Puyallup School District Athletics
2026-2027 Coaches Handbook

District Athletic Office
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FOREWORD

Athletics is an excellent means of bringing together home, school, and community, while contributing to the personal growth, and education of students. The interscholastic athletic program should provide the opportunity to compete in athletic contests with other schools; contribute in a positive way toward the total development of participants; aid the student in acquiring new friendships; further community spirit; and develop good sportsmanship.

The overall purpose of the Puyallup School District is academic growth and success. Athletics do not supplant this purpose. It is the Athletics Department's expectation that students will make appropriate progress toward academic expectations, requirements, and graduation.

Much of the success of the program depends upon the effective management and supervision of the program. To that end this manual should assist all personnel in interpreting the program in the proper perspective and serve as a reference source for carrying out responsibilities. An annual review of the policies and procedures in this manual requires the need to alter or expand the document. The ultimate objective is the betterment of the athletic program.

Nondiscrimination Statement

Puyallup School District does not discriminate in any programs or activities on the basis of sex, race, creed, religion, color, national origin, age, veteran or military status, sexual orientation, gender expression or identity, disability, or the use of a trained dog guide or service animal and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups.

Schools are meant to be safe and inclusive environments where all students and staff are protected from Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying (HIB), including in the classroom, on the school bus, in school sports, and during other school activities.

Refer to board policies 3210 & 3210R along with 5010 & 5010R for more information.

Questions or complaints of alleged discrimination may be directed to:
Title IX Coordinator-staff: Amie Brandmire, brandma@puyallupsd.org
Title IX Coordinator-students: Dr. Gordon Brobbey, brobbg@puyallupsd.org
Civil Rights Coordinator: Dr. Gordon Brobbey, brobbg@puyallupsd.org
Section 504 Coordinator: Maija Delaquin, delaqm@puyallupsd.org

MISSION OF THE PUYALLUP SCHOOL DISTRICT
To prepare and empower every student to reach their full potential and to thrive in school, society, work, and life.

ATHLETIC BELIEF STATEMENT
The Puyallup School District believes that interscholastic athletics must provide the opportunity for students to develop physically, socially, and emotionally throughout their secondary school career. Athletics and participation in athletics is one of the primary reasons that students feel a kinship with their schools and is a contributing factor in both student classroom success and the desire to stay in school.

Welcome Statement from Dr. Kevin Alfano, Superintendent
Our investment in student activities and athletics reflects one of our deepest commitments as a community: preparing young people for success in life. Athletics provides opportunities that extend far beyond competition. It teaches students how to work toward a common goal, overcome adversity, lead with integrity, and support one another through both victories and challenges.

At the center of this experience are our coaches.

Coaches do much more than teach skills and strategies. You create environments where students feel connected, valued, and challenged to become their best selves. Through your example, students learn resilience, accountability, teamwork, and perseverance; qualities that will serve them long after their final season has ended.

Perhaps most importantly, you demonstrate what it means to serve others. The consistency, care, and dedication you bring to your role leave a lasting impression on young people. Years from now, many of our students will draw upon lessons learned from a trusted coach as they pursue their own paths as leaders, mentors, educators, parents, and community members.

The relationships you build matter. The encouragement you provide matters. The example you set matters.

Thank you for the countless hours you invest in our students and for the positive impact you make every day. Your leadership helps shape not only successful athletes, but exceptional young people prepared to contribute to their schools, their communities, and the world around them.

We are grateful for all you do and proud to partner with you in this important work.

Welcome Statement from Jim Meyerhoff, District Athletic Director
As another season begins, take a moment to remember that coaching is about much more than the outcome on the scoreboard. Every practice, conversation, and decision provides an opportunity to influence young people in ways that may not become apparent until years later. Long after their playing days are over, many former student-athletes will remember the lessons, encouragement, and example their coaches provided as they build

careers, raise families, and contribute to their communities. Some will even choose to invest in others by becoming coaches and mentors themselves.

In education-based athletics, competition is important, but it is not the ultimate goal. Athletics provide a unique classroom where students learn perseverance, accountability, teamwork, respect, communication, and leadership. They discover how to overcome adversity, celebrate success with humility, and develop habits that support lifelong physical and mental well-being.

Thank you for the commitment you make to your athletes, your programs, and our schools. The time, preparation, and care you invest each day have a lasting impact that extends far beyond a single season. Your leadership helps shape confident, responsible young people who are prepared for success in life.

As you begin this school year, I hope you do so with enthusiasm and purpose, knowing that the difference you make cannot always be measured by wins and losses. The influence of a great coach lasts well beyond the final game, and your work continues to strengthen the lives of the students and communities you serve.

Coaching Code of Ethics
Integrity – The coach must act with integrity in performing all duties owed to athletes, the sport, other members of the coaching profession, and the public.
Competence – The coach must strive to be well prepared and current in order that all duties in the respective
discipline are fulfilled with competence.
Athlete's Interest – The coach must act in the best interest of the athlete's development as a whole person.
Respect for the Rules – The coach must accept both the letter and the spirit of the rules that define and govern sport.
Respect for Officials – The coach must accept the role of officials in providing judgement to ensure that competitions are conducted fairly and according to the established rules.
Personal Conduct – The coach must maintain the highest standards of personal conduct and support the principles of fair play.

