

PORTLAND CHRISTIAN SCHOOL



ATHLETIC HANDBOOK



STUDENT ATHLETIC HANDBOOK

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INTRODUCTIONS

The Portland Christian School Athletics Handbook is a reference guide for coaches, student-athletes and parents, concerning the policies that govern interscholastic athletics at Portland Christian School.

The coach of an athletic team reports to the Athletic Director and is primarily responsible for the compliance by his/her team members to the rules, regulations, and policies governing athletics at Portland Christian School. The Athletic Director will administer these rules and regulations as they relate to team and coach relationships.

Sound reasoning, good judgment, and adherence to the school's core values will be the standard by which situations outside these stated rules and regulations are determined and evaluated.

Interscholastic athletics is a voluntary program. Students are not obligated to participate and participation is not required for graduation. Thus, competition in high school athletics is a privilege and not a right. Accompanying this privilege is the responsibility to conform to standards established for the high school athletic program. This privilege may be revoked if the athlete fails or refuses to comply with the rules.

Thank you for your participation in our athletic program. May God bless you as you use your God-given athletic abilities and desire to serve Him in this integral part of school life.

Mission Statement

The mission of the Portland Christian Athletic Department is to promote an environment for Portland Christian School student-athletes, parents, coaches, and staff that maximizes student-athlete success in competition and strengthens their Christian character on the campus and in the community.

Our Coaches

Thank you for your support of our athletic program here at Portland Christian School. We are thankful that your child has indicated a desire to participate in interscholastic athletics and you have expressed your willingness to permit him/her to compete. We believe that participation in sports provides a wealth of opportunities and experiences, which assist students in personal adjustments. A properly controlled, well-organized sports program can often meet with the students' needs for self-expression, mental alertness and physical growth. It is our hope to maintain a program that is sound in purpose and will further each student's educational maturity and growth in Christlikeness.

Our Parents

Thank you for your support of our athletic program here at Portland Christian School. We are thankful that your child has indicated a desire to participate in interscholastic athletics and you have expressed your willingness to permit him/her to compete. We know that parents sacrifice a lot of resources, time and energy to help support their athlete.

Parents of student athletes have a responsibility to both their child and to the team. Without strong parental support the student athlete will not be able to achieve his/her greatest potential and/or the team may suffer.

It is important that parents provide positive reinforcement and understand their role as being part of the team. Parents, as well as players, should be supportive and encourage coaches and teammates at all times.

Parents are not coaches and learning to trust coaches is a key step to learning the value of the life lesson experiences athletics provides. It is also important that parents honor the Lord when attending athletic events. In order for PCS's athletic program to be successful, coaches, student athletes, and parents must make a firm commitment to glorify God at all times.

We ask that you would review this handbook, which will acquaint you with specific policies that are necessary for a well-organized program of athletics. It is the role of the athletic department, under the leadership of the Board of Directors and the building principals, to set the rules that govern the spirit of competition for the school. These rules need a broad basis of community support, achieved only through communication to the parents. It is our hope to accomplish this objective through this athletic publication for students and parents.

Our Athletes

Being a member of a Portland Christian School athletic team is an honor and a privilege. A great athletic tradition is not built overnight; it takes the hard work of many people over many years. As a member of an interscholastic squad of Portland Christian School, you have inherited an excellent tradition, a tradition you are challenged to uphold. We desire excellence, both in competitive athletic performance and in Christlike representation to our school and community.

We believe that participation in sports provides a wealth of opportunities and experiences, which assist students in personal adjustments. A properly controlled, well-organized sports program can often meet with the students' needs for self-expression, mental alertness and physical growth. It is our hope to maintain a program that is sound in purpose and will further each student's educational maturity and growth in Christlikeness.

A student who elects to participate in athletics is voluntarily making a choice of self-discipline and self-denial. These are the reasons we place such stress on good training habits. Failure to comply with the rules of training and conduct means exclusion from the squad. This concept of self-discipline and self-denial is tempered by our responsibility to recognize the rights of the individual within the objectives of the team. There is no place in athletics for students who will not discipline their minds and bodies for rigorous competition. We are striving for excellence and do not want our athletes to compromise our standards with mediocrity. Christ accepts and deserves nothing less from us than to strive to be the best. When your son/daughter becomes involved in one of our sports programs, he/she commits our staff to certain responsibilities and obligations, which include adequate equipment and facilities, well-trained coaches, and fair competition with qualified officials.

