



POUDRE SCHOOL DISTRICT

Athletic Handbook

Mission, philosophy, standards, rules and expectations applicable to interscholastic athletic participation in the Poudre School District.

Updated 7/1/2026

EDUCATE...

EVERY CHILD, EVERY DAY.

DISTRICT ATHLETICS OFFICE

1502 S. TIMBERLINE ROAD, FORT COLLINS, CO 80524

(970) 490-3106 website: www.psdschools.org



PSD High Schools offering interscholastic athletic programs:

- Fort Collins School
- Fossil Ridge High School
- Poudre High School
- Poudre Community Academy
- Rocky Mountain High School
- Timnath Middle High School
- Wellington Middle High School

PSD Middle Schools offering interscholastic athletic programs:

- Blevins Middle School
- Boltz Middle School
- Cache La Poudre Middle School
- Kinard Middle School
- Leshner Middle School
- Lincoln Middle School
- Preston Middle School
- Timnath Middle High School
- Webber Middle School
- Wellington Middle High School

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PURPOSE OF THIS HANDBOOK

The purpose of this handbook is to provide a practical guide for athletes and parents regarding the mission, philosophy, standards, rules and expectations of the PSD interscholastic program at the high school and middle school levels. It is our goal to expose as many students as possible to the benefits derived from participation in education-based athletics. Further, the best experience possible is best served when students, coaches, parents and administrators are informed, have open lines of communication, know what is expected of them, and truly commit to assuring that the mission and ideals of education-based athletics are aligned with daily practice in the operation of these programs.

MISSION

To pursue excellence daily through character and education-based activities that: 1) are not defined by the scoreboard or rating sheet; 2) demonstrate a commitment to respect, the spirit of fair play, and the ideals of sportsmanship; 3) are aligned with the mission, values and policies of PSD and the CHSAA; 4) are led by coaches/sponsors that are committed to such ideals; and 5) are participated in by students with an understanding of their role in representing PSD, their school, their team, and their community.

PSD ATHLETICS VALUES

- PSD does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, age, religion, creed, marital status, or disability in admission to or access to, or treatment or employment in, its programs and activities.
- PSD is firmly committed to Title IX.
- PSD believes in equity and balance across all education-based programming.

CHSAA CODE OF ETHICS

Poudre School District embraces the CHSAA Code of Ethics as foundational principles of creating an effective environment for the operation of education-based athletics at the scholastic level. In order to reach the maximum effectiveness in serving and fostering the education of the students so entrusted to us, it is the duty of all concerned with our athletic and activities programs to...

1. Cultivate an awareness that participation in athletics and activities is part of the total educational process and as such, the coach/advisor should neither seek nor expect academic privileges for the participants.
2. Emphasize the proper ideals of sportsmanship, ethical conduct, and fair play as they relate to the lifetime impact on the participants.
3. Develop a working awareness and understanding of all rules and guidelines governing competition, both in letter and intent.
4. Recognize that the purpose of athletics and activities is to promote the physical, mental, moral, social, and emotional well-being of the individual participants.

5. Avoid any practice or technique which would endanger the present or future welfare or safety of any participant.
6. Adhere to policies which do not force or encourage students to specialize or restrict them from participation in a variety of activities.
7. Refuse to disparage an opponent, an official, an administrator or spectator in any aspect of the activity.
8. Strongly encourage the development of proper health habits: the non-use of chemicals, including alcohol, steroids, tobacco in any form and other mood-altering substances.
9. Exemplify proper self-control at all times, accepting adverse decisions without public display of emotion or dissatisfaction with the officials or judges.
10. Encourage all to judge the true success of the athletic and activities programs based on the attitude of the participants and spectators, rather than based on a win or loss

PSD ATHLETIC PHILOSOPHY BY LEVEL OF PARTICIPATION

PSD notes that participation is a privilege and not a right. Playing time and selection to a team must be earned.

Middle School/High School

Varsity level: Varsity level programs are the most competitive of the athletic programs. This level includes the most skilled, well-prepared student-athletes. Varsity-level coaches are charged with fielding the most competitive team possible. Team selection, starting positions and playing time are all at the discretion of the head coach.

Sub-Varsity level: Sub-varsity programs are focused on developing the skills and abilities necessary for students to transition to the varsity level. Coaches at sub-varsity levels should emphasize development of both the individual and team. Coaches at the sub-varsity level are encouraged to play as many participants as possible. Naturally, the playing time becomes more competitive as student-athletes progress to the Junior Varsity level compared to C-level or D-level programs. It is worth noting that playing time still is at the discretion of the coach at the sub-varsity levels.

ATHLETIC ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

High School (grades 9-12) interscholastic athletic eligibility is governed by the Colorado High School Activities Association. General Eligibility guidelines are listed in Article 17 of the CHSAA Bylaws. Per article 17 of the CHSAA bylaws, three basic eligibility criteria apply to all athletes wishing to participate in high school athletics.

