forms are official school documents and are vital to the health and safety of the student-athletes.

The school district Arbiter Sports portal page can be found here: [Arbiter Sports](#)

ATTEND PRESEASON MEETINGS

One of the most important ingredients for a successful sports season is effective, open and appropriate communication between the coaches, parents and student/athlete. In order to ensure that this communication takes place, preseason meetings are scheduled by the athletic department/coaches. Topics of these meetings include athletic department policies, individual team expectations and rules, the health and safety of the student/athlete and a variety of other subjects. When preseason meetings are scheduled, student/athletes may be required to attend with a parent/guardian.

Preseason meetings are also the way students will find out where initial practice locations, times, and dates will be, and what the continued method of communication between the coach, players, and parents will be.

GETTING MEDICALLY CERTIFIED OR RE-CERTIFIED

Student/athletes must have a valid Physical Examination on file in the building nurses office. Physical Examinations are valid for one year from the date of the examination. Physical Examination paperwork can be handed directly to the nurses office, or in the summer time to the athletic department. They can be left in the mailboxes of these individuals in each building.

It is recommended to have the physical exam during the summer months to avoid problems with expired physical dates during the school year and/or sports seasons.

Families with questions should call the high school nurse's office at (914) 934-7967, the Middle School nurse's office at (914) 934-7942 or the district athletic office at (914) 934-5010. Taking care of the required paperwork before the season starts will help to avoid any unnecessary delays once the season begins!

ATTEND PRACTICE SESSIONS

Student/Athletes are expected to attend all scheduled practice sessions and games unless excused by the coach in conjunction with the parent. The importance of practice is clearly stated in the philosophy portion of this handbook. *It is important to note that fall practices for varsity and junior varsity teams typically begin in the third week of August (football may begin even earlier).*

WELLNESS AND SAFETY

ATHLETIC TRAINER

The athletic trainer provides emergency service for student/athletes and develops prevention strategies through appropriate training methods and physical conditioning programs. To ensure proper follow-up after an injury, the trainer consults with parents, the school nurse and/or the school physician, in addition to providing rehabilitation strategies for the student/athlete.

Any student/athlete under treatment by a private physician must have written permission from his/her physician in order to return to active status in the sports program. The chief school physician may be consulted in situations that warrant further review.

The athletic trainer works in the school district Monday through Friday and on select weekend days, depending on the specific sports schedule. Listed below are the hours of operation for the athletic trainer's office:

<u>Days</u>	<u>Hours</u>
Monday thru Friday	3:00pm – 7:00pm
Saturdays	Various Times*
Sundays	Various Times*

- *Dependent on the schedule of events

BENEFITS OF CONDITIONING

The obvious benefit of superbly conditioned athletes is the potential for the team or individual to compete at the highest possible level. A well-conditioned team is usually a successful team. However, the real benefits of conditioning are long term and we want our student/athletes to be exercisers for life. The health benefits derived from a regular exercise program are well documented. Developing lifelong habits to improve or maintain cardiovascular endurance, muscular strength and endurance and flexibility is an important goal for anyone involved in our athletic program. With this philosophy, one can understand why practice sessions are considered as important if not more important than contests.

THE COACH

Each coach is responsible for guiding their student/athletes through practices, scrimmages and games appropriate to their age and level of play. These activities are conducted so that the physical welfare, health, and safety of the participants is protected and fostered. The

coach teaches physical skills, moral values and proper ideals of sportsmanship, ethical conduct and fair play in accordance with the Port Chester Athletic Philosophy.

FOOD SUPPLEMENTS

In response to the focus on the use of food supplements, specifically Creatine, the National Federation of State High School Associations has issued a position statement on the use of drugs, medicine and food supplements in interscholastic sports. Text of the committee's statement is as follows:

"School personnel and coaches should not dispense any drug, medication or food supplement except with extreme caution and in accordance with policies developed in consultation with parents, health-care professionals and senior administrative personnel of the school district.

Use of any drug, medication or food supplement in a way not prescribed by the manufacturer should not be authorized or encouraged by school personnel and coaches. Even natural substances in unnatural amounts may have short-term or long-term negative health effects.