When you wear the colors of Portland Christian School, we assume that you not only understand our traditions but are willing to assume the responsibilities that go with them. The contributions you do make will be a satisfying accomplishment to you and your family.

Responsibility to School

One responsibility you assume as a participant is to your school. Portland Christian School cannot maintain its position as having an outstanding school unless you do your best in whatever activity you wish to engage. By participating in athletics to the maximum of your ability, you are contributing to the reputation of your school. You assume a leadership role when you are on an athletic team. The student body and citizens of the community know you. Because of this leadership role, you can contribute greatly to school spirit and community pride. Make Portland Christian School proud of you and those around you proud of your school by your faithful exemplification of the ideals of athletic competition and your Christian attitude.

Responsibility to Self

The most important responsibility is for you to broaden yourself and develop the strength of a Christian character and witness. You owe it to yourself to get the greatest possible good from your high school experience and to Christ to strive for your best in all things. Your academic studies, your participation in other extracurricular activities, and your daily high school experience prepare you for your life as an adult.

Responsibility to Others

As a squad member, you also bear a heavy responsibility to your teammates. When you know in your heart that you have lived up to all of the training rules, that you have practiced to the best of your ability every day, and that you have played the game “all out”, then you have fulfilled your responsibility to those with whom you compete.

ATHLETIC PHILOSOPHY

Statement of philosophy

Portland Christian School Athletics is founded on the teaching and principles of God’s Word. Biblical principles and the corresponding philosophies may differ substantially from schools with other philosophies. Such differences, however, do not necessitate unworkable relationships. Instead, our philosophy of athletics should provide an opportunity for others outside the Heritage community to visualize gospel actions and biblical principles. The Portland Christian School’s athletic program is a wonderful opportunity to minister to the community through exemplary actions, Christ-like attitudes, and a high level of individual and team athletic skill. The challenge for our athletes, parents, and coaches is to adhere to the Colossians 3:17 mandate. “And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him”.

Interscholastic athletics play an important role at Portland Christian School. Living out Christ’s life and teachings on the field of competition is a tremendous privilege and responsibility that the student-athlete will carry throughout life. As with all aspects of life, God often uses participation in athletics to help sanctify Christians. Men and women learn a great deal through their participation on the various teams including the importance of sportsmanship and the value of teamwork. Athletic participation is intended to provide the student-athlete with experiences that not only develop a healthy body but also raise their self-image and confidence. Athletics should function as an integral part of the total curriculum and conform to the objectives of Portland Christian School. In doing so, athletic competition adds to school spirit and helps all students (both participants and spectators) develop pride in their school.

Since participation in athletics can be such a positive experience, it is the policy of Portland Christian School that student-athletes shall enjoy as many different sport seasons as they wish without undue influence from any coach to specialize in one sport. At the high school level, the KHSAA offers a prestigious “Triple Threat” award for athletes who play a sport in each season (fall, winter and spring).

Objectives of athletic participation

1. *“Whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.”* (Colossians 3:17)
2. To maintain our witness for Christ and honor Him in all things
3. To provide a positive image of school athletics at Portland Christian School
4. To strive for athletic excellence that will produce successful teams
5. To provide opportunities that will serve as learning experiences that are similar to “real life” situations with emphasis on the following values:
 - a. Physical, mental and emotional growth
 - b. Loyalty, cooperation and teamwork that comes with team play
 - c. Self-discipline, excellence, self-motivation, and the ideals of sportsmanship that allow for winning and losing gracefully
6. To provide opportunities for students to experience individual success
7. To provide students with worthy use of recreational time both now and in the future
8. To be socially responsible and operate within a set of rules that promote respect for others
9. To understand the relevance of athletics in the overall educational program

GOVERNANCES

The Portland Christian School Board of Education

The Portland Christian School Board is responsible for the following areas:

- Interpreting the needs of the school.
- Developing policies in accordance with state statutes and mandates and in accordance with the educational needs and wishes of the people of Portland Christian School.
- Approving means by which professional staff may make these policies effective.
- Evaluating the interscholastic athletic program in terms of its value to Christ’s witness.

