**DERRY ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT PHILOSOPHY**

Interscholastic athletics are to be an integral part of the total secondary school educations program that has as its purpose to provide educational experiences not provided in the school's curriculum. The interscholastic athletic program shall be primarily for the benefit of the students who participate either directly or indirectly. Participation in the athletic program is a privilege granted to those interested students who meet the minimum standards of eligibility. Interscholastic activities shall be kept in proper perspective and must supplement the academic program. A sound athletic program provides the students with a safe environment in which they have fun, build character, learn to practice sportsmanship and develop skills and traits that help them become responsible citizens and live happy, healthy lives. Such a program generates enthusiasm, loyalty, and school spirit. It helps to promote good health, sound body, and an alert mind. The success of any season should be judged on the number of participants and spectators and the acquisition of new skills by those participating, the amount of enthusiasm generated, and how well good citizenship, team play and sportsmanship were taught.

**STATEMENT OF PURPOSE**

The purpose of the interscholastic program is to:

1. Provide opportunities for physical, mental, and emotional development.

2. Develop special skills in activities of the student's choice.

3. Develop such favorable personality traits as loyalty, cooperation, fair play, enthusiasm, etc.

4. Imbed in the participants self-motivation, self-discipline, self-setting goals.

5. Teach the ideals of good sportsmanship.

6. Help develop worthy use of leisure time, promote good citizenship, and create additional interests.

7. Provide an arena where students may cope with problems and handle situations similar to those encountered under conditions prevailing in the modern day world.

**CODE OF ETHICS**

1. Always play the game fairly.

2. Show courtesy for visiting teams and officials.

3. Establish good relationships with visiting teams and players.

4. Achieve a thorough knowledge of the rules of the game.

5. Respect the judgment of the game officials.

6. Recognize the true purposes of the program.

7. Remember that an athletic contest is only a game - not a matter of life or death for player, coach, or fan.

**Board Meetings**

Board meeting are held on the last and first Thursday of each month. At times, board meetings will be conducted on other days or cancelled for holidays, school vacation, or other circumstances. It is the coach’s responsibility to know the board meeting schedule and to provide the athletic director with any information needing board approval before the end of the second week of the month. Board schedules can be found on the district website.

**Employment Requirements**

Coaching contracts last a period of one year. Head coaches will be informed at the end of each season regarding their status. Coaches are approved on an annual basis in August.

 **Clearances and Certifications Requirements:**

The following clearances are required to coach. Coaches failing to submit clearances will not be permitted on school grounds until copies are submitted to the athletic office. The following are required:

1. Act 168 Sexual Misconduct/Abuse Disclosure Release
	1. *Must be submitted prior to board approval.*
2. Act 151 Child Abuse Clearances
	1. *Must be renewed every three years.*
3. Act 34 Criminal Background Check
	1. *Must be renewed every three years.*
4. Act 114 Federal Bureau of Investigation Background Check
	1. *Must be renewed every three years.*
5. Concussion Wise Certification
	1. *Must be completed annually prior to season.*
6. Sudden Cardiac Arrest Certification
	1. *Must be completed annually prior to season.*
7. NFHS Coaching Principles Course Certification Effective July 1, 2016
8. NFHS First Aid Certification Effective July 1, 2016

**Volunteer Coaches**

Volunteer coaches are required to submit all clearances listed above. Volunteers may are eligible for a full reimbursement upon completion of 20 hours of service within a 36 month period. Volunteers will only be reimbursed for the Act 114, Act 34, and Act 151 clearances. You must complete the log form under Appendix M in your athletic handbook.

**Pre-Season Meeting with Parents and Students**

***Coaches are required to have a meeting with students and parents prior to the start of your season***. You should plan to distribute the following information:

* 1. Practice and game schedule
	2. Expectations of students and parents related to playing time, attendance, academics, and team commitment.
	3. Lettermen Criteria.
	4. Parent/Student Handbook
	5. Cutting policy if applicable.
	6. Physical Information
	7. Any other information distributed by the athletic department

**PIAA Mandatory Rules Interpretation Meeting**

Head coaches or a designee must attend a mandatory rules interpretation meeting if applicable to their sport. Any coach who misses a mandatory PIAA rules meeting will assume responsibility for any fines. You can find more information regarding these meetings at [www.piaa.org](http://www.piaa.org). Failure to attend a meeting will result in the district being fine by the PIAA. These fines will be passed on to the head coach for failing to attend.

