

Activities Guide for Middle School Students and Parents



General Standards for Participation in Interscholastic Activities

PURPOSE: The Activities Guide for Students and Parents is a condensed guide with information necessary to effectively understand and participate in the activities program in Prince William County Public Schools (PWCS).

The information provided in this guide is representative of the rules and policies that govern athletic/activity participation in PWCS as provided by the Virginia High School League Rules and PWCS policies and regulations.

Additional questions can be answered by contacting the school's administration or refer to the school division's website at www.pwcs.edu, and view the Student's "Code of Behavior" and Policies and Regulations sites. For more information, contact the Office of Health, Physical Education, Driver Education, Athletics, and JROTC at 703-791-7353.

ATHLETIC/ACTIVITY ELIGIBILITY

Concussion Policy - As of July 1, 2011, Prince William County School Board's concussion policy will go into effect requiring student and parent participation in concussion training before the student may participate in the season. In order to participate in any extracurricular athletic activity, each student-athlete and the student-athlete's parent or guardian shall attend, on an annual basis (every 12 months), concussion training provided by the School Division. After having reviewed materials describing the short- and long-term health effects of concussions, each student-athlete and the student-athlete's parent or guardian shall sign a statement acknowledging attendance in concussion training and understanding of such information. (Refer to Regulation 759-1)

ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY

Students must be academically eligible to represent a school in any athletic and after school activities. A student is determined to be academically ineligible if in a nine week grading period, he/she receives two or more F's. The student is ineligible to participate in the following nine week marking period. Academic eligibility will carry over from the fourth grading period to the first grading period of the next school year. Rising sixth grade students start the school year with a "clean slate"; however the student can be declared ineligible to participate in the nine weeks following a marking period if criteria are not met. The student may meet eligibility at the interim and be eligible to try out for a sport in the next season if the proper criteria are met. (Refer to Regulation 640.2 and 648-1)

CONDUCT ELIGIBILITY

A student is determined to be conduct ineligible as determined by two or more U's in the preceding nine week marking period. The student is ineligible to participate in the following nine week marking period. Conduct eligibility will not carry over from the fourth grading period to the first grading period of the next school year. The new school year starts with a "clean slate"; however the student is ineligible to participate in the nine weeks following a marking period if criteria are not met. The student may meet eligibility at the interim and be eligible to try out for a sport in the next season if the proper criteria are met. (Refer to Regulation 733.1)

AGE

A student shall not have reached the age of fifteen on or before the first day of September of the school year in which he/she wishes to compete.

STUDENT PARTICIPATION

ATTENDANCE

Each student is required to attend school and classes regularly. Any student who is absent the day of any activity cannot participate in that event. On the day of an event (game or practice), a student must attend school for at least one half of the day, three and one half hours of the instructional day. In the case of extenuating circumstances, the school administration may waive the rule.

ACTIVITY INSURANCE AND PARENTAL PERMISSION

Each candidate for an interscholastic athletic team must provide proof of parental permission. Parents are strongly encouraged to have insurance covering possible accident or injury in school-sponsored games, practice sessions, and travel to and from contests. Such coverage may be provided through the purchase of Scholastic Accident Insurance or by submitting proof of similar or superior coverage. Schools do not provide insurance for participating students.

(The football insurance option available through the school system, if selected, will cover students participating in football only. Insurance for school time and other sports must be purchased separately.)

EQUIPMENT RESPONSIBILITY

It is the responsibility of the student/athlete to maintain and return all equipment and uniforms issued to them. Parents will be financially responsible for any equipment or uniforms that are lost, damaged, stolen, or misplaced during the time the student/athlete is responsible for them. The price of replacing these items shall be the actual cost to the school for purchasing new replacement items. Until any charges for lost equipment have been paid, the student shall be placed on the school's obligations list.

TRANSPORTATION

All students who are traveling to and from a school sponsored activity shall use school approved transportation. Students may not ride home from an away game site with anyone except the legal guardian or parent. Release of a student to a parent is left to the school's discretion.

STUDENT CONDUCT AND SPORTSMANSHIP

SPORTSMANSHIP

Admission to interscholastic events in Prince William County entitles spectators to enjoy a competitive exhibition of skills in an educational setting. We ask that spectators give the student athletes positive encouragements and support.

Inappropriate and unacceptable behavior may lead to the removal of the spectator(s). Prince William County Public Schools encourages an atmosphere of sportsmanship and support for all athletes. (Refer to Regulations 648-7 and 648-7.1)

BULLYING/HAZING

Bullying consists of any words or actions that harm or threaten another person's body, property, self-esteem, or group acceptance. This includes all oral, written, electronic, or non-verbal forms of ridicule, harassment, and intimidation.