The Kentucky High School Athletic Association

Schools are voluntary members of the Kentucky High School Athletic Association and compete only with member schools and schools from other states who belong to their state association. As a member school, Portland Christian School agrees to abide by and enforce all rules and regulations promulgated by this Association. The primary role of the state association is to maintain rules and regulations that ensure equity in competition for the student athletes and a balance with other educational programs. The association solicits input and is responsive to requests for rule modifications from member schools, appointed committees, and coaches' associations. The state association attempts to enforce such rules that assure the greatest good for the greatest number and to ensure that competition is conducted in an appropriate manner.

The National Federation of State High School Associations

The National Federation consists of the fifty individual state high school's athletic and/or activities associations. The purposes of the Federation are to serve, protect and enhance the interstate activity interests of the high schools belonging to state associations; to assist in those activities of the state associations which can best be operated on a nationwide scale; to sponsor meetings, publications and activities which will permit each state association to profit by the experience of all other member associations; and to coordinate the work to minimize duplication.

Kentucky Christian Athletic Conference

Portland Christian School is a voluntary member of the KCAC. This league was established for the primary purpose of promoting Christian athletes and Christian school programs as a whole.

REQUIREMENTS FOR PARTICIPATION

Physical Examination

A yearly physical examination is required for each student athlete in grades 6-12. Athletes may not practice or play until this form is completed and turned in to the PCS Athletic Office. The physical form provided by the KHSAA must be completed by both the physician and the parent. The student, parent and examining physician must sign and date this form. The physical covers all KHSAA sports at Portland Christian for one year from the date of the physical. The form will be kept on file in the athletic office. Coaches are not to allow any student to begin any practice without verification that the student has a valid (not expired) KHSAA Form 4 on file in the administrator's office. This form is **REQUIRED** by the state.

Parental Acknowledgment of Athletic Policies

At the time a student tries out for an athletic team, he will be presented with this handbook along with all the necessary forms and information for participating in athletics. Each parent or guardian shall read all of the enclosed material and certify that they understand the athletic eligibility rules and policies of the school by signing the "Parent Athletics Acknowledgement" form.

Insurance

All athletes at Portland Christian School must be covered by insurance as directed by the KHSAA.

Academic Eligibility

Portland Christian School is governed by the KHSAA Bylaw 5, "Minimum Academic Requirements" for student athletes in high school. Students participating in athletics sanctioned by the KHSAA and cheerleading, including team managers and game support staff and their middle school equivalent, should meet the following requirement to remain eligible for competition, performance and practice: Student must maintain a 1.66 overall grade point average to be determined on the weekly grade check as mandated by KHSAA and with no failing grades in any class.

For our 7th-12th grade students, grades will be checked weekly beginning with the first day of practice (or the first day of school). At least three grades must be entered for athletic eligibility to be determined. If an athlete is found to be academically ineligible, they will not be allowed to participate in any practices, games or athletic events with their team until the next successful grade check. An athlete that is ruled ineligible more than twice in a season could remain ineligible for the rest of that given season. Grade checks will be conducted each week on Friday to determine eligibility for the subsequent week (Monday through Sunday period).

The academic eligibility for elementary students will be determined by the elementary principals.

Athletic Fee

An athletic fee (*per sport*) is required of students who participate in any interscholastic sport. This fee is paid per athlete per sport. If the athletic fee is not paid by the first day of practices, the athletic fee will be charged to the student's account.

ATHLETIC CODE OF CONDUCT

A firm and fair policy of enforcement is necessary to uphold the regulations and standards of the athletic department. School administrators and the coaching staff feel strongly that high standards of conduct and citizenship are essential in maintaining a sound program of athletics. The welfare of the student is our major consideration and transcends any other consideration. All athletes shall abide by a code of ethics which will earn them the honor and respect that participation and competition in the interscholastic program affords. Any conduct that results in dishonor to the athlete, the team or the school will not be tolerated. Acts of unacceptable conduct, such as, but not limited to theft, vandalism, disrespect, immorality, violence, profanity, violations of the law could result in athletic disciplinary action. Penalty for this type of conduct will be determined by the head coach, the athletic director and the building principal if necessary.

Coaches are to observe a "zero" tolerance for unsportsmanlike or unchristian conduct in a practice or game. This applies to all players and coaches. Any actions or language not consistent with a Christian athlete are not to be tolerated. The coach is responsible for explaining the "zero" tolerance rule at the first practice. Minor offenses constitute a warning, the second minor offense or serious offense will require that consequences be enforced, and the third minor offense or a serious flagrant offense may result in removal from the team. Reinstatement of an athlete to the team can only be made by the building principal. In a game situation, all KHSAA rules and regulations will apply to athletes and coaches as well.