**Athletic Physicals**

Every student participating in a Derry Area School District sport must have completed physical. Physicals must be completed in their entirety. It is the head coach’s responsibility to communicate with the athletic trainer. The head coach is not permitted to allow any student to participate without an athletic physical. Student’s participating without a physical are a liability risk to the district and more importantly a greater risk to themselves. Random checks will be done by the athletic director or trainer at the beginning of the season to assure coaches are in compliance.

**Practice**

All practice schedules must be given to the athletic director and trainer in advance of the season. All practices are to be supervised by board approved coaches at all times. Practices lengths must meet the guidelines set forth by the PIAA, you are not permitted to practice/compete more than six consecutive days.

Students must be supervised in the locker room and on the playing surface at all times. In the event of an evening practice, students must go home and return. They are not permitted to stay at the school until practice. They are permitted to stay after school if they have tutoring or another obligation to be here.

Special Holidays and Sundays: Sunday practices must be approved by Athletic Director. All holidays should be treated the same as a Sunday. Practices during the more extended vacations may be scheduled at the discretion of the coach with the approval of the administration.

**Off-Season Open Gym / Optional Workouts**

Off-season programs must be voluntary. Making an off-season practice/workout mandatory constitutes a practice. Practices outside of the PIAA defined season are illegal.

Student-athletes cannot be punished for not attending off-season workouts. Once the season begins, all students are to have equal opportunity on the team.

Since off-season workouts are voluntary, students must understand that this will have a significant effect on their mental and physical skill level during the season. Students participating in off-season workouts will have an increased advantage over students not attending.

**Student/Athlete Being Transported by Ambulance**In the event a student is transported in an ambulance during practice, a coach or designee must accompany that player to the medical facility. Once the student is in a safe environment, contact the athletic director.

**Attendance and Absenteeism**Students absent from school beyond 11:00 AM will not be permitted to participate in any interscholastic activities without a doctor’s written permission. Prior approval must be obtained for any other situation from the Principal, athletic director, and coach.

If a student is in attendance but leaves in the afternoon, the student is not permitted to participate in athletics without a doctor’s written permission. Written permission must be given to the head coach or athletic trainer.

**Weekly Academic Eligibility**

Students’ grades must be recorded by teachers by 8:30 am on each Friday morning. Grades will be reviewed by the Athletic Department at 8:45 am each Friday and are considered final at that point. Consequently, there will be no grace period allowing grades to be made up during the day unless approved by the principal and athletic director. Please stress this to your athletes – as of 8:45 am Friday mornings, all grades are final – it is the athletes’ responsibility to ensure all “make-up” work has been completed prior to that time.

Coaches, parents, and principals will be notified if a student athlete is considered ineligible. Students who have been reported as having two or more failures will be considered ineligible and will be notified that they will be prohibited from participating in practices or games from Saturday through the following Sunday.

**PIAA Eligibility Requirements**

A student who participates in interscholastic athletics at a school which is a member of the Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association, Inc. ("PIAA") must comply with PIAA eligibility rules. If you fail to comply with these rules, you will lose your eligibility to participate in interscholastic athletics. If you participate while ineligible, you, your school, and/or your Team will be penalized. It is, therefore, important for you to be aware of applicable eligibility provisions.

The information set forth below highlights and summarizes the major requirements you must meet to be eligible. It does not identify every rule or every detail. Unless otherwise indicated, each requirement applies to students in grades 7 through 12.

The Principal of your school is responsible for certifying as to your athletic eligibility. If you have any questions concerning your athletic eligibility, either now or in the future, you should discuss the matter with your school Principal or Athletic Director. If they are uncertain about a matter, they can request guidance and even a formal ruling from PIAA as to your athletic eligibility. A complete copy of the PIAA eligibility rules may be viewed on the PIAA Website at www.piaa.org/resources/handbook, or may be obtained from your Principal or Athletic Director.

