Port Angeles High School Student Athlete & Parent Handbook

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This handbook is designed to help parents and students clearly understand the rules, culture, and basic expectations of participating in Port Angeles High School Athletics. Interscholastic sports are a voluntary privilege. By participating, student-athletes and families agree to uphold high standards of academics, behavior, and sportsmanship. More detailed policy information can be found in the Student Athletic Code under District Procedure 2151P.

1. Student Athlete Expectations

Behavior & Character

- Being a student-athlete is a voluntary privilege, not a right. You represent Port Angeles High School at all times—in the classroom, on the field, and in the community.
- All athletic programs adhere to a strict "Three Strikes and You're Out" rule per season. Accumulating three strikes results in automatic removal from the team.
- While the three-strike policy governs minor or repeated infractions, severe offenses may result in greater discipline, including immediate removal from the team. This includes unsportsmanlike conduct, fighting, vandalism, criminal activity, violation of district or WIAA student conduct rules, violation of team rules, or violations of District Policy 3207 (Hazing, Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying).

Travel & Transportation Expectations

To prioritize team focus, privacy, and respect on the road, all student-athletes must adhere to the following travel standards:

- **Electronic Device Rules:** All personal electronics must be placed in the locked team storage container immediately upon boarding district transportation.
    - No personal device use, recording, or videotaping is permitted at any time during travel. Coaches may allow school-issued Chromebooks strictly for homework.
    - Upon arrival, devices remain locked for the duration of the competition, though the head coach has the discretion to let athletes hold their own phones.
    - If held, devices are returned to students at the post-competition meal, upon boarding the bus home (if there is no team meal), or the moment a student is officially released to an authorized adult.
    - Coaches may return phones at hotels on overnight or postseason trips. Immediate access is always granted for approved medical tracking (e.g., blood sugar levels) or emergencies.
- **General Travel Standards:** Students must ride the team bus/van both to and from all away contests.
    - Students may be released to ride home with a parent or guardian if written permission is pre-approved by the principal or Athletic Director *before* the trip.

        - Students must check out with their coaches before leaving with their pre-approved transportation
    - We treat drivers, opponents, and facilities with respect. Teams must leave all buses, opponent locker rooms, and restaurants cleaner than they found them.
    - Academically or behaviorally ineligible students cannot travel on the bus/van or attending away contests with the team.

Uniform and Equipment Expectations

- You must take care of your uniform and return it washed and in good condition directly to your coach immediately at the end of the season.
- If gear is lost or damaged beyond normal wear-and-tear, the full replacement cost will be charged as a fine to the student's school account.

2. Parent Expectations

We love having parents support our programs. To ensure a positive environment for all student-athletes, we ask our parents and guardians to commit to the following standards:

- Encourage a "team first, individual second" mindset. Show positive support and encouragement for your own student-athlete, as well as every other member of the team.
- Be aware of your student-athlete's needs, feelings, and concerns. Allow them to experience the season on their own terms, rather than trying to relive your own experiences through them.
- Attend as many games as possible so you get a full and complete understanding of the program.
- Demonstrate excellent sportsmanship at every single contest. Respect the officials, opponents, and coaching staff.
- It can be difficult to accept when your student-athlete does not get as much playing time as you or they hoped for. Remember that coaches are teachers who must make tough judgment decisions based on what is best for the entire team.
- Never attempt to talk to a coach about another student-athlete's performance, behavior, or playing time. Let the athletes advocate for themselves.