Hazing in any form shall not be tolerated and may result in dismissal from the organization. (Refer to Reg 733.01-1)

SUBSTANCE ABUSE, TOBACCO, AND WEAPONS POLICY

Students involved in the possession, use or attempted use, receipt or attempted receipt, purchase or attempted purchase, distribution or attempted distribution of drugs (illegal, prescription, and/or over-the-counter), alcohol, inhalant intoxicants, look-alikes, placebos, or paraphernalia who are under the influence of same on school property, or at school-related activities, are subject to suspension and/ or expulsion from school and shall be removed from the extracurricular activity for the remainder of the season. Students found in possession or in use of illegal weapons on any school property, going to or from school, or at any school-related activity, regardless of where that activity takes place shall also face removal from the extracurricular activity for the remainder of the season. The use of tobacco products shall result in disciplinary action ranging from a conference to suspension to dismissal from the organization. (Refer to Regulations 735.2 and 775.1)

ENERGY DRINKS

In 2010, the VHSL Executive Committee passed an energy drink policy which is in effect immediately for all VHSL member schools. PWCS supports this policy and will follow the same policy for middle school interscholastic activities. The basics of this policy are as follows:

- A recommendation that athletes not consume energy drinks during participation in any interscholastic practices and competition.
- The penalty for violation of this rule will be established by the Middle School Athletics Executive Committee in 2011-2012.

Energy drinks are defined as drinks advertised as boosting energy. These drinks do not emphasize energy derived from the calories they contain but rather through a choice of caffeine, vitamins and herbal supplements the manufacturer has combined. Some common examples of energy drinks are Amp, Monster and Red Bull.

Fluid Replacement Drinks or drinks used to replenish body fluid after exercise are defined as drinks that are designed to replace energy and electrolytes, used especially to assist the body in recovering from exercise. Some common examples of fluid replacement drinks are Gatorade and Powerade.

Soft drinks such as Coke or Pepsi, while not fluid replacement drinks, are not classified as energy drinks.

STUDENT MEMBERSHIP

AWARDS

The minimum criteria for awarding a school activity certificate or other similar award must include:

1. The participant must complete the season in good standing;
2. The participant must fulfill all team related obligations;
3. The coach may establish more specific requirements with the approval of the activities director and principal.

OUTSIDE TEAM MEMBERSHIP

Outside participation shall not conflict with the practice or contest schedule of the school. Any such absence shall be considered unexcused. Students selected for a school team shall have the expectation of participation in school sponsored interscholastic athletics as a priority over participation in outside teams. Consequences for non participation will occur.

OUT-OF-SEASON PRACTICE

Member schools and coaches shall confine all organized or formal practices for a contestant or a team to the seasonal limitations. Any individual, group, or gathering that has assembled for the purpose of instruction and is under the direction of any member of the school coaching staff shall constitute a violation of the out of season practice rule. A school is permitted to organize and supervise conditioning programs to include weight lifting, running, and exercising as long as the program is general in nature and includes exercises designed to promote physical fitness. No school shall issue equipment designed for a specific sport for this type of program. These conditioning programs must be open to all members of the student body.

RECRUITING STATEMENT

No coach or school personnel shall discuss or otherwise promote transfers or change in residence or residence arrangements with any student, parent, or other person of influence or knowingly permit such activity to take place for the purpose of facilitating activity participation.

MIDDLE/HIGH SCHOOLS
Rules and Regulations Governing Participation
On Athletic Teams and Extracurricular Activities

Name: _____

Date: _____

School: _____

Extracurricular Activity: _____

The student activities program is voluntary and extracurricular. Participation in middle/high school activities is a privilege and not a right. With this privilege, it is the responsibility of the participant to uphold the standards established by the school. These standards are based on the fundamental premise that the participant is in a position of school leadership and he/she should represent the activity, the school, and the community in the highest manner.

All activity participants are responsible for appropriate conduct as defined in the Prince William County Public Schools **Code of Behavior** and the rules established by their organization's constitution during the entire term of the activity. Any violations may be accompanied by, but are not restricted to, the following disciplinary actions:

- A conference;
- Suspension from the game(s) or practice(s);
- Two game suspension;
- Suspension from next eligible event;
- Suspension for a minimum of thirty calendar days from all school activities, including practice;
- Dismissal from organization;
- Dismissal from all activities for a period of one year following the date of the conviction;
- A fine from the Virginia High School League.

Appeal Procedure: Disciplinary action will be taken only after the student has had the opportunity to answer charges of the violations, including the right to bring his/her own witnesses before the activity sponsor. Appeals may be made to the principal of the middle/high school with a further appeal to the Superintendent of Schools or his/her designee. Since participation in activities is a privilege and not a right, students who are suspended may not participate during the period of the appeal.

BY SIGNING THE EMERGENCY PERMISSION FORM FOR ATHLETICS, YOU ARE ACKNOWLEDGING THAT YOU HAVE RECEIVED, READ, AND WILL ADHERE TO THE RULES AND REGULATIONS GOVERNING PARTICIPATION ON ATHLETIC TEAMS AND EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES.

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