Expectations for Coaches
The function of a coach is to educate students through participation in interscholastic athletic and activities. An education-based activity program should be designed to enhance academic achievement and should never interfere with opportunities for academic success.
Each student-athlete should be treated as though he or she were the coaches' own, and his or her welfare should be uppermost at all times.

The coach shall be aware that he or she has a tremendous influence, for either good or ill, on the education of the student-athlete and, thus, shall never place the value of winning above the value of instilling the highest ideals of character.
The coach shall uphold the honor and dignity of the profession. In all personal contact with student-athletes, officials, athletic directors, school administrators, the state high school athletic association, the media, and the public, the coach shall strive to set an example of the highest ethical and moral conduct.
The coach shall take an active role in the prevention of drug, alcohol, and tobacco abuse.
The coach must maintain the highest standards of personal conduct and support the principles of fair play.
The coach shall promote the entire education-based activity program of the school and direct his or her program in harmony with the total school program.
The coach must strive to be well prepared and current in order that all duties in the respective discipline are fulfilled with competence.
The coach shall master the contest rules and shall teach them to his or her team members.
The coach shall not seek an advantage by circumvention of the spirit or letter of the rules.
The coach shall exert his or her influence to enhance sportsmanship by spectators, both directly and by working closely with cheerleaders, pep club sponsors, booster clubs, and administrators.
The coach shall respect and support contest officials. The coach shall not indulge in conduct which would incite players or spectators against the officials. Public criticism of officials or players is unethical.
The coach must act with integrity in performing all duties owed to athletes, the sport, other members of the coaching profession, and the public.

Supervision Responsibilities
Coaches bear the responsibility of supervising students participating in team activities, and it is crucial to remember that these teams are integral parts of an educational system. Similar to a classroom setting, alcohol consumption and drug use are strictly prohibited while coaches are responsible for students. This extends to scenarios like overnight trips where coaches are in charge of the team's safety and well-being, even if parents or others may be consuming alcohol or drugs.
By refraining from alcohol and drugs during such events, coaches ensure that they can respond promptly and effectively to any emergencies involving team members. Intoxication could impair their ability to provide the necessary response or raise doubts about their competence.
By adhering to these guidelines and maintaining a professional approach, coaches can uphold a safe and secure environment for their student-athletes, promoting a positive and educational experience within the team.

Expectations for Student-Athletes
Academic performance is your primary responsibility.
Read, familiarize yourself and comply with policies outlined in the Student Athletic Handbook AND your coach's specific set of team policies.

Treat teammates, coaches and opponents with respect.
Respect officials and accept their decision without argument or gesture.
Exercise self-control, setting an example for others to follow.
Win without boasting, lose without excuse, and
never quit.
Always remember that you represent the Puyallup School District, your school and the community, and it is a privilege.
Return any equipment; uniforms issued to the participant must be returned in the same condition at the end of the activity. Equipment that is lost, damaged or stolen is the responsibility of the participant, and it is the responsibility of the participant to make restitution to the school.
Report any injury to the coach no matter how slight the injury may appear. If the injury requires a physician's care, the participant must have written permission from the doctor before returning to the activity.
Attend classes the day of, and after, a competition.
Extracurricular activities are not an excuse for being tardy on the day following a competition.

Expectations for Spectators
Attempts to understand and be informed of the playing rules.
Appreciates a good play no matter who makes it.
Cooperates with and responds enthusiastically to cheerleaders/dance team.
Shows compassion for an injured player;
applauds positive performance; does not
heckle, jeer or distract players; and avoids use of profane and obnoxious language and behavior.
Respects the judgment and strategy of the coach and does not criticize players or coaches for loss of game.
Respects property of others and authority of those who administer the competition.
Censures those whose behavior is unbecoming.
Respects officials and accepts their decisions without gesture or argument.

South Puget Sound League Sportsmanship Code
Show pride, class, spirit and respect.
Display modesty in victory and graciousness in defeat.
Please enjoy the game and promote good sportsmanship.
Your participation as a fan at a school sporting event allows:

- the athletes to compete.
- the coaches to coach.
- the officials to officiate.
- other fans to enjoy a positive experience.

Legal Duties of Athletic Coaches

Several obligations or duties have been identified as absolute requirement for coaches and athletic administrators. These standards have evolved as a result of various case law proceedings and legal judgements against individuals and school districts. It is important that all coaches, including assistants and volunteers, know and understand the following duties.

This is not all-inclusive but is generally accepted as the "Legal Duties of Coaches" by the NFHS (National Federation of High Schools) and NIAAA (National Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association).

1. DUTY TO PLAN

a. Have a yearly plan, keep it, and follow it.
b. Follow all district and state guidelines relative to ASB funds and booster clubs.
c. Prevent or reduce injury and loss by developing responsive strategies in:
    i. Coaching competence and medical screening
    ii. Appropriate activities that consider age, maturity, and environmental conditions
    iii. Injury response
    iv. Warnings to athletes and their families
    v. Child advocacy in cases of alcohol and other drug abuse or family neglect or abuse

2. DUTY TO SUPERVISE

A coach must:

a. Be physically present
b. Provide competent instruction
c. Structure practices that are appropriate for the age and maturity of players
d. Prevent foreseeable injuries and respond to injury or trauma in an approved manner
e. This duty requires supervisors to ensure that facilities are locked and that students are denied access when a competent staff member cannot be physically present to supervise
f. Supervise the condition, safe usage, maintenance and upkeep of equipment and facilities