- Student must be enrolled in enough classes to be classified a “Full-Time Student” by CDE.
- Student must have earned a requisite number of credits during the previous grading term. (Exception: First semester 9th graders)
- Periodic eligibility grade checks will be conducted by each member school, throughout the season.

Middle School (grades 6,7,8) athletic eligibility will be determined on an ongoing basis by each building's administration with considerations given to the following factors:

1. Academics
2. Student Discipline Matters
3. Attendance

A student shall be declared ineligible if that student has not met expectations set forth by the school in order to participate in PSDMSAL competitions. In addition, students must be in attendance for no less than half the school day to participate in PSDMSAL sanctioned athletic practices, scrimmages, and/or competitions. The building principal and/or athletic director have the authority to waive said requirement at their discretion.

ATHLETIC FEES

- Athletic fees approved by the Board of Education will be charged for athletes in grades 6-12. Athletic fees will be collected at the beginning of each sport season prior to participation in the first official practice day unless the student qualifies for a fee waiver.
- If a student is cut from the team, 100% of the fee paid is refunded. If a student is dropped for disciplinary reasons at any time 0% of the fee paid is refunded. If a student quits the team, is injured, and eliminated for the entire season or transfers out, refunds are as follows:
 - First day of practice through the fifth day of practice, 100% of the fee paid is refunded.
 - Sixth day of practice to the first sanctioned competitive contest, 50% of the fee paid is refunded.
 - After the first sanctioned competitive contest, 0% of the paid fee is refunded.
- Students who qualify for free or reduced-priced meals, and complete the District's Permission to Share Form** qualify for fee waivers when applicable.

**The National School Lunch Act requires the Child Nutrition Department to receive written authorization for a student's status (free or reduced-priced) to be shared with authorized district officials for the purpose of providing fee waivers.

- Athletic Fee Schedule: For a complete list of Athletic fees, please visit the PSD website [Student Fees and Charges | Poudre School District](#)

TRYOUTS

A **three-day** tryout will be granted at the beginning of each athletic season. The official start date of each season will be dictated at the high school level by the CHSAA sports calendar, and at the middle school by the official PSDMSAL calendar. The head coach **may** extend the tryout period (by adding additional tryout days) at their discretion. Athletes who miss one or more days during the tryout window are not guaranteed additional tryout days. A coach **may** extend an abbreviated tryout opportunity to an athlete who was unable to attend all/any tryout days.

SPORTS PHYSICALS AND MEDICAL INSURANCE

Poudre School District requires that all student-athletes in its interscholastic athletic program shall have a sports physical prior to participation in practices and games. Physicals must be secured annually. Physicals are valid for 365 days from the date of the exam. If a physical expires during the season the student-athlete is immediately ineligible for practices and competitions until an updated physical is on file with the school.

Physicals are not provided by the District and must be obtained from a licensed practitioner including any of the following: MD's, DO's, Nurse Practitioners, Physician's Assistants, and Doctor of Chiropractic who are School Physical Certified (DC, Spc.). The Health and Wellness Center at Centennial High School and virtual care program at Lincoln Middle School offers sports physicals/annual exams, sick visits, mental health services etc. year-round.

PSD is protected from liability under the Colorado Governmental Immunity Act for injuries that may result from participation in interscholastic athletics and recommends families obtain appropriate insurance coverage from qualified sources to cover potential medical expenses. PSD makes voluntary student accident insurance available through a third-party provider. More information regarding coverage and rates, as well as links to enrollment forms can be found at [PSD Schools Risk Management and Student Insurance](#). It is the responsibility of the parent or guardian to provide accident/health insurance coverage for their student as a condition of the student's participation in interscholastic athletic practices and competitions; Poudre School District does not independently provide such insurance coverage. Sports physical must be indicated on the following form and only page 4 should be submitted to the school athletic office.

High School level sports: CHSAA PPE form [CHSAA Sports Medicine | CHSAANow.com](#)

Middle School level sports: PSD PreParticipation form [PSD School PreParticipation](#)

PLACEMENT OF NON-PSD STUDENTS IN PSD ATHLETIC PROGRAMS

The purpose of these guidelines is to set forth in writing the policy of Poudre School District R-1 (the "District") for implementation of C.R.S. § 22-32-116.5 regarding student participation in extracurricular and interscholastic activities at District schools. Additionally, the following guidelines prevent recruiting by schools and school activity shopping by students and their parents, both of which the District has determined are unfair to the other schools, students and parents involved in the activities.