Any student who is on an in-school or out-of-school suspension can NOT practice or play in a contest on any day that the suspension is in effect.

The coaches are directly responsible for the actions of the athletes on their specific teams. The principals are directly responsible for the actions of coaches. The school administrator is ultimately responsible for the entire athletic program.

BASIC ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT POLICIES

Participation

An athlete may participate in only one sport per season unless he/she has received the approval of the coaches involved and the Athletic Director.

Once a student athlete joins a sports team, we highly encourage them to complete the season. Occasionally, there may be a reason for an athlete to need to quit the team. If this is the case, you must consult with your head coach and report your situation to the Athletic Director. A meeting will be set up with the student athlete and their parents to discuss this decision. If the student athlete does not continue on the team, all equipment issued to the athlete should immediately be turned in to the athletic office. Quitting a sport, without a good reason, will result in penalties that will be determined by the coach and Athletic Director. These penalties will range from the loss of awards earned to being prohibited to participate in any athletic program.

If an athlete wishes to change sports during a season, he/she will not be permitted to participate on another team that season without the approval of the coaches involved and the Athletic Director. This procedure assures a smooth transfer, which is in the best interest of the student.

Equipment

School equipment and uniforms assigned to the student athlete is his/her responsibility. The athlete is expected to keep them clean and in good condition. Loss or damage of any equipment is the athlete's financial obligation.

Missing Practices and/or Games

An athlete should always consult his/her coach before missing practice or games. Missing practice or a game without communicating with the coach will be dealt with as a serious violation. Vacations by athletic team members during a sport season are discouraged. In the event of an absence due to a vacation that is unavoidable, an athlete must contact the head coach prior to the vacation. Commitments to Portland Christian teams should always come before club or outside teams. Different coaches may have different policies regarding practice attendance and playing time. Athletes should know, and respect, the policies and procedures of their coach if/when needing to be absent.

Travel

Transportation to athletic events is the responsibility of the student-athlete. Arrangements are to be made by the parents to transport their child to and from practices and games. The coach is not responsible for transportation.

Conflicts in Extracurricular Activities

An individual student who attempts to participate in several extracurricular activities will, undoubtedly, be in a position of a conflict of obligations. The athletic department recognizes that each student should have the opportunity for a broad range of experiences in the area of extracurricular activities, and, to this end, will attempt to schedule events in a manner to minimize conflicts. Students have a responsibility to do everything they can to avoid continuous conflicts. This would include being cautious about belonging

to too many activities where conflicts are bound to happen. It also means notifying the faculty sponsors/coaches involved immediately when a conflict does arise. When a conflict arises the sponsors/coaches will work out a solution so the student does not feel caught in the middle. If a solution cannot be found, the principal will make the decision based on the following:

1. The relative importance of each event.
2. The importance of each event to the student.
3. The relative contribution the student can make.
4. How long each event has been scheduled.
5. Consultation with parents.

Once the decision has been made and the student has followed that decision, he/she will not be penalized in any way by either faculty sponsor or coach. If it becomes obvious that a student cannot fulfill the obligation of a school activity, he should withdraw from that activity.

College Recruitment Policy

In the event an athlete should be contacted personally by a college recruiter, the athlete has an obligation to work through his/her coach and the athletic department. Inform your coach of such a contact as soon as possible. College recruitment information is available in the Athletic Office. For students who may possibly be recruited to play at an NCAA school, there are specific procedures to follow beginning in the athlete's sophomore year. The school counselor, academic dean or athletic director may provide this information to an athlete.

Attendance

Students who miss part of the school day due to illness must be in attendance by the start of the 5th period class to be able to play in a contest or to practice on that date. Students missing school for reasons other than illness must have an excused absence in order to participate. Final authority for infractions of this rule will rest with the building principal. Students absent from school on Friday with a contest the following day (Saturday) will be eligible to participate provided the absence is an excused absence.

Dress Code

A member of an athletic team is expected to be well-groomed and be fully in compliance with the school dress code. Appearance, expression and actions are all important parts of representing athletes, the team, the school and Christ.