3. DUTY TO ASSESS AN ATHLETE'S READINESS FOR PRACTICE AND COMPETITION

a. Coaches are required to access the health and physical or maturational readiness skills and physical condition of athletes
b. A progression of skill development and conditioning improvement should be apparent from practice plans
c. Athletes must be medically screened in accordance with WIAA and PSD regulations before participating in tryouts, practice, or competition
d. Injured athletes who require the services of a physician may not return to practice or competition without written permission of the Athletic Trainer

4. DUTY TO MAINTAIN SAFE PLAYING CONDITIONS

a. Coaches are considered trained professionals who possess a higher level of knowledge and skill that permits them to identify foreseeable causes of injury inherent in defective equipment or hazardous environments

b. Weather conditions must be considered, and athletes should not be subjected to intense or prolonged conditioning during periods of extreme heat and humidity or during unhealthy air quality

c. A plan for monitoring and responding to dangerous weather conditions is necessary

5. DUTY TO PROVIDE PROPER EQUIPMENT

a. Coaches must ensure that athletes are properly equipped with clean, durable and safe equipment

b. Protective equipment must carry a NOCSAE (National Operating Commission on Safety in Athletic Equipment) certification and must be checked for proper fit and wearing

c. Athletes must wear protective equipment any time they are exposed to the full rigors of contact in practice or competition

6. DUTY TO INSTRUCT PROPERLY

a. Athletic practices must be characterized by instruction that accounts for a logical sequence of fundamentals that lead to an enhanced progression of player knowledge, skill and capability

b. Instruction must demonstrate appropriate and safe technique and must include warning about unsafe technique and prohibited practices

c. Coaches have an obligation to maintain written and dated practice plans to be saved on file

d. Coaches have an obligation to record daily student attendance for all practices and competitions to be saved on file

7. DUTY TO MATCH ATHLETES DURING PRACTICE

a. Athletes in practices should be matched with consideration for maturity, skill, age, size, speed. To the degree possible, mismatches should be avoided in all categories.

8. DUTY TO CONDITION PROPERLY

a. Practices must account for a progression of cardiovascular and musculoskeletal conditioning regiments that prepare athletes sequentially for more challenging practices and competitive activities

b. Consideration must be given to weather, maturational and readiness factors

9. DUTY TO WARN

a. Coaches are required to warn parents and athletes of unsafe practices specific to a sport and the potential for injury or death

b. A generic warning and sport specific warnings should be included at the parent meetings and online clearance forms for specific sports. Both athletes and parents should be required to provide written certification of their comprehension

10. DUTY TO ENSURE ATHLETES ARE COVERED BY INSURANCE

a. Athletes must be cleared through the athletic office prior to participation and should not be allowed to participate without this clearance

11. DUTY TO PROVIDE EMERGENCY CARE

a. Coaches are expected to be able to administer approved, prioritized, standard first aid procedures in response to a range of traumatic injuries

12. DUTY TO DEVELOP/FOLLOW AN EMERGENCY CARE PLAN

Plans must be in place to:

a. Manage uninjured team members while emergency care is being administered to an injured athlete

b. Ensure access to a stocked first aid kit, spine board and other emergency response equipment

c. Access to a telephone and ensure a timely call to EMS

d. Expedite rapid access by EMS to the injured athlete by stationing coaches or team members at driveways, parking lots, entry doors and remote hallways

13. DUTY TO PROVIDE PROPER TRANSPORTATION

a. District transportation should be utilized as much as possible for travel to athletic events

b. Ensure that all athletes are on the bus before it departs from an away contest

14. DUTY TO SELECT, TRAIN and SUPERVISE COACHES

a. Administrators have responsibility to ensure that appropriate skill and knowledge levels exist among members of the coaching staff to ensure appropriate levels of safety and well-being among athletes.

Student/Parent/Coach Communication

Steps of Communication in Athletics

Situations arise throughout the course of the year that may require a conference between the coach and player or coach and parent. It is important that all involved have a clear understanding of the other's position. Please do not attempt to confront a coach before, during, or after contests and practices. These can be emotional times and meetings of this nature usually do not promote positive resolutions. When a conference is necessary, the following procedures should be put in motion to arrive at a resolution.

Step 1: Player meets with coach
Step 2: Player/Parent meet with coach
Step 3: Player/Parent/Athletic Director meet with coach

If a non-satisfactory resolution is provided from meeting with the coach step 3 will be put into motion with a meeting between player, coach, parent, athletic director, and/or administrator. From this meeting appropriate next steps will be determined.
Parenting and coaching are extremely difficult vocations. By establishing and understanding each position, we are better able to accept the actions of the other and provide a greater benefit to our students. As parents, when your students express an interest in becoming involved in our programs, you have the right to understand the expectations of the increased demands on student-athletes. This begins with clear communication from your students' coach.