Middle School Guidelines:

1. Student participation in competitive activities at District schools may be based on tryouts or other merit-based selection criteria as determined by the coach or sponsor.
2. Students who reside within the District and who attend a school that does not offer an activity for which they are eligible and in which they wish to participate shall only be eligible to participate in that activity at their neighborhood school (if the activity is offered at their neighborhood school). If the activity is not offered at their neighborhood school, they shall only be eligible to participate in that activity at the closest District school to their residence that offers it or at the closest District school to their school of attendance that offers the activity (except that if the closest District school is a charter school, they may choose to participate in the activity at the charter school or at the closest District non-charter school that offers the activity).
3. Students who do not reside within the District and who attend a school within the District that does not offer an activity for which they are eligible and in which they wish to participate, shall only be eligible to participate in that activity at the closest District school to their residence that offers the activity or at the closest District school to their school of attendance that offers the activity.
4. Students who do not reside within the District and who do not attend a school within the District shall only be eligible to participate in that activity at the closest District school to their residence that offers the activity or the closest district school from their school of attendance that offers the activity.
5. Student eligibility for, and participation in activities at District schools shall be subject to eligibility requirements imposed by the school of participation in accordance with but not limited to, C.R.S. §§ 22- 32-116.5 & 22-36-101, CHSAA Bylaws, District policies and regulations, and the decisions of the coach/sponsor responsible for the activity.
6. Decisions made under these guidelines at the school level may be appealed to the District's Director of Athletics and Activities. Decisions made under these guidelines by the Director of Athletics and Activities may be appealed to the Assistant Superintendent for the school at issue. Decisions made under these guidelines by an Assistant Superintendent may be appealed to the Superintendent of Schools.

High School Guidelines:

1. Student participation in competitive activities at District schools may be based on tryouts or other merit-based selection criteria as determined by the coach or sponsor.

2. Students who reside within the District and who attend a school that does not offer an activity for which they are eligible and in which they wish to participate shall be eligible to participate in that activity at their neighborhood school (if the activity is offered at their neighborhood school), or may choose to participate at any school in the district only if that school is currently accepting choice/open enrolled students. If a school is closed to choice/open enrollment but is the only school to offer an activity in the District, placement may be granted. Once an official placement has been finalized, the student will be eligible to participate in any activity not offered at their school of attendance and will not be permitted to participate at other schools within the District, unless the activity is not offered at their school of placement.

If a student wishes to change their athletic placement, eligibility will be subject to (but not limited to) Article 18 of the Colorado High School Activities Association (CHSAA) Bylaws.

3. Students who do not reside within the District and who attend a school within the District that does not offer an activity for which they are eligible and in which they wish to participate, shall only be eligible to participate in that activity at the closest District school to their residence that offers the activity or at the closest District school to their school of attendance that offers the activity. Once an official placement has been finalized, the student will be eligible to participate in any activity not offered at their school of attendance and will not be permitted to participate at other schools within the District, unless the activity is not offered at their school of placement.

4. Students who do not reside within the District and who do not attend a school within the District shall only be eligible to participate in that activity at the closest District school to their residence that offers the activity or the closest district school to their school of attendance. Once an official placement has been finalized, the student will be eligible to participate in any activity not offered at their school of attendance and will not be permitted to participate at other schools within the District, unless the activity is not offered at their school of placement.

5. Student eligibility for, and participation in activities at District schools shall be subject to eligibility requirements imposed by the school of participation in accordance with but not limited to, C.R.S. §§ 22-32-116.5 & 22-36-101, CHSAA Bylaws, District policies and regulations, and the decisions of the coach/sponsor responsible for the activity.

6. Decisions made under these guidelines at the school level may be appealed to the District's Director of Athletics and Activities. Decisions made under these guidelines by the Director of Athletics and Activities may be appealed to the Assistant Superintendent for the school at issue. Decisions made under these guidelines by an Assistant Superintendent may be appealed to the Superintendent of Schools.

HIGH SCHOOL TRANSFERS TO/FROM PSD

All transfers must follow [CHSAA transfer policies and procedures](#). Visit [CHSAA.com](https://chsaa.com) for more information.

SPORTSMANSHIP

The Player

- Treats coaches and opponents with respect.
- Plays hard but plays within the rules.
- Exercises self-control, setting the example for others to follow.
- Respects officials and accepts their decisions without gesture or argument.
- Wins without boasting, loses without excuses, never quits.
- Always remembers that it is a privilege to represent the school and community.

The Coach

- The coach is the central figure in the sportsmanship pattern of the school and community. The coach is the leader and example.
- Treats own players and opponents with respect.
- Inspires in the athletes a love for the game and the desire to compete fairly
- Is a role model for the type of person they want the athletes to be.
- Disciplines those on the team who display unsportsmanlike behavior.
- Respects the judgment and interpretation of the rules by the officials.
- Knows they are a teacher and understands the athletic arena is a classroom.