**Age**

To be eligible to participate in grades 10 through 12, you must not have reached your 19th birthday by June 30 immediately preceding the school year. Where you will participate only in grades 7 and 8, you may not have reached your 15th birthday by June 30 immediately preceding the school year; where you will participate only in grades 7 through 9, you may not have reached your 16th birthday by June 30 immediately preceding the school year.

**Amateur Status and Awards**

To be eligible to participate in a sport, you must be an amateur in that sport. Amateur status, and eligibility, is lost if you, or your parent(s) or guardian(s), receive money or property for or related to your athletic ability, participation, performance, services, or training in a sport.

You may receive be recognized and receive awards for your participation only from your school or school-affiliated booster club, the sponsor of an athletic event, a non-profit service organization approved by your school Principal, or the news media. Permissible awards include items of apparel, a blanket, watch, ring, scroll, carry-on or warm-up bag, photograph, medal, plaque, or similar award, which must bear appropriate institutional insignia or comparable identification. The fair market value of all of the items provided to you may not exceed $200. If they do, you must return the items in excess of $200.

**Attendance**

You must be enrolled in and in full-time attendance at a PIAA member school or a Charter or Cyber-Charter School, or be home-schooled.

Generally, you are eligible only at the school at which you are enrolled or, if a home-schooled student, at a public school in the public school district in which you reside. If you are a student enrolled in either a Charter School or Cyber Charter School, you should consult with your Principal to determine the school at which you are eligible.

If you are absent from school during a semester for a total of 20 or more school days, you will lose your eligibility until you attend school for a total of 45 school days following your 20th day of absence.

**Team Photos**

Coaches are required to schedule a time in which the school district approved photographer can take the necessary photos for the school’s yearbook. The approved photographer will be given a copy of each coach’s phone number and they will contact you to set up a time to take the necessary pictures. Should you wish for your program to have individual photos or other additional photos taken, the photographer will also have those services available as well. Since the photographer is board approved, no other photographer should be used by you or your booster organization without prior approval.

**Media and Reporting Scores**

Listed below are the phone numbers, fax numbers, and email addresses for most area media outlets:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **MEDIA** | **PHONE #** | **FAX #** | **EMAIL** |
| Tribune Review | 800-690-8040 | 724-830-6285 | ptrsports@tribweb.com |
| Post Gazette | 877-672-6224 | 412-263-1926 | sports@post-gazette.com |
| Indiana Gazette | 800-262-3077 | 724-349-4550 | sports@indianagazette.net |
| \*\*\*Latrobe Bulletin | 724-537-3351 | 724-537-0489 | Lb.sports@verizon.net |
| Blairsville Dispatch | 724-459-6100 | 724-459-7366 | dscifo@tribweb.com |

\*\*\*Middle School only reports to Latrobe Bulletin.

**Camps, Clinics, or Special Trips**

In the event that your program competes in an event during the off-season that event must be board approved and recognized a school function. Such events could include but are not limited to: team camps, leagues, 7 on 7’s, scrimmages, etc. Essentially if you partake in any function other than traditional conditioning, this must be approved.

Also, any regular season event requiring an overnight stay or out of state travel must be board approved.

The reason for such approval originates with the district’s liability to protect its students. If an off-season function is not recognized as a school function board approved) coaches and students are not protected under the district’s liability insurance, therefore exposing the district and its employees to legal ramifications should an accident occur.

It is the responsibility of the head coach to provide this information to the athletic director in a timely manner.

**Meal Money**

Funding for the meals of student-athletes and coaches will only be given if the trip meets two of the following criteria:

1. The athletic competition requires students and coaches to travel over 70 miles from campus to fulfill a WPIAL or PIAA section schedule or post season event.
2. Athletic competition requires an overnight stay.
3. The students will not be provided with meals or snacks from a booster organization while traveling.