In order to minimize health and safety risks of student-athletes, maintain ethical standards and reduce liability risks, school personnel and coaches should never supply, recommend or permit the use of any drug, medication or food supplement solely for performance enhancing purposes."

INJURIES

It is the student/athletes' responsibility to immediately report any injury to his or her coach or athletic trainer. The coach and/or athletic trainer will then complete an incident report. If a student/athlete has been removed from a practice or contest because of an injury requiring medical attention, the student/athlete cannot return to practice or competition without a physician's release.

MEDICAL INSURANCE

Medical insurance coverage provided by the Port Chester School District is supplementary (secondary) to a family's medical insurance coverage (primary). Medical expenses resulting from any athletic injury must first be submitted to the parents' insurance carrier. Any remaining balance can then be submitted to the school's insurance carrier, which supplements the parents' coverage in limited ways. Be advised that the school's insurance may not cover the entire balance of any left over medical expenses.

Open Door Medical Centers, Inc.

The Port Chester Rye UFSD, in cooperation with the Open Door Family Medical Centers, Inc. is currently operating school based health centers in our schools. Our School Based Health Centers offer on-site comprehensive health care, providing confidential, quality health care by qualified providers for all registered students of these two school attendance zones.

The Centers are available to all children whose parents enroll them. You are invited to participate in this unique opportunity by simply completing an enrollment form available at all school sites and through your PTA. All enrolled students may receive their sports physicals and immunizations as well as the following primary care services: sick care, vision screening, health

screening, dental screening, and mental health counseling through the Guidance Center, nutrition education, and prescription medications as needed. General wellness health care and all services are provided during the school day and after school at all sites.

NUTRITION

In order to approach peak performance in athletics, student/athletes, parents and coaches need accurate information on how to properly fuel and nourish the body. The athletic department on an ongoing basis will emphasize the following dietary guidelines.

- **Eat *more* complex carbohydrates.** By ingesting carbohydrates, athletes maximize glycogen storage. Glycogen is the primary source of energy for muscles. Recommended sources of carbohydrates are grains, cereals, bread, potatoes, pasta, vegetables and fruits. As an added bonus, most carbohydrate sources are also high in vitamins & minerals.
- **Eat *moderate* amounts of protein.** Athletes must understand that eating excess protein is not beneficial. While athletes have a slightly increased protein requirement, the normal athletic diet is composed of more than adequate amounts of protein. Eat more carbs, not more protein!
- **Eat *less* high fat foods.** Foods high in fats include fried foods, cookies, cakes, luncheon meats and whole milk dairy products. This does not mean avoiding these foods completely; however, we must learn to choose low fat versions such as skim milk, lean beef, chicken and fish, minus the skins, and such low fat snacks like pretzels.
- **Always stay well hydrated, especially in hot weather.** Studies clearly show that performance suffers in a dehydrated athlete. Drink before, during and after exercise. Plain cold water is usually the best, however, sports drinks may provide an edge if you exercise continuously over one hour. Thirst is not a good measure of when to drink fluids. A thirsty athlete is already in the early stages of dehydration.
- **Maintain a healthy body composition and avoid quick weight loss.** Within reasonable guidelines, a leaner athlete is a more efficient athlete. A normal range of body fat for males is 7-18% while a healthy range for females is 15-25%. Your body fat is determined by heredity, and of course, diet and exercise.
- **Replace carbohydrates used for energy during training and competition.** In order to refuel your body to prepare for the next practice or game, carbohydrate rich foods need to be ingested soon after exercise. Eating 200-400 carbohydrate calories within 1-2 hours of exercise is best.
- **Eat an appropriate pre-practice/pre-competition meal.** Three to four hours prior to practicing or playing a game, athletes need to “fuel” their bodies with a high carbohydrate, medium sized meal composed of familiar foods. However, within an hour of exercise, always avoid sugary foods such as candy bars.
- **Don’t be tempted by nutritional supplements or other “performance-enhancers”.** Athletes should be able to properly fuel their bodies through a normal well-balanced diet that is especially rich in complex carbohydrates. Nutritional supplements such as amino acids, protein & high doses of vitamins and minerals may actually be harmful. Use of anabolic steroids is hazardous and illegal.