The Spectator

- 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.
- Shows compassion for an injured player, applauds positive performances, 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 a game.
- Respects property of others and authority of those who administer the competition. Respects the integrity and judgment of game officials. Understands that they are doing their best to help promote the student-athlete and admire their willingness to participate in full view of the public.

PSD EJECTION POLICY FOR SPECTATORS

Any spectator affiliated with PSD schools that is ejected or removed from an athletic venue due to poor sportsmanship will be placed on probation and not allowed to return to further PSD athletic events until the following have occurred: 1) The individual meets with the building administration to discuss future expectations for behavior. 2) The individual completes an approved "A Better Way" course from the Parent Essentials/Onboarding Curriculums. Proof of completion must be sent to the building AD before the spectator may return.

Repeated minor offenses or egregious acts of unsportsmanlike conduct including verbal harassment and/or contact with an official, coach, staff member, athlete, opposing team members, will be grounds for law enforcement involvement and may be grounds for spectators to be permanently banned from all future PSD contests.

CHSAA SANCTIONS FOR MISCONDUCT AND UNSPORTSMANLIKE ACTIONS

All sanctions or penalties related to unsportsmanlike conduct received by student-athletes, spectators or coaches (i.e. technical foul(s), yellow card(s), red card(s), ejection(s), etc.) must be reported to the building athletic director immediately. PSD will enforce all CHSAA sanctions for misconduct and unsportsmanlike actions. PSD also reserves the right to impose further or more severe penalties for egregious or repetitive violations of sportsmanship expectations.

STUDENT-ATHLETE CITIZENSHIP EXPECTATIONS (Grades 6 through 12)

PSD has high expectations for the students that participate in extracurricular activities and interscholastic programs (**grades 6 through 12**). As such, student-athletes are expected to demonstrate good citizenship in school, during activities and in the community. The core expectations of behavior regarding the use of alcohol and drugs are outlined in the sections that follow. District Policy JJ specifically is written for students in grades 9 through 12. Similar expectations also apply to student-athletes in grades 6 through 8.

Behavior Unbecoming a Student-Athlete

Participation in the athletic program is a privilege, and student-athletes are expected to behave in a manner that will reflect positively on their teams and on their school. As representatives of the athletic program and the school district, it is the responsibility of the student-athletes to make positive decisions at school and in the community. Behaviors that violate these expectations and reflect poorly on the student-athlete, athletic program, and school will be met with proportional consequences. Such behaviors will be identified at the discretion of the athletic director and principal, and may include, but are not limited to, pictures of using and/or possession of alcohol, tobacco products, drugs, illegal performance-enhancing substances, vapes, or electronic cigarettes, as well as bullying, harassment, hazing, vandalism, theft, assault, and any behavior/activity resulting in police involvement.

These rules shall apply to all students who participate in any Poudre School District interscholastic athletic program. In addition to these rules, students participating in interscholastic athletics are subject to and required to comply with all policies and regulations in the Poudre School District Code of Conduct. Student-athletes shall not be eligible to participate in athletic practices or competitions during any period of suspension or expulsion under the Code of Conduct.

Student-athletes are also subject to and required to comply with the Bylaws adopted by the Colorado High School Activities Association, with all team/program rules, and are required to exercise good sportsmanship at

all practices and competitions. A student-athlete who fails to comply with these requirements as determined by a coach, PSD administrator or competition official shall be subject to suspension from practices/competitions and or removal from the team.

ANTI-HAZING POLICY

PSD prohibits bullying, hazing, intimidation, or threats. Hazing includes, but is not limited to humiliation tactics, forced social isolation, verbal or emotional abuse, forced or excessive consumption of food or liquids, or any activity that requires a student to engage in illegal activity. The Student and Parent(s) acknowledge and understand that hazing of any type is not permitted in any PSD and/or CHSAA-sanctioned activity.

The Student agrees they will not engage in any prohibited conduct. The Student and Parent(s) further acknowledge and understand that it is their responsibility to immediately report any acts of hazing that they become aware of to a sponsor, teacher, counselor, school support staff, coach, or administrator in my school.

INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETIC TRAINING AND PERSONAL CONDUCT RULES (DIST. POLICY JJ)

Participation in Poudre School District interscholastic athletic programs is a privilege, not a right. Student-athletes serve as representatives of their schools and teams and may be viewed as role models by younger students. In addition, student health and fitness must be maintained on a year-round basis to meet the demands of interscholastic athletic competition. For these reasons, student-athletes are required to comply with the standards set by these training and personal conduct rules.

These rules shall apply to all students who participate in any Poudre School District interscholastic athletic program. In addition to these rules, students participating in interscholastic athletics are subject to and required to comply with all policies and regulations in the Poudre School District Code of Conduct. Student athletes shall not be eligible to participate in athletic practices or competitions during any period of suspension or expulsion under the Code of Conduct. Student athletes are also subject to and required to comply with the Bylaws adopted by the Colorado High School Activities Association and with their coach's team rules, and are required to exercise good sportsmanship at all practices and competitions. A student athlete who fails to comply with these requirements as determined by a coach, School District administrator or competition official shall be subject by a suspension from practices and/or competitions, and for more serious violations shall be subject to removal from the team.

