

Activities Guide for Middle School Students and Parents



General Standards for Participation in Interscholastic Activities

PURPOSE: This Activities Guide for Students and Parents is designed to be useful to students and parents. The intent is to condense into one pamphlet information which is necessary to effectively understand and participate in the activities program in Prince William County.

The pamphlet includes a collection of information pertaining to state and county procedures and regulations. Additional reference on the administration of interscholastic activities will be found in the Virginia High School League Handbook and the Prince William County Public Schools Interscholastic Activity Handbook. Copies of these documents are available in each high school.

There may be questions that arise which may not be covered in this brochure. This pamphlet is only a guide. Only open communication among the coaching staff, activities directors, athletic coordinators, parents, students and school administrators will ensure an effective activity program.



ELIGIBILITY

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.

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.

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.

OUTSIDE TEAM MEMBERSHIP

Outside participation shall not conflict with the practice or contest schedule of the school. Any such absence shall be considered unexcused.

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.

AMATEUR STATUS

A student who represents a school in an interscholastic sport shall be an amateur in that sport. An amateur athlete is one who engages in athletic competition solely for the physical, mental, social, and benefits derived pleasurable.

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 (11:30 a.m.). 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 and 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.

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.

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.

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.

HAZING

Hazing in any form shall not be tolerated and may result in dismissal from the organization.

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, 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.

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. Booing, taunting, or intimidating the officials and opponents is inappropriate and unacceptable. To assure a positive and safe atmosphere, only uniformed cheerleaders will lead cheers. We encourage support for allowing all athletes the opportunity to compete in a sportsmanlike atmosphere.

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.

This does not apply to recreation programs sponsored by governmental agencies and civic organizations when approved by member schools. The program must be open to everyone in the community served and shall not be limited to varsity or junior varsity athletes from a specified school.

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.

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

Name: _____ **Date:** _____

School: _____ **Extracurricular Activity:** _____

- I. **Justification:** 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 in 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.
- II. **Rules of Conduct:** 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. Violations may include but are not restricted to:
1. Use of alcohol, drugs, or controlled dangerous substances (except by physician's prescription and notification of advisor).
 2. Possession of weapons.

DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS: Violation of rules of conduct 1 or 2 will result in dismissal from the organization.

3. Use of tobacco.
4. Exceeding the allotted number of absences or tardiness to announced meetings, activities, etc.
5. Violation of the rules and regulations listed in the Prince William County Code of Behavior.
6. Failure to maintain appropriate appearance.

DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS: Violations of rules of conduct 3, 4, 5, or 6 will result in disciplinary action ranging from a conference to suspension to dismissal from the organization.

7. Misconduct or misbehavior which results in "out of school" suspension.

DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS: Violation of the rule of conduct 7 will result in disciplinary action that will include suspension from the games missed and the next eligible when the student returns or possible dismissal from the organization.

8. Conduct, which results in conviction of non-traffic related class 1 or class 2 misdemeanor.

DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS: Violation of the rule of conduct 8 will result in dismissal from all activities for the period of one year following the date of the conviction.

9. Fighting during interscholastic activities. This includes closely following an opposing player during a disturbance; making taunting gestures or sounds; baiting; punching whether the punch lands or not; pushing; wrestling in a contest other than wrestling; or tackling an opponent outside a legal play situation.

DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS: Violation of the rule of conduct 9 will result in a two game suspension from the next scheduled game. The same penalty applies to any member of the playing squad who leaves the bench during a fight. The Virginia High School League fines the student athlete.

- III. **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 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.

Form #61582451497G shall be made available for parent and student signature prior to the start of competition for each sport season.

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Prince William County
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The Prince William County Public School Division does not discriminate in employment or in its educational programs and activities against qualified individuals on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, pregnancy, age, veteran status, or disability.