RISKS OF PLAYING SPORTS

The athletic program is conducted, first and foremost, with the safety of its participants in mind. Student/Athletes and parents must be aware that certain risks of injury are inherent in athletic

participation. Although not probable, accidents such as brain injuries, paralysis or even death may occur.

TOBACCO

According to the American College of Sports Medicine, cigarette smoking or vaping is a major coronary risk factor. Also, current research shows a dramatic increase in oral cancer for individuals who chew tobacco. Nicotine, the major drug in tobacco, is a widely known stimulant that is highly addictive.

For obvious health, safety and conditioning reasons, the athletic department expects our student/athletes to abstain from all use of tobacco products. The use of tobacco in any form will not help our teams and student/athletes reach their goals of excellence.

ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT REGULATIONS

ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY

The Athletic Department recognizes that the primary responsibility of student-athletes is educational. Therefore, the Athletic Department supports the concept that student-athletes should work to their potential in the classroom and be committed to achieving maximum academic success. While scholastic achievement is determined on an individual basis, the administration and the Athletic Department reserve the right to determine a student-athlete's eligibility to participate in athletic contests and practices.

Students who are not performing to academic expectations are subject to the Academic Eligibility [Board of Education Policy \(5305 & 5305-R\)](#) and our High School Eligibility Policy which is enforced by the high school administrative team.

*Students suspended from the team due to academic reasons will need to get their academic affairs in order before returning to team practices and games.

ATTENDANCE

A student/athlete shall be in attendance of their regular classes in order to practice or participate in a contest. Because of health and safety reasons, unexcused absences and tardiness because of illness, will exclude student/athletes from practice or games on that day. If you are healthy, get to school on time. If you are to be excused, be sure the excuse is for a valid and acceptable reason. Communication with your coach and your school's attendance office is imperative. Students who are unprepared and do not change for Physical Education class will be ineligible for that day's practices and/or games.

ATHLETIC AWARDS

League & Sectional Awards

All-League and All-Section awards are selected by coaching organizations associated with each individual sport as well as the local media outlets. Coaches nominate select players from his or her respective team, and the coaching membership and select media representatives then vote on these nominations. Each individual coaching association provides these awards.

It is important to understand that while "your" coach does have input in the awards selection process, he or she does not have the final decision about who does and does not receive recognition. Remember that like you, the student-athlete who strives to be the best, your coach is also striving to do their best.

Team and School Awards

The coaching staff at the conclusion of each sports season may distribute team and school awards. Recipients of these awards are selected by the coaching staff and/or voted by the team members.

Earning a Varsity Letter

The athlete must be in good standing at the season's end (equipment, etc.) and have met the criteria for participation to earn an award.

1. Any varsity player who satisfactorily completes the season shall be granted a one-time varsity letter.

Pins - Athletes will receive a sports pin for each successive varsity season completed. Captains and managers will receive appropriate pins.

Certificates - Issued to any varsity player in lieu of a second varsity letter.

2. Athletes unable to complete a season due to injury, illness or other such circumstances may earn a letter if the coach feels a letter is justified. Otherwise, athletes must finish the season to be eligible for an award.
3. Any student with outstanding debts for equipment (lost or stolen) will not receive any awards until all debts are paid in full.

CHANGING SPORTS

It is important that a student/athlete attempts to go out for the right sport, particularly at the Junior Varsity and Varsity levels. A student/athlete may not change from one sport to another once a team has been selected, without permission of the Athletic Director. If a student/athlete has been cut from one team it is permissible to try out for another team.

COLLEGE SELECTION & RECRUITING

Student-athletes who are interested in playing sports at the collegiate level should consult with their respective coaches and/or guidance counselors at the start of the junior year in high school. Your coach can assist with contacting the coaches of the schools you are interested in, while a guidance counselor can help you find a school that is right for you. The student-athlete must make the initial effort & communication with their coach and counselor.