Rules Concerning Controlled Substances, Alcohol and Tobacco

A student-athlete's unlawful or otherwise improper use or possession of controlled substances, alcohol and/or tobacco reflects poorly on the student's school and team and sets a bad example for other students, regardless of when the use or possession occurs. In addition, a student-athlete's use of controlled substances, alcohol and/or tobacco may adversely affect the student athlete's health, fitness and athletic performance and may result in injury or harm, regardless of when the use occurs. Accordingly, students participating in any Poudre School District interscholastic athletic program shall not, regardless of the quantity involved: (1) use or possess any beverage containing alcohol; (2) use or possess tobacco or tobacco products; or (3) use or possess any controlled substance, including steroids, in any manner that is contrary to law or Poudre School District policies and regulations.

The foregoing rules shall be in effect for Poudre School District interscholastic athletes on a year-round basis, including weekends, summers, vacations and holidays, whether the student-athlete is on or off School District property and whether or not the student-athlete is at the time participating in any school-sponsored activity or event. The consequences for violation of the rules concerning controlled substances, alcohol and tobacco are applicable to all Poudre School District students in interscholastic athletics throughout the time they are enrolled in grades 6 through 8 and 9 through 12. Student-athletes begin their high school athletic careers with a clean slate. Middle school violations/suspensions do not carry over from grades 6-8 to grades 9-12.

Level 1: Student Conduct Involving Drugs and Alcohol

- **possession of drug paraphernalia**

- **use and/or possession of tobacco, nicotine, or other non-tobacco/non-THC vape liquid**
 - Consequence for **First Violation** is a Category 1 suspension of interscholastic competitions for which the student-athlete is otherwise eligible and in which the student-athlete is otherwise able to participate, beginning in the season when the first violation occurs (including regular season and postseason/playoff competitions) and continuing into any subsequent season of the same or a different sport if the full suspension cannot be served during the season when the first violation occurs. During all periods of the suspension, a student-athlete must participate in practices and otherwise remain in good standing with each team from which they are suspended in order to be eligible to return after the suspension.
 - Athletic suspensions are effective immediately
 - A scrimmage is not considered an athletic contest. Therefore a student-athlete serving a suspension may participate in a scrimmage unless serving an out-of-school suspension. Scrimmages may not be used as a contest date in order to fulfill the requirements of a suspension.
 - Student-athletes must be present at all team contests while serving a suspension.
 - Student-athletes may not participate in any practice/contest (on/off campus) while serving out-of-school suspension.
 - Consequence for **Second Violation** is a Category 2 suspension **AND** successful completion of online training assigned by school official. All other requirements of suspension remain consistent with first suspension. (See above)
 - Consequence for **Third Violation** is removal from ALL interscholastic athletics in Poudre School District.

Level 2: Student Conduct Involving Drugs and Alcohol

- **possession of alcohol, less than one gram of marijuana in its traditional/natural form, unauthorized drugs sold over the counter, or drug paraphernalia;**
- **use and/or being under the influence of alcohol, marijuana, or unauthorized drugs sold over the counter:**
 - Consequence for **First Violation** is a Category 2 suspension of interscholastic competitions for which the student-athlete is otherwise eligible and in which the student-athlete is otherwise able to participate, beginning in the season when the first violation occurs (including regular season and postseason/playoff competitions) and continuing into any subsequent season of the same or a different sport if the full suspension cannot be served during the season when the first violation occurs. During all periods of the suspension, a student-athlete must participate in practices and otherwise remain in good standing with each team from which they are suspended in order to be eligible to return after the suspension.
 - Athletic suspensions are effective immediately
 - A scrimmage is not considered an athletic contest. Therefore a student-athlete serving a suspension may participate in scrimmages unless serving an out-of-school suspension. Scrimmages may not be used as a contest date in order to fulfill the requirements of a suspension.
 - Student-athletes must be present at all team contests while serving a suspension.
 - Student-athletes may not participate in any practice/contest (on/off campus) while serving out-of-school suspension

- Student-athlete may reduce length of athletic suspension to a Category 1 suspension if student agrees to the following:
 - Completion of online training assigned by school official
 - Meeting with drug and alcohol counselor/school counselor/dean
 - Meeting with athletic director scheduled and/or completed
 The requirements listed above must be completed prior to returning to athletic competition.
- Consequence for **Second Violation** is a Category 3 suspension. All other requirements of suspension remain consistent with first suspension. (See above)
- Consequence for **Third Violation** is removal from ALL interscholastic athletics in Poudre School District.