Communications you should expect from your student's coach

1. Philosophy of coach and program
2. Expectations and goals the coach has for student-athletes, program, and team
3. Locations and times of all practices and contests
4. Specific team requirements, including special equipment, and team activities
5. Injury procedures for practices and contests
6. Team rules, guidelines, and consequences

Appropriate Discussion Topics with Coaches

Treatment of your student athlete
Strategies to assist your athlete
Concerns about your athlete's behavior

It is very difficult to accept your student athlete not playing as much as you hope. Coaches make decisions based on what they believe to be the best for all student-athletes involved. As you have seen from the preceding lists certain topics can be discussed with your coach. Other things need to be left to the coaches discretion:

- Team Selection, Playing Time, Strategy, Play Calling, Team Members, Fellow Coaches and Programs

Team Philosophy

High School Playing Time Expectations

Varsity Teams

Varsity competition is the culmination of each sport program. Squad size at the varsity level is limited. The number of participants on any given team is a function of the number needed to conduct an effective and meaningful practice and to play the contest. It is vital that each team member has a role and is informed of its importance as it relates to the 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. It is the coach's responsibility to make clear to the student athlete what his/her role is on the team.

An advanced level of skill is a prerequisite for a position on a varsity team, as is the realization that a varsity sport often requires a five or six-day-a-week commitment. This commitment is often extended into vacation periods for all sport seasons, the dedication and commitment needed to conduct a successful varsity program should be taken seriously by all involved.

Junior Varsity Teams

This level of competition has an increased emphasis upon team play, physical conditioning, and refinement of basic skills. Although being successful on the JV level is important, winning is not the sole objective. This is the level at which the athlete displays his/her readiness for the execution of skills at game speed. Athletic abilities, commitments, and positive attitudes will be rewarded and tested in competitive game situations.

An attempt will be made to allow as many participants as possible to play but not all will play equally. At the JV level, playing time will be based on team commitment (attendance) and the degree of effort, skill improvement, ability to compete and execution of skills at game speed demonstrated by the student athlete in practice and during games.

C Teams

At this level, students become accustomed to interscholastic practice and play. For many, it is their first introduction to competitive sports, different from recreation in its demands and philosophy.

Gaining experience through training and play should be paramount, not the win/loss record. At this level of play, 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.
All players will receive fair playing time (not equal), as safety, team commitment (attendance) and positive participation in practice allow.

Junior High Playing Time Expectations
8th Grade/Varsity Teams
All eligible students are expected to participate in the contest, though playing time for athletes on 8th grade or Varsity level teams may not be equal. (similar to high school JV Teams)

7th Grade/JV Teams
Athletes on 7th grade teams or JV level will participate in all contests if eligible. Equitable participation time should be a goal at this level. (similar to high school C-Teams)

7th Graders on 8th Grade Teams
Puyallup School District handbook policy does not allow 7th grade participation on the 8th grade team.

The only exception is when it becomes necessary to include 7th graders on the 8th grade team due to lack of numbers (before cuts are made) to maintain a program. Parents of the 7th graders being moved up must be consulted first and permission must be granted by the respective principal and district athletic director. The District Athletic Director will notify all buildings when this situation occurs.

Team Selection

Philosophy- In accordance with our overall athletic philosophy and our desire to see as many student-athletes as possible participate in the athletic program, coaches are encouraged to keep as many student-athletes as they can without affecting or compromising the integrity of their sport. Obviously time, space, facilities, personal attention and individualized instruction, equipment, along with other factors, are necessary for team development and will affect squad size. However, when developing the individual sport policy in this area, coaches are encouraged to maximize the opportunities for our student-athletes without diluting the quality of their program.
Limitation of Team Membership Policy - the coaches (in consultation with the athletic director) of the respective sports will determine minimum and maximum team membership limits, taking into consideration the criteria listed above. In cases when the "Squad Reduction Policy" is used, the coach will keep the athletic director informed concerning the method and time of "cuts."
Squad Reduction Policy
- The choice of membership for each athletic team will be determined by the coach of that team.
- Junior varsity and C-team coaches are expected to take into consideration the policies established by the head coach in each program.
- There is no such thing as a final team cut. The athlete's membership on any team is always subject to proper behavior as outlined in specified school and team guidelines.
- Prior to tryouts, the coach shall provide the following information to all candidates for the team and their parents:

a. Extent of the tryout period.
b. Criteria used to select the team.
c. Approximate number of students to be selected.
d. Practice and game commitments for those who make the team.

Best Practice Tryout Procedure:

- When a squad cut becomes necessary, the process should include these important elements. Best practice would recommend that each athlete should:

a. Be provided a minimum of three distinct sessions of tryouts.
b. Be permitted, whenever possible, to compete in a scrimmage situation.
c. Be at all tryout days or provide written permission to the coach in advance for missing the tryout period due to extenuating circumstances. If permission is granted for an alternative tryout, the athlete must go through a similar criteria process as other team members.

- If an athlete is cut, the coach should inform him or her personally (via a face-to-face meeting or a personal letter/e-mail) as to the reason for the cut and the skills or techniques that they can work on for the next season.
- Coaches should take the opportunity to discuss alternative possibilities for participation in school athletics.
- If a coach foresees difficulties arising because of squad cuts, he or she will discuss the situation with the athletic director in advance.

District Procedures

Coaches are Required to:
Possess at all times, medical emergency information for every student-athlete.
Head coaches are required to have an Emergency Action Plan on file with the building athletic director. Emergency plan must include location of the nearest AED.

Travel to Team Events
A. In District transportation may not be provided for evening high school or junior high school athletic contests/practices.
B. If transportation is provided by the district to or from a contest venue, ALL athletes must use that transportation. Except that an athlete may return:
(1) With their own parent(s) - if parent meets the coach in person after the contest and requests to take his/her athlete (only) home in their own car.
(2) In a private car, if the parent sends a written request to the principal prior to departure and the principal gives approval to the coach in charge.
(3) Individual school administration may develop more specific student-athlete transportation policies.
C. Athletes will remain with their squad and under the supervision of their coach when attending away contests.
D. Visiting athletes are direct representatives of their school, community and home and should conduct themselves accordingly.

Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying (HIB) Reporting
All reports of harassment, intimidation, or bullying should be reported immediately to an adult at the school. Students often report bullying to school staff with whom the student and/or family feels most comfortable, including the following personnel: counselors/social workers, safety officers and/or school resource officers, teachers, and principals/assistant principals.

Reporting will initiate an investigation and parent/guardian will be informed of the outcomes of the investigation. The school will work with the parent/guardian to decide next steps to help address the issues. If the student/parent/guardian disagrees with the findings of the investigation, the student/parent/guardian can appeal the decision.

All instances of suspected harassment, intimidation, and/or bullying should be reported to your school's principal or assistant principal. You may also complete the official HIB Report Form HIB Reporting Form and submit it to the school's main office.

Electronic Communications
Communications from/to coaches must take place on district approved platforms. This currently includes use of PSD email accounts.

Each coach hired has a district email account (name@puyallupsd.org). Volunteer coaches do not have district email accounts and should go through a paid coach for communications with student-athletes.

ParentSquare, StudentSquare, and Schoology are district approved platforms and can be used to reach a group or individual students.

FinalForms allows for team communication with students and parents.

Policies 2022/2022R outline the purpose of using district approved platforms, which are backed up for the protection of district employees.

Field Trip Forms and Timelines
Overnight or out-of-state athletic trips require approval by the district athletic director, the superintendent and/or school board. This includes any trip in the name of the school including regular and post-season contests, along with summer opportunities. This includes trips that may not require any ASB funding.

These forms are due to the district athletic office no later than **30 school days prior to the trip** to allow for the approval process. Start this process early, when you are first contemplating the trip for your team. Anticipate participation in post-season contests.

No funds may be spent until final approval is confirmed.

More information regarding field trips can be found on the Coaching Resources web page.

Maintaining Employee/Student Boundaries Regulation No. 5272R

The following activities are boundary invasions and can create an actual impropriety or the appearance of impropriety. Whenever possible, employees should avoid these situations. If these activities are conducted, they should be pre-approved by the appropriate administrator or supervisor. If not pre-approved, the employee must report the occurrence, to the appropriate administrator or supervisor, as soon as possible.

- Being alone with an individual student out of the view of others;
- Inviting or allowing individual students to visit the employee's home;
- Visiting a student in the student's home; and/or
- Social networking with students for non-educational purposes.

Reporting Violations

Students and their parents/guardians are strongly encouraged to notify the principal (or other administrator) if they believe a teacher or other employee may be engaging in conduct that violates this policy. Employees are required to promptly notify the principal (or supervisor) or the superintendent if they become aware of a situation that may constitute a violation of this policy.

Disciplinary Action

Employee violations of this policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal. The violation will also be reported to the state Office of Professional Practices, if covered. Violations involving sexual or other abuse will also result in referral to Child Protective
Services and/or law enforcement in accordance with the Board's policy on Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect.

Accidents

All coaching staff members are required to have current first aid certification and must be able to handle minor injuries. When a serious injury occurs which requires immediate medical attention, the coach in charge must take appropriate first aid measures. If a physician, emergency medical technician (EMT), Certified Athletic Trainer (CAT) or another medical professional is present, his/her assistance should be requested.

All coaches are required to have PSD "Emergency Medical Information" for every student athlete on their team eligibility list at all games and practices. Coaches can access this information in FinalForms.

When a serious injury occurs, the athlete should be advised to see his/her medical provider. Coaches should not designate a specific physician or clinic, unless directly requested to do so by the parent or guardian. The athlete must provide a written release

from his/her medical provider to the athletic director before they may return to any sports activity.

Emergency Action Plans (EAP)
An EAP should be specfic to your facilities and team, as each activity will have different environments and circumstances. Items to include in an EAP are duties of responders (staff and students); where the emergency equipment is located including the nearest AED; address of the facility and who will direct EMS to the scene.
Having a plan is a good start, hoping you will never need it. Practicing the EAP with the team is essential so roles are defined.
Olympic Sports and Spine has helped create basic EAP's for district facilities.

How to Report an Injury

Procedure:
Coach reports an injury/accident by downloading and completing the PSD Incident/Accident Report Form. Coaches may need to acquire this from their athletic director. Email an electronic copy to **Athletics@puyallupsd.org** and the school nurse where the student is registered/enrolled.

An accident report should be filed by a coach on any accident if:
911 is called or EMT/other outside medical assistance is called to the scene.
The student is taken from school or a school event to a physician or hospital either by the school or a parent or guardian.
Student injuries that involve:
• the head, neck or back.
• burns from any source, or electrical shock.
• exposure to, ingestion of, or contact with chemicals.
• student seizures, whether related to trauma or medical condition.
• loss of consciousness.
• when a student goes into shock.
All drug-related incidents involving overdose or reaction from prescription drugs/illegal substances.
Student injuries involving entering, exiting, or while riding on a school bus, other than minor scrapes or bruises.
All injuries involving significant privacy issues of students.
Note: The decision to file an injury report is in many cases judgmental. The best rule of thumb is "when in doubt, file a report".