Collegiate sports are divided into three divisions - I, II or III. Students wishing to participate at the Division I or II level must meet the minimum requirements of the NCAA Clearinghouse. Those desiring to compete at the Division III level do not have to meet the minimum requirements of the "Clearinghouse"

Note: Athletic scholarships are wonderful opportunities to supplement the increasing cost of higher education, but student-athletes & parents must realize that these scholarships are very selective. Other options such as financial aid, school-to-work programs, etc. are also available and can assist families in their selection of schools. Always strive to be the best, but please don't get discouraged if you do not receive an athletic scholarship.

NCAA CLEARINGHOUSE

The Initial-Eligibility Clearinghouse is an organization that has been established by the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) for the benefit of those students wishing to participate in intercollegiate athletics while attending college or university in the United States. The Clearinghouse is designed to certify an individual's athletic eligibility before they enter college or university. The focus of the organization is with Division I and Division II schools, but it also acts as an advisory model for Division III schools.

If you would like more detailed information, please contact the NCAA directly and ask for the "NCAA Guide for the College-Bound Student/Athlete". This publication is a wealth of knowledge for parents and students alike, covering topics such as frequently asked questions, financial aid, Initial-Eligibility Clearinghouse, necessary forms and the recruiting process. It is a must for those student-athletes moving on to the next level of competition.

You may contact the NCAA using the information listed here:

The National Collegiate Athletic Association
P.O. Box 6222
Indianapolis, Indiana 46206-6222
(317) 917-6222
NCAA Hotline: (800) 638-3731
www.ncaa.org

COMPETING ON NON-SCHOOL TEAMS IN SEASON

Opportunities exist for Port Chester student/athletes, at the modified, varsity, and junior varsity levels to participate in non-school sponsored teams while participating in school-sponsored teams. When these situations occur, sound communication between the student/athlete, parent or guardian, coaches and athletic administration is mandatory.

As discussed in the philosophy portion of this handbook, membership on a junior varsity or varsity team requires a considerable time commitment. The school district must monitor the wellness and safety of each of our student/athletes. With this in mind, each situation involving outside-of-school competition must be carefully evaluated on a case-by-case basis. Port Chester student/athletes' first commitment must be to the school program.

EQUIPMENT & UNIFORMS

Equipment and uniforms are essential components of interscholastic athletics. They protect you and identify you as a team member. At the beginning of the season, you will be issued a uniform and equipment (when necessary). You must provide any equipment required for your sport that is not provided by the school.

It is the responsibility of the student-athlete to care for and return to the coach all clothing, uniforms and equipment he/she has been issued immediately upon completion of the season (or after dropping out of that sport). Any equipment or uniforms needing repair must be immediately brought to the coach's attention. No one should have any school issued "equipment" at the conclusion of the season.

- Uniforms may NOT be worn in school except on days there is a contest (home or away)
- Failure to adhere to these guidelines will result in the student being charged for any missing/damaged items.
- Failure to settle outstanding financial debts will result in suspension from further athletic participation as well as the withholding of transcripts and report cards.

FAMILY VACATION

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

QUESTIONS, CONCERNS AND COMMUNICATIONS

From time to time during the course of an athletic career in our schools, parents and student/athletes alike may have questions or concerns that need to be addressed. Ordinarily, the team coach is the best source of information. If there is a concern, individuals are encouraged to begin the communication process with the coach. However, if you should choose not to speak directly with the team coach, or after speaking with the coach you are not entirely satisfied, the next step is to communicate with the athletic director or assistant athletic director.

Almost all questions or concerns can be answered and resolved through the above process. If there is still a concern after following the steps outlined above, parents, guardians or student/athletes may speak with the building principal or superintendent of schools.

24-HOUR RULE

In an effort to maintain good communication, coaches are directed not to discuss any try-out related situations, game, game incident, or game situation that may be interpreted as controversial and lead to a parental response that is emotional or confrontational until at least 24 hours after the incident. A parent or guardian is asked not to approach a coach to discuss a try-out related situation, a game, a game incident or a situation that occurred during the game that has provoked an adverse emotional response or a hostile situation until at least 24 hours after the fact.