Level 3: Student Conduct Involving Drugs and Alcohol

- **possession of unauthorized drugs not sold over the counter or one or more grams of marijuana in its traditional/natural form, any amount of marijuana in its non-traditional/non-natural form (i.e., concentrates, edible, wax, etc.);**
 - **use and/or being under the influence of unauthorized drugs not sold over the counter; and**
 - **purchasing, distributing, exchanging, giving, or selling over-the-counter drugs or alcohol**
- Consequence for **First Violation** is a Category 2 suspension of interscholastic competitions for which the student-athlete is otherwise eligible and in which the student-athlete is otherwise able to participate, beginning in the season when the first violation occurs (including regular season and postseason/playoff competitions) and continuing into any subsequent season of the same or a different sport if the full suspension cannot be served during the season when the first violation occurs. During all periods of the suspension, a student-athlete must participate in practices and otherwise remain in good standing with each team from which they are suspended in order to be eligible to return after the suspension.
 - Athletic suspensions are effective immediately
 - A scrimmage is not considered an athletic contest. Therefore a student-athletes serving a suspension may participate in scrimmages unless serving an out-of-school suspension. Scrimmages may not be used as a contest date in order to fulfill the requirements of a suspension.
 - Student-athletes must be present at all team contests while serving a suspension.
 - Student-athletes may not participate in any practice/contest (on/off campus) while serving out-of-school suspension
 - Opportunity to reduce athletic suspension is not afforded to suspensions in this category.
 - Consequence for **Second Violation** is a Category 3 suspension. All other requirements of suspension remain consistent with first suspension. (See above)
 - Consequence for **Third Violation** is removal from ALL interscholastic athletics in Poudre School District.

Athletic Suspension Table

Number of Contests	Category 1	Category 2	Category 3
1	1	1	1
2	1	1	1
3	1	1	1
4	1	1	2
5	1	1	2
6	1	2	3
7	1	2	3
8	1	2	4
9	1	3	4
10	1	3	5
11	2	3	5
12	2	4	6
13	2	4	6
14	2	4	7
15	2	5	7
16	2	5	8
17	3	5	8
18	3	6	9
19	3	6	9
20	3	6	10
21	3	7	10
22	3	7	11
23	4	7	11
24	4	7	12

- Cheer and Dance participate during the Fall and Winter (2) seasons according to the CHSAA calendar. Athletic suspensions will be calculated using scheduled events during the season the infraction occurs.

- Sideline and Competition cheer are two separate disciplines. A student-athlete competing in both disciplines will serve proportional suspensions in each discipline.
- National competitions are subject to athletic suspensions if the student-athlete is representing the school/district.

EXPECTATIONS FOR COMMUNICATION

If participants are to experience the full potential of benefits possible through participation in education-based athletics, everyone involved must be on the same page. It is important that everyone involved in these programs takes the time to read this handbook, and further makes the commitment to embrace the outlined expectations, philosophy, values, expected outcomes, and other areas of general operation of the programs.

For parents, one of the hardest things is to let go of your child to allow them to have the 'experience'. However, it is best. There will be disappointments, and sometimes true heartache. Try to resist intervening at each of these moments. We have all been there, and believe it or not, your child needs to self-advocate and learn to communicate with their coach(es) on their own. One of the most important end products that a participant can graduate with is perseverance. When your child faces adversity later in life, it is important that he/she has developed the skills and wherewithal to navigate the circumstances.

In your opinion, when the issue has not been addressed or you believe you must intervene, we ask you to honor the communication process. Please observe the following parameters when you express your desire to meet with a coach or the coaching staff:

1. **Wait 24 hours before proceeding.** Many times, this 'cooling off' period gives you time to reflect and often takes the emotion out of the response. This is good in many ways. Maybe the issue is not as pressing at your thought when you were 'in the moment'. Perhaps your son or daughter solved the issue on their own. Finally, if you do proceed to meet with the coach or coaching staff it is much more likely to be a productive meeting. In the end, we all want what is best for your child.
2. **NEVER confront a coach immediately following a competition or practice.** This is embarrassing for your child, and almost never is a positive experience for anyone involved.
3. **Review the section in this handbook regarding our mission, the role of education-based athletics, our values and what topics are appropriate to discuss.** It is vital that we are aiming for the same target.
4. **Call or email your child's coach during office hours to request a time to meet.**
5. **In almost every scenario it is best to bring your child with you to the meeting.** One of the most frustrating starts to a meeting comes when a parent opens the meeting by stating, 'please do not tell my child that I am meeting with you, as they have told me that they do not want me to be involved.' Again, **it is their experience.** Maybe all that is needed is the parent(s) being there to support their child in communicating what the issue is and assist everyone in working towards a solution.
6. **Never rely totally on what you have heard or have been told.** There may be more to the story, or your child may have taken what was said the wrong way.
7. **Stick to subjects that are appropriate to discuss.** These subjects include: A). Areas to improve to increase playing time, move to a higher level, etc. B). Discussion of actual or perceived mistreatment. C). Clarification of role.
8. **Avoid subjects that are not appropriate to discuss.** These subjects include: A). Playing time/squad selection – these are determined at the coach's discretion. B). Other students – if another student or students are discussed, it is only appropriate that their parents are involved. C. Hearsay or rumors.