**Meal Money Procedures:**

1. Meal money must be requested one week prior to the event. Requests cannot be granted less than five days before an event.
2. The coach must notify the athletic director with the number of students and coaches that will be attending the competition.
3. Only coaches and students actually participating in competition will be provided meal money.
4. Meal Money Distribution: Breakfast: $8.00 – Lunch: $9.00 – Dinner: $15.00
5. Coaches must collect receipts for everything meal money is used for. Coaches are responsible for funds spent without a receipt.
6. In the event that receipts are not issued (i.e: concession stands) coaches must record on Appendix U – Non-Receipt Reconciliation Form.
7. Tipping: The district will only reimburse you for a %15 tip. The %15 must be calculated for the amount of meal money spent, not the total bill. Coaches and students are responsible for additional funds spent beyond the allotment.
8. Coaches should do their best to be frugal with meal money while providing their students with healthy and nutritious meals.

**Meal Money Reconciliation:**

1. Immediately following the competition, you must submit a blue form from the business office with all receipts attached. Any remaining funds must also be attached to the form.
2. Submit this form to the athletic director in a timely manner for approval.

**Inventory of Equipment**

Head coaches are responsible for the distribution and collection of all equipment at the conclusion of the season. Once coaches inventory and properly store the equipment, they must provide the athletic director with a list of all equipment and a list of students that have not turned equipment in.

Equipment is the responsibility of the student once it has been distributed. Student athletes who do not turn in their uniform and/or equipment in a timely manner will be placed on the school debt list (will not receive their report card or diploma). Students who lost or damaged their uniform/equipment will be required to pay the original cost of the uniform/equipment before being removed from the debt list. However, if the lost uniform/equipment is found it must be returned to the school. If the uniform or equipment is not damaged the student will be reimbursed the amount they paid for the uniform or equipment.

**Fitness Center**

1. Students must be supervised at all times while in the fitness center.
2. Team use of the fitness center must be scheduled through the electronic facility request system.
3. Equipment must be returned to its storage area before exiting the facility.
4. Music should be kept at a reasonable volume and lyrics must be appropriate for a school setting.
5. You must be one of the following to utilize the fitness center:
	* 1. Current Student – Under supervision of teacher or coach only.
		2. Current Employee or Board Member
		3. Coach ( Head, Assistant, Volunteer)
			1. If a person does not meet the above criteria, he/she is not permitted in the fitness center.

**Team Commitment**

Students whose academic programs exceed the normal school day may experience a conflict with sports/extracurricular activities. These academic services may include work-study programs, after-school tutoring programs or any other **academic** endeavor.

If these academic responsibilities interfere with the opportunity to participate in extracurricular activities because of the inability to fully participate in sports practices or other extracurricular pre-requirements, then accommodations should be made to ensure equal opportunity for student access.

Students may be provided with additional practices, schedule flexibility or other means deemed appropriate to allow the opportunity to compete in a sports program or extracurricular activity when their academic program impedes normal participation.

**Team Commitment Rules and Guidelines**

1. In fairness to athletes who have been with a team since the first day of practice, it is recommended that no athlete be permitted to join the team after the fifth practice day. Special considerations may be made by the Athletic Director and head coach after considering the athlete’s reason for coming out late.
2. Students who enter the school district after the sixth practice day will be permitted to join the various athletic teams with the approval of the Athletic Director and the respective head coach.
3. No athlete will be permitted to change from one sport to another sport after six practice days or the first scrimmage. Respective coaches should have no influence on the athletes decision whether to change from one team to another. Whether the athlete quits or is asked to leave the team will have no bearing on the issue. For example: An athlete who quits the track team may go out for baseball with the first 5 practice days of each sport, but after the sixth practice day for either sport he/she may not join another team without permission from the Athletic Director, who will seek input from both head coaches.
4. In the event that an athlete wishes to play two sports during the same season, a meeting will be set to include the athlete, both head coaches, and the Athletic Director. At that meeting, guidelines will be set for the upcoming seasons to include a schedule for the athlete determining their practice schedule and game schedule, what events will take priority in the event of a conflict, etc.
5. It is the responsibility of the student to communicate any schedule conflicts with all coaches, teachers, and advisors involved. If a student fails to communicate a schedule conflict in a timely manner to the coach, special accommodations will not be made which may result in loss of playing time at the coach’s discretion. Students who miss practice could pose a risk to themselves or other students if strategies and concepts are not understood.