It is important for parents to temper game emotions in the best interests of children. The intent of this departmental regulation is to remove any emotional and/or confrontational discussion away from the presence of the players and spectators to allow all parties the opportunity to reflect, and compose themselves and put the incident or situation that occurred in the game in perspective before meeting to discuss it.

SCHOOL-SANCTIONED PROGRAM/TRIPS

There are numerous educational opportunities for students in our school system. The athletic department supports school-sanctioned programs and trips but also realizes that student/athletes who choose to participate in a school exchange may miss substantial amounts of practice time, which affects personal conditioning and team chemistry. As stated in the Family Vacations section, student/athletes who miss practice or competitions for any reason may have their position or playing time adjusted. Coaches, parents and student/athletes have a responsibility to each other to plan and communicate far in advance of each sport season when considering participation in school-sanctioned programs/trips.

SEASON SCHEDULES

The Port Chester School District is a member of the New York Public High School Athletic Association. Contest schedules are determined by Section One, a subdivision of the NYSPHSAA, and must be followed throughout the school year.

Occasionally, changes to the schedules are necessary because of school conflicts, inclement weather, etc., but for the most part every effort should be made to complete the assigned schedules. Families must realize that many times schedules cannot be changed because of league and/or section regulations or facility availability and usage.

Every effort is made to accommodate student/athletes during exam periods, school functions and school vacations, but contests and practices may be necessary during these times to keep a program continuous, in shape and ready for the season in its entirety.

Individual team schedules are available from the athletic office approximately two weeks prior to the start of each athletic season.

ATHLETIC PLACEMENT PROCESS

The Athletic Placement program is a process for screening student/athletes to determine their readiness to compete in interscholastic athletic competition by evaluating their physical maturity, socio-emotional maturity, physical fitness level and skill level. The intent of this program is to provide an opportunity for student/athletes in grades 7 & 8 to safely participate at an appropriate level of competition based upon readiness rather than age and grade. This program has been designed to assess a student/athlete so they may be placed at a level of competition, which should result in a favorable experience for that individual.

The head coach of each sport, in consultation with the Director of Athletics, recommends individuals to be selectively classified. An emphasis shall be placed on assessing the socio-emotional maturity stage of each student/athlete, especially in situations where student/athletes are attempting to participate on an advanced level.

ATHLETIC PLACEMENT PROCEDURES

1. Coach identifies student for Athletic Placement Process program to the Director of Athletics. Coaches are reminded that only exceptional candidates should be identified.
2. The Athletic Administrator should confirm that the student is suitable for consideration. Additionally, because of the increased time demands of participation at the high school level. Furthermore, administration should assess the student's emotional readiness to socialize with high school aged students. If the student is not academically or socially ready, the student should not proceed through APP.
3. The Director of Athletics, in conjunction with the head varsity coach and Physical Education staff (and School Counselor, if necessary) will determine if the Athletic Placement Process should continue.
4. Parents/Guardians Permission. All students who are to be evaluated must first obtain written parent/guardian permission before any evaluation may begin.
5. Medical Clearance: Must be completed before the physical fitness portion of the process. The district medical director will determine a student's physical maturity level, and compare the physical size of the student in relation to that of students against whom the student wishes to compete. If the student is determined not to have attained the appropriate physical maturity level and comparable physical size for the desired sport and level, the process stops.
6. Sports Skill Evaluation by the Coach. The coach should make an honest evaluation of the student's skills. They should understand the intent and purpose of the program and the coach must place the student's welfare above all else.
7. Physical Fitness Testing. This must be done by a certified Physical Education teacher who is not a coach of the sport for which the student will be trying out. The President's Physical Fitness Test has been selected as the test for this process, and the student must successfully pass 4 out of 5 test components.
8. Qualification Determination. The results of the three evaluations will be sent to the Director of Physical Education & Athletics.
9. Try-Outs. The student is allowed to try out for the sport and level requested or the student must return to the modified level of competition.
10. Records. The Physical Education Director and/or Athletic Director will maintain all records of students who have successfully completed the APP process.
11. Notifications. A notification list of the scores of all athletes who have successfully completed the process and have been approved through the APP after the try-out period has been completed will be sent to the Athletic governing board or section office.