9. **Follow the communication process beginning with the lowest level.** Most issues are solved by simply having your child meet with the coach. The only exception to following the prescribed communication process is to report unlawful activity or physical abuse. In these circumstances, the parent(s) should immediately contact an administrator. Below are some scenarios that will help guide you through this process.
10. **If an issue cannot be resolved informally, put all concerns or allegations in writing and include as much detail as possible prior to contacting the appropriate party.**

RESOLVING CONFLICTS OR ISSUES

Initial Communication

- A student-athlete, parent, guardian, coach, or a member of the public with a concern or complaint should first try to resolve the matter directly and informally with the individual(s) concerned. This may be done either verbally or in writing to the individual(s) involved.

Review

- If the matter cannot be resolved informally at the initial level, the complainant should submit a written statement describing his/her concerns in a clear, specific, and detailed manner to the building athletic director. The building athletic director shall review the steps taken to resolve the complaint informally up to that point, investigate the facts (including obtaining relevant information through interviews of persons having knowledge of the matter), and either facilitate a mutually acceptable resolution of the problem (including obtaining relevant information through interviews of persons having knowledge of the matter), and either facilitate a mutually acceptable resolution of the problem when possible (including, where appropriate, arranging a face-to-face meeting of the parties) or otherwise render a decision on the matter. Any resolution or decision shall be arrived at as soon as the circumstances reasonably permit and shall be communicated in writing to all parties to the dispute (with a copy submitted to the building principal).
- If the building athletic director has not resolved or decided the matter to the satisfaction of one or more parties to the dispute, each dissatisfied party shall submit a written statement to the building principal stating the basis of their dissatisfaction. The building principal shall review all of the building athletic director's documentation, conduct any additional investigation he or she deems necessary, and either facilitate a mutually acceptable resolution of the problem or otherwise render a decision on the matter. Any resolution or decision shall be arrived at as soon as the circumstances reasonably permit and shall be communicated in writing to all parties to the dispute.

Appeal

- If the complainant feels the issue has still not been resolved, he/she may submit a written appeal in a timely manner to the District Athletic Director.
- If the complainant feels the issue has still not been resolved, he/she may submit a written appeal in a timely manner to the Assistant Superintendent.

COMMUNICATION SCENARIOS

Scenario #1 – Sarah, a high school sophomore, plays soccer for her high school team, she has played club soccer since she was 6 years old, and she just was informed that she did not make the varsity team. She is very upset and has set a goal of making the varsity team. She wants to quit.

BEST PRACTICE FOR HER PARENT(S) – Being there to support Sarah does not mean going to the high school office to demand an immediate meeting with the Athletic Director and/or Principal. What would this solve? What would be best is for Sarah's parent(s) support her, encourage her to keep working and tell her to meet with her coach(es) to come up with a list of items that she can improve in order to achieve her goal of making the varsity squad. PSD programs are extremely competitive. With every season, not everyone can make varsity. Many never make this level.

What if Sarah's parent(s) called the District Athletic Director in this instance? The District Athletic Director would immediately ask the parent(s) if they have followed the communication process. The District Athletic Director would ask if the parent(s) had met with the coach involved. If not, the parent(s) would be referred to the appropriate level. This is not a subject to bring to the District Athletic Director level unless extenuating circumstances were involved **and** the parent(s) had proceeded through the communication process (they had previously met with the coach(es), the building athletic director, and the building principal without reaching a resolution).

Scenario #2 – Kevin, a 7th grade student, participates on the C-Team basketball team at his middle school. Kevin's parents called the coach after he was pulled from a game, and replaced by a starter when his team fell behind by 2 points late in a game. Kevin's parents are concerned about the philosophy being employed in the program. They openly wonder if the coaches are more concerned about winning over the development of all students.

BEST PRACTICE FOR HIS PARENT(S) – Given the description of the events in this scenario, Kevin's parents have some legitimate questions/concerns. They should schedule a meeting with Kevin's coach(es) to ask them about their philosophy for middle school athletics. PSD allows administrative teams to shape and operate the many programs offered within their buildings. However, this should be carried out in concert with the overall mission and values of PSD middle school athletics as described in this handbook. PSD spends a considerable amount of professional development in communicating these areas with both building athletic directors and coaches.