3. Signing Up for Athletics

- **Complete Online Registration:** Port Angeles High School uses Final Forms for all athletic registration. Parents and student-athletes must log in together to fill out, update, and digitally sign all required emergency contact forms, medical history papers, and district athletic policy agreements. Additional information on Final Forms sign up found here: Final Forms Help

- **Submit a Valid Medical Physical:** Every athlete must have a current Sports Physical Evaluation on file with the Athletic Office. Physicals are valid for 24 months from the date of the exam and must remain valid through the entirety of the upcoming sports season. Completed physical forms can be uploaded directly to Final Forms or turned in to the Athletic Office.
- **Complete Concussion Baseline Testing:** All high school student-athletes are required to complete a baseline concussion assessment prior to participation. These tests are administered directly by our high school Certified Athletic Trainer and are valid for 24 months from the date of completion. Athletes will not be cleared to play until a valid baseline is on file. Contact the Athletic Trainer (solson@portangelesschools.org) to schedule your baseline testing.
- **Purchase ASB Card & Pay Participation Fees:** All student-athletes must buy a high school ASB Card for $40 for the current school year. Purchases can be made via our Online Payment Portal. In addition, the district applies the following athletic participation fees:
    - **Annual One-Time Fee:** A $50 one-time fee is assessed annually to all students who participate in any identified athletic or extracurricular activity.
    - **Seasonal Fee:** A $25 fee is assessed per sports season (or per semester for year-long activities) and is due prior to competition.
    - **Yearly Fee Cap:** To keep sports accessible, no individual student will pay more than a $100 maximum per year in total participation fees.
    - **Financial Waivers:** If your family needs assistance or would like to request a financial fee waiver, please contact the Athletic Office directly before the season begins.
    - **Fines:** All outstanding school fines and fees must also be fully paid and cleared before an athlete is certified as eligible.

4. Injury and Medical Clearance

- Students must tell their coach immediately if they are injured.
- If you take your athlete to an outside doctor or urgent care, you must get a written medical release and turn it into the Athletic Office.
- Our high school Certified Athletic Trainer is the ultimate medical authority on site. Even with an outside doctor's note, your athlete must be evaluated and cleared by our Trainer before returning to play.

5. Varsity and Sub Varsity Expectations

Varsity Team Expectations

The varsity team represents the best of Port Angeles High School student-athletes, showcasing the best students in the classroom and the best athletes in competitions.

- Varsity athletics represent our highest level of competition. The focus is on fielding the most competitive team possible, striving for championship-caliber execution, and developing team excellence.
- The roles of individual players are equally important in value, but that does not mean the same in playing time. Roster spots and game time are earned and determined by the coaching staff to put the team in the best position to win.
- Requirements for earning varsity letters are determined by the head coach. However, in addition to those sport-specific requirements, you must complete the season in good standing, meet all team and program expectations, and not be under suspension or in violation of the Athletic Code at the conclusion of the season to receive any letters.

Junior Varsity (Sub-Varsity) Expectations

The primary goal of Junior Varsity program is to prepare athletes for future varsity readiness.

- Junior varsity is focused on player development and gaining experience. JV contests are designed to give athletes critical game-situation reps and refine their skills.
- Each player has a specific role, and while playing time is more widely distributed than at the varsity level to ensure growth, equal playing time is not guaranteed.
- To maximize development or fill roster needs, some athletes may "swing" and participate on both the JV and Varsity squads during the season.

6. Communication Expectations

Methods of Communication

To ensure student safety, transparency, and clear boundaries, the Port Angeles School District strictly regulates how communication happens between coaches, families, and athletes.

- As a parent or student-athlete, you are expected to use **SportsYou**, **Final Forms**, and coaches **District Email** for all team updates, schedules, and messaging.
- Students are strictly prohibited from directly texting or calling a coach's personal phone.
- Parents and guardians are permitted to call or text the coach directly on their phone when appropriate.

The 24-Hour Rule & 5-Step Communication Process

To ensure productive, respectful, and successful conversations, Port Angeles High School Athletics utilizes a 24-Hour Rule alongside a structured 5-Step Communication Process.