STUDENT-ATHLETE ELIGIBILITY GUIDELINES

1. DAILY REQUIREMENTS

To be eligible to compete in daily athletic events (games, practices, meets, etc.) students must attend every class on his/her schedule on the day of the event. Failure to do so will result in being declared ineligible to participate in that day's event.

Students who are not in class, but are properly accounted for, and on the school grounds, by means of a legal pass will be exempt from this policy. Students who need exemptions for other reasons not associated with school events (doctor's appointments, legal appointments, etc.) must provide a note from a parent/guardian that serves to make the absence from school a legal one. Failure to do so will result in being declared ineligible for that day.

If you participate in an athletic event and have not attended every class that day, you will be in violation of this policy, and subsequently may be suspended from the next two regularly scheduled contests.

2. AGE AND GRADE

A student shall be eligible for interscholastic competition in grades 9, 10, 11 and 12 until his/her nineteenth birthday. If the age of nineteen is reached on or after July 1, the student may continue to participate during that school year in all sports.

Note: Students may be eligible regardless of age or grade if they have been approved through the State Education Department's Selection/Classification Program.

More information can be found in the NYSPHSAA Handbook here: [NYSPHSAA Handbook](#)

3. AMATEUR

A student who represents a school in an interscholastic sport shall be an amateur in that sport. An amateur is one who engages in athletic competition solely for the pleasure of the activity and for the benefits derived from participation. An athlete forfeits amateur status in a sport by:

A. Competing for money or other compensation (allowable travel, meals, and lodging expenses may be accepted).

B. Receiving an award or prize of monetary value, which has not been approved by the NYSPHSAA (only awards/prizes having a monetary value of \$500 or less will be approved).

C. Capitalizing on athletic fame by receiving money or gifts of monetary value (scholarships to institutes of higher learning are specifically exempted).

D. Signing a professional playing contract in that sport.

Instructing, supervising, or officiating in any organized youth sports program, recreation, playground, or camp activities will not jeopardize amateur standing. Receiving compensation for officiating shall not affect amateur standing.

A student who violates the above rule may apply to the league or to the designated body within that section for reinstatement one year from the date of the latest violation.

More information can be found in the NYSPHSAA Handbook here: [NYSPHSAA Handbook](#)

4. ASSUMED NAME

Participating under an assumed name in any athletic contest shall make the student/athlete ineligible in that sport for a period of one year from the date of the violation.

More information can be found in the NYSPHSAA Handbook here: [NYSPHSAA Handbook](#)

5. BONA-FIDE STUDENT

A contestant must be a bona fide student of the high school represented and must be taking at least four subjects including Physical Education. A foreign exchange student may be considered a bona fide student if all of these eligibility rules are satisfied. A student in an education program in two schools may represent only the home school.

More information can be found in the NYSPHSAA Handbook here: [NYSPHSAA Handbook](#)

6. DURATION OF COMPETITION

A pupil shall be eligible for senior high school athletic competition in a sport during each of four consecutive seasons of such sport (eight consecutive academic semesters) commencing with the pupil's entry into the ninth grade and prior to graduation, except as otherwise specified by the Commissioner's Regulations. A pupil enters competition in a given year when the pupil is a member of the team in the sport involved, and that team has completed at least one contest.

The eligibility for competition of a pupil who has not attained the age of 19 years prior to July 1st may be extended under the following circumstances:

- If sufficient evidence is presented by the chief school officer to the section to show that the pupil's failure to enter competition during one or more seasons of a sport was caused by illness, accident, or similar medical circumstances beyond the control of the student, such pupil's eligibility shall be extended accordingly in that sport.
- If the chief school officer demonstrates to the satisfaction of the section that the pupil's failure to enter competition during one or more seasons of a sport is caused by such pupil's enrollment in a national or international student exchange program or foreign study program, that as a result of such enrollment the pupil will be required to attend school for one or more additional semesters in order to graduate, and that the pupil did not enter competition in any sport while enrolled in such a program, such pupil's eligibility shall be extended accordingly in such sport.