Athletes and parents are expected to know and abide by the dress code policy for all athletic events including practices and home and away games. Disregard for the dress code may result in an athlete missing a practice or game and can result in dismissal from the team. Athletes will not be allowed to practice in clothing that does not comply with the dress code.

The expectations for student athlete dress code are as follows:

Shirts

- Shirts should have sleeves or cover the entire shoulder and not be loose underneath the arm.
- Cut off sleeveless shirts are NOT acceptable (for boys or girls) when they expose any part of the chest or stomach.

- Boys may not be shirtless at any time.
- Girls' sports bras should not be seen at any time (*with exception for the top of the shoulders/neck area that may be partially visible with dress code compliant shirts.*)

Shorts

- The inside seam of all shorts must be at least 4”.
- Spandex may only be worn under athletic shorts that meet dress code requirements.

General

- Clothing and accessories should not display graphics or lettering that endorse a message contrary to the Christian mission or rules of the school.
- Practice clothing, when not designated, will be modest and within the definition of the school dress code.

Squad Selection

In accordance with our philosophy of athletics and our desire to see as many students as possible in the athletic program while at Portland Christian School, we encourage coaches to keep as many students as they can without unbalancing the integrity of their sport. Time, space, facilities, equipment, and other factors will place limitations on the most effective squad size for any particular sport.

Choosing the members of athletic squads is the responsibility of the coaches of those squads. Prior to trying out, the coach shall provide the following information to all candidates for the team:

1. Details of try-out period
2. Criteria used to select the team
3. Number to be selected
4. Practice and game commitments

When a squad cut becomes necessary, the process will include important elements. Each candidate shall:

1. Compete in a minimum of four practice sessions. (*Exceptions may include sports such as golf and tennis where practice facilities are limited, and this may not be possible.*)
2. Perform in at least one intrasquad game.
3. Be personally informed of the cut by the coach, including the reason for the action.

Coaches will discuss alternative possibilities for participation in the sport or other areas in the activities program.

Playing Time

Playing time is not guaranteed for any athlete at the middle school or high school level. Equal playing time is not guaranteed for any athlete at any level, including elementary school. While we desire to see all athletes reach their full potential, Portland Christian offers an interscholastic athletic program and not a recreational league. Coaches have the discretion to play whom they believe will best serve the purpose of the team in each athletic competition.

We want athletes who want to compete, and therefore it is understandable when an athlete would like to earn more playing time in their sport. If an athlete would like to know how to earn more playing time, the athlete should following the following procedure:

1. Athlete should ask the coach if they can meet to discuss how the athlete can improve to earn more playing time. (Note: the parents are always welcome to accompany the athlete).
2. The athlete should meet with the coach(es) before or after practice to discuss possible areas and strategies for improvement. (Note: the parents are always welcome to accompany the athlete).
3. If the athlete feels like they still do not understand the coach's expectations, the parents may reach out and contact the coach to set up a meeting with the parents. (This is assuming the parents have not already been involved in previous conversations).
4. If the athlete and parents still feel like they do not understand the coach's expectations, the parents may reach out to the athletic director to set up a meeting to discuss their concerns.

Parents typically should not approach coaches about playing time for their child if the child has not first asked the coach how they can earn more playing time . While parents are encouraged to communicate openly with their coach about their child, parents should refrain from contacting the coach to discuss overall game strategies, substitution decisions and/or other coaching discretion issues. If parents would like to request a meeting with a coach to discuss their athlete, they should follow a "24hr Rule" and wait at least 24 hours after any game, match or competition before attempting to contact the coach. The Athletic Director will be notified of any individual meetings between parents and coaches.

"24 Hour Rule"

All parents and student-athletes should refrain from approaching the coach about playing time, sport specific decisions or game management for 24 hours after the game/match/competition. After 24 hours has passed, parents and/or student-athletes may call or email the coach to set up a time to meet and discuss their concerns. If this meeting does not resolve the issue, parents or coaches are welcome to contact the athletic director or school principal to serve as a mediator. This is an official PCS Athletics policy and will be enforced by all coaches.

Injury/Incident Reports

All injuries which occur while participating in athletics should be reported to the coach. If the injury requires medical attention by a doctor or treatment center, it will be necessary to have an Injury Report Form completed. Once athletes are treated by a physician, the athlete must obtain the doctor's written permission to return to the activity.