Injuries Requiring Transport
In the event a student-athlete sustains an injury that requires transportation to a medical facility, use the following guidelines;

Coaches should immediately contact parent/guardian if possible, to inform them of the situation and the need to transport. Leave a message to call if necessary.
Contact your building athletic director or administrator if AD is not available. They will contact the district AD/admin.
Send the emergency information with the medical personnel. If no paper copy is available, medical personnel can take a photo of the medical information in the FinalForms account.
An adult should travel with the student-athlete to the medical facility. If parent/guardian or another adult that the parents agree can travel with the student are not available, a coach should accompany the student. The adult should ride in the medic unit or traveling behind in a separate vehicle. If there is only one coach available, stay with the team and communicate to AD and parents.
Stay with the student-athlete until parent/guardian has arrived.
At the medical facility, the coach should collect special equipment (such as a helmet) that may have been involved in an injury. Submit the equipment immediately to your building athletic director and document the chain of custody of the equipment.
Document the incident and how the injury was treated. Submit an incident/accident report form.
Follow-up communication with the family is important.
Student-athlete will need clearance from an approved medical professional to return to participation in athletics.

Program Overview Document - Team Handbook
Head coaches are expected to develop and share a **Program Overview Document (POD)** or **Team Handbook** with your student-athletes and their families prior to the start of each season. This document is one of the most valuable communication tools you can provide. It establishes the foundation of your program by clearly defining your vision, goals, expectations, policies, and procedures. It also gives student-athletes, parents, assistant coaches, and administrators a common understanding of how your program operates and what it means to be a member of your team. A thoughtfully prepared POD demonstrates organization, professionalism, and a commitment to building a positive education-based athletic experience.

A Program Overview Document is much more than a collection of team rules—it is a reflection of your leadership and the culture you are striving to create. When expectations are communicated clearly and consistently, misunderstandings are reduced, questions can often be answered before they arise, and difficult conversations become easier because everyone has a common point of reference. Your document should evolve as your program grows, reflecting lessons learned and improvements made each season. Most importantly, it should communicate what you value most, helping everyone involved understand not only what you expect, but why those expectations matter in creating a positive and successful experience for every student-athlete.

Reach out to the building or district athletic director if you have questions about creating this document.

Practice Plans and Attendance Documentation
Creating a daily practice plan in important for many reasons:
An outline of the team activities and skills taught. This is important for safety documentation.
Coaching staff is on the same page about practice responsibilities and timelines. Many coaches share with students or captains.
The ability to reflect on adjustments made to the plan, how to improve that, and as a reference when planning future years.

Documentation of daily student attendance is critical along with a plan to teach safety-related items to those who missed a day.

From WSRMP: Be sure to document specific safety training, defining the hazards for each activity and specific safety skills and equipment required. Administer verbal and written quizzes to demonstrate/document that students understand how to apply safety principals (Why must you keep your head up? If I do this, what may happen?).

Open Gym/Pool/Field Activities
Schools may conduct open athletic facilities (gym, pools, field, and track) in the off season if all of the following conditions are met:
• Students have a choice of activities;
• Activities are open and advertised to all members of the student body;
• No coaching or drilling of the athletes attending occurs;
• Supervision is provided by any individual approved by the school district;
• Participation in open gym cannot be a requirement or conditions of participation on a school team.

Open Gym opportunities must be approved by the building athletic director.

Summer Activities
INCLUDING TEAM PRACTICES, WEIGHT ROOM, CONDITIONING, OPEN GYM/POOL/FIELDS

1. Puyallup School District allows district employed coaches to seek approval to organize and conduct summer athletic activities on district facilities and/or grounds.
2. Approved activities must comply with all WIAA and PSD Rules and Regulations.
3. The high school athletic director is responsible for the review, submission for final approval, and administrative oversight of all summer athletic activities conducted by their respective school.
4. Proper supervision must be present at all times.
5. Participation in summer athletic activities are open and available ONLY to students properly registered and enrolled at the school.
6. Incoming 9th graders are not allowed to participate in summer activities until the day following the conclusion of the junior high school spring sport season.
7. All summer outdoor conditioning practices must be held at times that are appropriate for heat and air conditions.
8. Volunteer coaches must be fully cleared and under the direct supervision of the paid coaching staff at all times.

Freedom of Expression
Board policy 3220R outlines freedom of expression for students.
Students will enjoy freedom of expression, whether verbal or written, providing such expression does not constitute a material and substantial disruption of the orderly operation of the school or otherwise violate this policy. The principal will have the authority to monitor student verbal and written expression. Students who violate the standards established by this policy and chapter 28A.600 RCW for verbal and written expression may be subject to corrective action or punishment.

Board policy 5650 outlines freedom of expression for employees.
Speech: The free speech rights of district employees acting within the scope of their employment are subject to reasonable restrictions and limitations under appropriate

circumstances, since public employees speaking within the scope of employment are considered to be speaking on behalf of their employer, and as such will maintain a viewpoint neutral stance on controversial and partisan political matters. Employees acting within the scope of their employment who teach controversial issues must follow the guidelines set forth in their collective bargaining agreement. Speech that creates a real or foreseeable disruption of district operations, or a violation of the district's non-discrimination policy, is subject to restriction.