More information can be found in the NYSPHSAA Handbook here: [NYSPHSAA Handbook](#)

STUDENT-ATHLETE TRANSFER GUIDELINES

All transfer students must see the Coordinator of Athletics to determine their athletic eligibility prior to trying out for any interscholastic sports team. Students must be residents of the Port Chester School District as determined by the Student Residency Committee to be eligible to participate.

1. A student in grades 9-12 who transfers, with a corresponding change in residence of his/her parents (or other persons with whom the student has resided for at least six months) shall become eligible after starting regular attendance in the second school. A residence change must involve a move from one school district to another. Furthermore, when a student moves from one public school district to another public school district, for athletic eligibility the student must enroll in the public school district of his/her parent's residency.
2. A student who transfers without a corresponding change in residence of his/her parents (or other persons with whom the student has resided for at least six months) is ineligible to participate in any interscholastic athletic contest in a particular sport for a period of

one (1) year if the student participated in that sport during the one (1) year period immediately preceding his/her transfer.

Note: A student in a foreign exchange program listed by CSJET has a one-year waiver of the Transfer Rule. If such a student elects to stay a second year he/she becomes a foreign student at the start of the school year with item (b) in effect.

Exemptions to (#2):

- The student reaches the age of majority (emancipated minor) and establishes residency in the district.
- If a private or parochial school ceases to operate a student may transfer to another private or parochial school of his/her choice. Otherwise, a student must enroll in the public school district of his/her parents' residency.
- A student who is a ward of the court or state and is placed in a district by court order. **Guardianship does not fulfill this requirement.**
- A student from divorced or separated parents who move into a new school district with one of the aforementioned parents – Such a transfer is allowed once every six months.

Note: It is provided, however, that each school shall have the opportunity to petition the section involved to approve transfer without penalty based on an undue hardship for the student.

3. Transfer students trying out for sports before school opens in the fall shall register and be accepted by the principal of that school before the medical examination and the first practice. This shall constitute the start of the regular attendance for fall sports. ***Note: After approval by the school medical officer a student may practice immediately and must satisfy the specific Sports Standard according to the number of practice sessions required.***
4. Practices at the previous school may be counted toward the minimum number of practices required provided the principal or athletic director of the previous school submits, in writing, the number and dates of such practices to the principal or athletic director of the new school.

More information can be found in the NYSPHSAA Handbook here: [NYSPHSAA Handbook](#)

TRANSPORTATION GUIDELINES

Student/Athletes shall be transported to and from away contests (games and/or scrimmages) by school authorized vehicles only. For special circumstances, parents may request to provide transportation for their own child. In such cases, the request must be made in writing in advance to the Athletic Director - using the [Transportation Waiver Release](#) - and a copy containing the Athletic Director's signature shall be submitted to the student/athlete's coach. A transportation waiver must be signed for each occurrence. One blanket transportation waiver cannot be utilized for an entire season. At no time may students transport themselves or other student/athletes to or from away athletic contests (games and/or scrimmages).

As a general rule, school personnel should not transport students to and/or from an away athletic contest (game and/or scrimmage). Certain situations may be permitted for school personnel to transport student/athletes, but only when permission is granted by the parents/guardians and such requests are made in writing in advance to the Athletic Director.

Games may be canceled if transportation to site is prohibited due to change in National Alert Status or school district policy.

TRYOUTS & CUTTING

Port Chester's policy of participation is one of taking as many individuals as possible on a team. Athletic participation is seen as an important part of the overall educational program. However, sometimes it is not possible to keep everyone that comes out for a team and as a result, tryouts are necessary for selecting team membership.

Tryouts for all of Port Chester's Interscholastic Athletic Teams will last a minimum of three (4) days. All students will be given the opportunity to try out. Students who do not make a team must be given an opportunity to learn why they were not selected. Coaches must provide students with this information if requested.

VALUABLES

VALUABLES SHOULD NOT BE BROUGHT TO THE ATHLETIC LOCKER ROOM AND STUDENTS ARE REQUIRED TO LOCK AND SECURE ALL PERSONAL ITEMS!

It is very important that student-athletes do not bring jewelry, large amounts of money or any other valuable items to the athletic or Physical Education locker room area at any time. Students should leave such items at home or in their school locker.