Because emotions run high immediately before, during, or right after a game or practice, these times are reserved strictly for the team. Parents and athletes are expected to let 24 hours elapse before initiating contact regarding a concern. Once that window has passed, any unresolved issues follow this order:

Five-Step Communication Process

1. The student-athlete meets with the individual coach or head coach.
2. If unresolved, the student-athlete and parent/guardian meet with the coach.
3. If unresolved, the student-athlete, parent/guardian, and coach meet with the Athletic Director.
4. If unresolved, the student-athlete, parent/guardian, coach, and Athletic Director meet with the building principal.
5. If unresolved, the student-athlete and parent/guardian may request a meeting with the Superintendent or designee.

7. Academic Eligibility

At PAHS, the word *Student* comes before *Athlete* for a reason. If you don't take care of business in the classroom, you cannot represent us in competition. Our district standards are high, and they apply to all students, including Running Start and alternative programs.

The Basic Rule

You must be passing ALL of your enrolled classes to play. Failing even a single class makes you ineligible.

- Freshmen, Sophomores, & Juniors: Must be taking 7 classes.
- Seniors: Must be taking at least 6 classes (with admin approval).
- Passing vs. Failing: A grade of NC (No Credit) or S (Satisfactory) is considered passing. A grade of U (Unsatisfactory) or I (Incomplete) is not passing.

Regular Season Grade Checks (Triad Checks)

Grades are checked at every Triad report and at the end of each Semester.

- Triad grade checks come every 6 weeks of the school year.
- If you have an F, U, or I at a Triad check, you are immediately ineligible for games.
- You may still practice, but you cannot play in contests.

- You remain benched until you provide official documentation to the Athletic Office proving that you are passing all classes. Falsifying grade paperwork results in losing your eligibility for the rest of the season.

Spring Semester Failures – (Eligibility to play upcoming Fall Season)

- If you fail one or more classes at the end of the school year, you will begin the next school year on ***Academic Probation.*** Your grades will be officially checked on the fourth Saturday of September in the following school year.
    - If you are passing all current classes at this check, you are off probation.
    - If you are failing 1 class, you are placed on Academic Suspension for 3 weeks.
    - If you are failing 2 or more classes, you are placed on Academic Suspension for 5 weeks.

Winter Semester Failures – (Eligibility to play the rest of Winter Season)

You go straight onto ***Academic Suspension*** starting the very first day of the second semester:

- Failing 1 class: 3-week suspension from games.
- Failing 2 or more classes: 5-week suspension from games.

Academic Probation and Suspension

- **Academic Probation** is an active monitoring period when a student-athlete has failing grades. During probation, you are fully eligible to practice and compete in games while working to raise your grades. However, if you are still failing classes when the monitoring period ends, you will immediately move to Academic Suspension.

8. Guide to College Athletics

While the Port Angeles High School Athletic Department and your coaches are here to support, counsel, and help advocate for you, the student-athlete and their family are ultimately responsible for the pursuit of college athletics. Navigating recruiting, managing eligibility timelines, and reaching out to college coaches requires active, personal effort from the student parent and/or guardian.

To help you kick off this process, the NCAA provides a comprehensive, official guide covering everything from the Initial-Eligibility Clearinghouse to division-specific rulebooks. This website is your starting point: NCAA Future Student-Athletes Guide

Core Areas to Focus on Early

If playing in college is your goal, you and your family must proactively manage these three foundational areas starting as early as your freshman year:

- **Academic Core Course Tracking:** The NCAA does not just look at your overall GPA; they calculate a specific "Core GPA" using only approved math, english, science, and social science classes. You must ensure your high school schedule meets the NCAA Core Course Requirements for Division I or Division II.
- **The NCAA Eligibility Center:** By your sophomore or junior year, you must create a profile with the NCAA Eligibility Center. This is the official clearinghouse that certifies your academic eligibility and amateur status so you can legally be recruited.
- **Proactive Recruitment:** College coaches rarely find athletes by accident. It is up to the student-athlete to build an athletic resume, compile game footage/highlights, and directly email college coaching staffs to express interest. Here is an article to help with the process: Steps for Parents to Help Child with College Athletic Recruiting