Media and Publicity
RESPONSIBILITY FOR PUBLICITY
The responsibility for publicity rests on the coach. The coach owes it to their team to see that they are recognized for their efforts. Athletes enjoy receiving publicity. When used effectively, it is a tremendous means for motivation.

Media Guidelines
Coaches have a responsibility to the school, community, students, parents, and guardians who are interested in our athletic programs, to cooperate with the media whenever possible. Always remember—when dealing with the media—to present an image that is consistent with the ideals and high standards of Puyallup School District.

View the media as friends, not adversaries. The longer you coach a team, the more likely you might develop a personal relationship with some of the media representatives regularly covering your team. While we encourage these relationships, remember that, regardless of what is said, a reporter's first obligation is to report the news.

Don't say it if you don't want to see it in print. Never speak negatively about opponents or the game officials.
On rare occasions, the general tone of an interview is such that you may not be comfortable continuing an interview. Should this occur, please notify the Office of Communications and Public Affairs. In general, when speaking to the media, be confident, courteous, and prompt.

Coaches Must Respect Students' Privacy Rights
Coaches must adhere to Federal Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) requirements when sharing student information. FERPA is designed to protect the privacy of students. This law says there are situations in which student information can legally be shared. But it also gives parents/guardians the option of forbidding the release of that information in all but extremely limited situations.

Sharing student information with the media or with coaches/staff outside of the school district can easily be in violation of this federal law. Do not share information that may violate the privacy of a player, including academic standing, whether he or she is on your team or another team, without getting guidance from the Communications Office or the district's athletic director.

Social Media

Purpose of Social Media Accounts for School Athletics and Activities

Social media can be used by our athletic teams and activities to promote the positive things happening in the program, encourage others to support the program, and is a good way to connect to a larger external audience including others in the sport industry. Team social media accounts are not venues for venting frustrations about participants, officials, or contests. Managers of accounts should avoid responding to negative or inflammatory messages from others. This helps maintain a positive approach regarding the program in the messages from the school accounts, and eliminates the opportunity to provide bulletin board material for opponents.

Official team accounts are to be approved by the principal and/or athletic director.
The expectation is that established accounts will stay with the school if there is a transition in coaches.
Accounts that are not official school team accounts must clearly identify themselves as non-official and not a representation of the school team. An example is a booster club.

Students and their parents acknowledge a Social Media Agreement as part of the clearance process. Communication from coaches about social media expectations is critical in the education of student-athletes.

Policy 2022 and Regulation 2022R, Electronic Resources, relate to all social media sites within the district. Staff members who have private personal social media pages must follow Policy 5272 and Regulation 5272R, Maintaining Employee/Student Boundaries. *Refer to the policy and regulation for examples of unacceptable conduct*.

Weather Related Guidelines

Inclement Weather - In the event that PSD closes schools because of weather (snow, flood, lahar, earthquake) ALL district activities on that day are ALSO canceled.

Air Quality - The Washington Department of Health and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency monitors air quality and makes determinations about the risk for certain groups to participate in outdoor activities. When the air quality becomes "Unhealthy" schools will move activities indoors and/or cancel events. As always in any weather condition, students with asthma, respiratory infections, lung or heart disease, or conditions like diabetes should follow their current Care Plans and any student with respiratory complaints should be sent to the health room to be properly assessed by the school nurse. WIAA has recommended using www.airnow.gov.

Heat Index - See the handout on the Coaching Resources web page regarding Heat Index and practice/competition. WIAA has provided an online heat index calculator, use our zip codes.

Lightning

NFHS GUIDELINES ON HANDLING PRACTICES AND CONTESTS DURING LIGHTNING OR THUNDER DISTURBANCES
Revised and Approved March 2018

These guidelines provide a default policy to those responsible or sharing duties for making decisions concerning the suspension and restarting of practices and contests based on the presence of lightning or thunder. The preferred sources from which to request such a policy for your facility would include your state high school activities association and the nearest office of the National Weather Service.

PROACTIVE PLANNING

1. Assign staff to monitor local weather conditions before and during practices and contests.
2. Develop an evacuation plan, including identification of appropriate nearby safer areas and deter-mine the amount of time needed to get everyone to a designated safer area:
    a. A designated safer place is a substantial building with plumbing and wiring where people live or work, such as a school, gymnasium or library. An alternate safer place from the threat of lightning is a fully enclosed (not convertible or soft top) metal car or school bus.
3. Develop criteria for suspension and resumption of play:
    a. When thunder is heard or lightning is seen*, the leading edge of the thunderstorm is close enough to strike your location with lightning. Suspend play for at least 30 minutes and vacate the outdoor activity to the previously designated safer location immediately.
    b. 30-minute rule. Once play has been suspended, wait at least 30 minutes after the last thunder is heard or lightning is witnessed* prior to resuming play.

c. Any subsequent thunder or lightning* after the beginning of the 30-minute count will reset the clock and another 30-minute count should begin.

d. When lightning-detection devices or mobile phone apps are available, this technology could be used to assist in making a decision to suspend play if a lightning strike is noted to be within 10 miles of the event location. However, you should never depend on the reliability of these devices and, thus, hearing thunder or seeing lightning* should always take precedence over information from a mobile app or lightning-detection device. – At night, under certain atmospheric conditions, lightning flashes may be seen from distant storms. In these cases, it may be safe to continue an event. If no thunder can be heard and the flashes are low on the horizon, the storm may not pose a threat. Independently verified lightning detection information would help eliminate any uncertainty.