**Two Sport, Same Season Athletic Participation - ( Effective July 1, 2016)**

The following guidelines must be followed in order to certify an athlete to participate in two sports during the same season:

1. The athlete must determine and announce their major sport and the athlete cannot change his/her major sport after the date of the first competition. Coaches must keep track of this.
2. The head coaches of each sport must meet by the end of the first week of the season and prepare a participation schedule for both teams.
3. The 2 sport athlete cannot quit either of the 2 sports and must finish the season in good standing to be eligible for any and all awards. Permission to quit one will only be granted if the well-being or academic performance is affected by competing in two sports.
4. The coaches of each sport should have a meeting with the athlete and his/her parents before the first legal competition date to review the schedule, expectations and commitments.

**Student Athlete Practice Attendance**

Our student-athletes are expected to attend all practices. Student-athletes will only be excused from practice for the following reasons:

Acceptable Absences

 1. Personal Illness (must have a doctor’s excuse)

 2. Quarantine

 3. Death in immediate family.

 4. Court Appearance

 5. Impassable roads

 6. Academic Requirement (See Team Commitment)

Unacceptable Absences

1. Other commitment to a recreation team.
2. Vacation, unless considered an excused absence by the school.
3. Hunting, Fishing, or other recreational activity.
4. Oversleeping
5. Other miscellaneous reasons not included in acceptable absences.

Coaches will monitor absences from practice, the following will occur with each unexcused absence:

 First Unexcused Absence: Miss one game

 Second Unexcused Absence: One week athletic suspension from games.

 Third Unexcused Absence: Dismissal from team

**Profanity**

Profanity has no place in our educationally based interscholastic athletic programs. At no time should coaches use profanity and all coaches should ensure their team members do the same. The student code of conduct outlines the consequences for using profanity.

**Parent Pick Up**

Coaches should not leave practices and contests until all student-athletes have been picked up by their parents. This includes away contests as well. Safety for our students is paramount; we must do everything possible to ensure the safety of all involved team members.

**Tobacco Use**

The athletic setting is a tobacco free environment. At no time should coaches be using tobacco during a practice, contest, or around students. Coaches should remind their team members of the policy as well, including spit tobacco products. The Code of Conduct for student-athletes clearly outlines the consequences for tobacco usage.

**Lightning**

Lightning is a safety hazard for all those involved in interscholastic athletics. Coaches should remove all participants from playing and practice fields as soon as thunder is heard or lightning is seen. The athletic trainers carry lightning detectors but they cannot be at every practice and contest. The coach should take the lead role in ensuring safety for all those involved in his/her program.

**Home Schooled Student Athletes**

It is the responsibility of each coach to report the grade, sport and contact information for any home schooled athletes to the Athletic Director as soon as the coach receives contact from them. The Athletic Director must ensure academic eligibility on a weekly basis for these student-athletes. Pennsylvania law requires us to provide them with the same opportunities as our in-school student-athletes and we are very pleased to do that.

**Moving Freshman to Varsity Level**

For sports where freshman students are not already part of the varsity team. They may only be moved to the varsity level for two reasons:

1. The team cannot fulfill its competitive obligations without moving the freshman up.
2. The student’s athletic abilities are beyond a Jr. High level and not moving the student up would hinder the student ability.

The head coach must consult with the athletic director and parents of the student prior to changing the student’s status.

**Recreation/Club/All-Star Leagues**

We cannot prohibit student athletes from participating in athletic programs outside of the Derry Area School District. However, we strongly discourage coaches from persuading students to not join other sports in order to join non-district programs to benefit their sport. Our goal is to build well-rounded student athletes in order to give them a path to success.

Coaches found to use their employment position with Derry Area to recruit students away from our athletic program will be reprimanded in accordance with the athletic handbook.