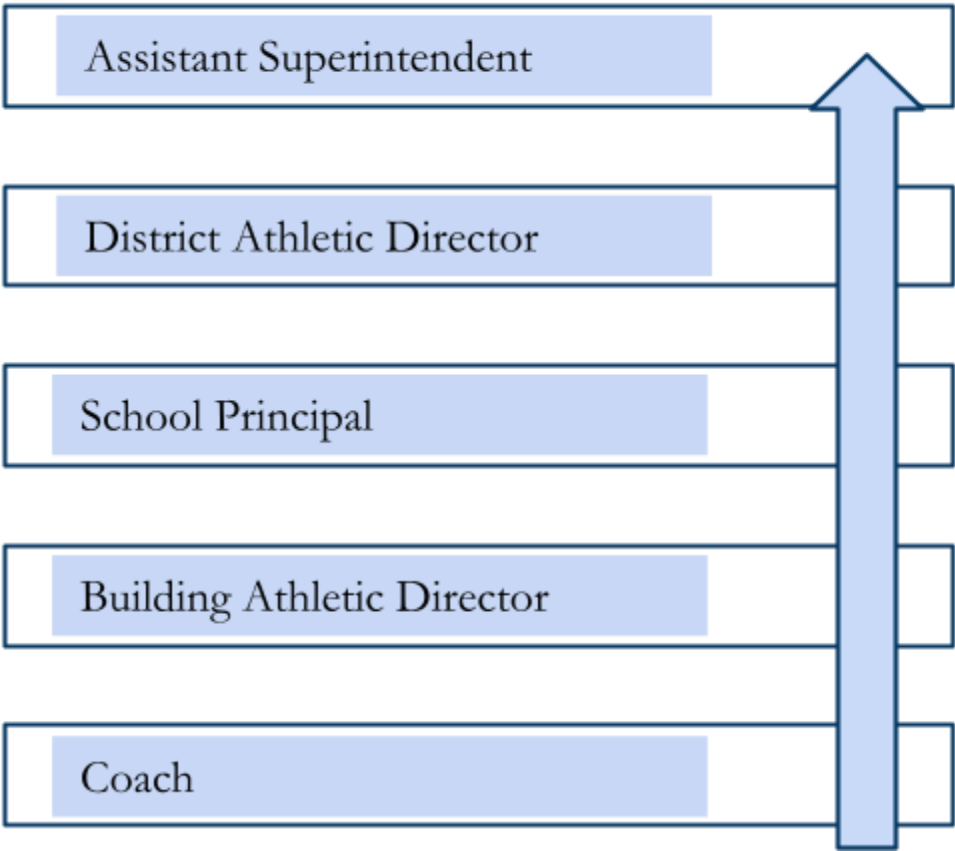
This scenario portrays an example in which the issue might work through the communication process. The parents request and are granted a meeting with the coach. During the meeting, Kevin's parents are told the starters were put back in the game because the coach believed winning will help build the confidence of the team, and believed it was justified. Kevin's parents disagree.

This would be a perfect example of a situation in which the building Athletic Director might get involved. The parents have followed the communication process, but believe the issue is still unresolved. The parents would have a legitimate request to clarify what the true mission of middle school athletics is with building Administrators.

Scenario #3 – Gina is a junior at a PSD high school. She is a member of the varsity basketball team. Gina is visibly shaken when she comes home from her basketball game. Her team had just won a thrilling overtime game versus their rival earlier that evening. Her parents are stunned as they cannot imagine why she might be upset. She is reluctant to talk to them about it. However, she finally relents and shows them a text that she received from one of her coaches that is inappropriate. Gina is beside herself and tells her parents that she will never play again.

BEST PRACTICE FOR HER PARENT(S) – This is a very serious situation, and an example of an issue that does not need to adhere to the communication channels. Gina’s parents should immediately contact a PSD administrator. This could include the District Athletic Director or Assistant Superintendent and should be done ASAP.

PSD FORMAL COMMUNICATION PROCESS



SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

Social media includes any digital platform used to create or share content publicly or privately, such as Instagram, TikTok, Snapchat, X, Facebook, YouTube, and any similar or future platforms.

- Student-athletes represent their team, school, and community and are responsible for their behavior on social media.
- Inappropriate or harmful use of social media that has a nexus to the school, District, or team is prohibited, including but not limited to:
- Posting or sharing disrespectful or derogatory content about teammates, students, coaches, staff, or other schools
- Threats, harassment, bullying, or content that endangers others
- Content depicting or promoting illegal activity, including underage drinking, drug use, violence, or sexual misconduct

Violations may result in disciplinary action under the Poudre School District Code of Conduct, including suspension or loss of athletic participation, and may involve law enforcement when applicable.

TRANSGENDER PARTICIPATION

PSD follows all CHSAA, and state regulations regarding transgender participation.

[CHSAA Policy](#)
[PSD Support](#)