4. Review the lightning safety policy annually with all administrators, coaches and game personnel and train all personnel.
5. Inform student-athletes and their parents of the lightning policy at start of the season.

Athletic Eligibility

Student Eligibility to Participate
Student-Athletes are eligible to participate on a team when they have completed the clearance process.
Coaches may not allow a student to participate without receiving a clearance card with emergency information from the building athletic director. A list of cleared students from the AD is acceptable.

Student Clearance Process

A. Complete online permission and eligibility forms found at puyallup-wa.finalforms.com
B. Submit to the AD a current physical examination from a medical provider that is valid through the entire season.
C. Pay the Athletic Fee and purchase a school ASB card.
D. Meet the minimum academic requirements during the previous semester.

A Baseline Concussion Screening (BCS) is no longer required PRIOR to the season to TRYOUT for a team. BCS testing will take place during practices once teams are determined.

Academic Eligibility

Policy 2151 and 2151R outline PSD academic requirements.
WIAA Handbook section 18 outlines WIAA requirements.

To be eligible to participate a student must have completed the following in the immediately preceding semester:
A. Completed a minimum number of courses.
B. Passed 5 of 6 classes.
C. Earned a minimum 2.0 GPA.
D. Be a member of the school.

Failing to meet these standards will result in academic probation or ineligibility.

If a coach is aware of possible eligibility issues for a student they should discuss it with their building athletic director. An ineligible athlete that participates in a contest could result in forfeiture of the contest.

ATTENDANCE - Outlined in school board regulation 2151R
Any student participating in an activity shall be expected to attend and participate in all classes on the day of the scheduled activity. On any school day, students must be in attendance at least one half-day to participate in practice. In the case of weekday scheduled activities, attendance in all classes the following day shall also be expected. In

the cases of weekend scheduled activities, attendance in all classes the previous Friday shall be expected. Failure to comply with these attendance regulations will result in a student being declared ineligible and not allowed to participate in the next scheduled activity. Exceptions to this rule may be made by the building principal or designee.

CLEARED FOR PARTICIPATION vs ELIGIBLE TO COMPETE as outlined in WIAA Handbook Section 18

18.2.0 CLEARED FOR PARTICIPATION - No student shall participate in a practice unless they are on the cleared for participation list on file in the principal's office or the office of the principal's designee. (PSD this is the building AD)

Note - See 18.2.1 regarding cleared to participate before 50% date to be eligible for post-season.

18.3.0 ELIGIBLE TO COMPETE - Only students who are currently eligible to compete in an activity may appear in the team uniform on the team bench, sideline, court, field or deck during the contest.

18.3.1 A student must be currently eligible for an activity in order to participate in the pre-event warm-up.

Coaching Resources Web Page
The PSD Coaching Resources Web Page is intended to be a place where coaches and athletic directors can find necessary materials and links. Handbooks, forms, emergency info, and more.

If you believe something is missing, send a message to the district athletic office and we will consider adding that information to the web page.

www.puyallupsd.org/coaches

Information on Coaching Resource Web Page
Coaches will find these documents on the PSD Coaching Resource web page under the Athletics Department. The site can be found at **www.puyallupsd.org/coaches**.
• Annual Checklist of coaching requirements
• Handbook and Manuals: PSD Coaches Manual, Student Athletic Handbook, SPSL and PAL handbooks, WIAA Coaches Standards
• Health and Welfare of Student-Athletes, Emergency Planning: Concussion information, Air Quality, Heat Index, Emergency Action Planning, WSRMP Athletic Liability Manual
• ASB and Booster Clubs: ASB Manual and Related Materials, SafeSchools ASB presentation, Booster Club info
• District Forms: Incident Form, Clarification of Forms for Athletics, PSD Frequently Used Forms, Field Trip and Prior Approvals, Accounting, Fundraising, annual Title IX form.
• PSD School Board Policies that Relate to Athletics: Electronic Resources and Safety, Interscholastic Eligibility, Field Trips, Student Incentives, Concussion and Sudden Cardiac Arrest, Maintaining Employee/Student Boundaries.
• PECAAA and Human Resources links

As part of the approval process, coaches must complete the online acknowledgement form in FinalForms that includes this statement:

COMPLETE ONCE PER SCHOOL YEAR
As a coach in the Puyallup School District, I have reviewed the PSD Coaching Resources web page (www.puyallupsd.org/coaches) for the 2025-26 school year. I understand that I am responsible for reading all information, becoming familiar with its contents and following the guidelines, including:
- PSD Coaches Handbook
- Handbooks and Manuals
- ASB and Booster Clubs
- District Forms
- PSD School Board Policies that Relate to Activities
- Health/Welfare of Student-Athletes and Emergency Planning
- PECAAA and Human Resources Info

I am also aware of my responsibility to:

- complete all required PSD and WIAA training prior to deadlines.
- maintain sports specific required certifications including First Aid/CPR/AED.
- uphold the honor and dignity of the professions. In all personal contact with student-athletes, officials, athletic directors, school administrators, the state high school association, the media, and the public, the coach shall strive to set an example of the highest moral and ethical conduct.
- follow policies outlined by the school board and in the PSD Coaches Handbook.
- promote the entire education-based activity program of the school and direct my program in harmony with the total school program.

My signature below indicates my acknowledgement of these requirements. (signed digitally in FinalForms)