



# **PULASKI COUNTY MIDDLE SCHOOLS'**

**Student Athlete**

**And Parent Handbook**

**2019-2020**

## **PHILOSOPHY OF STUDENT ATHLETICS**

Pulaski County Middle Schools recognize the importance of athletics as an integral component of a student's complete educational development. As such, we believe that all students should have an opportunity to participate in some form of interscholastic athletics and that such participation should encourage positive scholastic and social growth and achievement. All participants and teams will represent the schools and community in a positive manner and will reflect the dedication and hard work that will be required to compete and be successful. Success will not be measured by records that are achieved by teams or individuals, but rather by the knowledge that each participant gave his/her best effort and prepared for each contest to the best of his/her ability. Pulaski County Middle Schools realize that an effective interscholastic athletic program is the product of responsible cooperation between its four major components: the student athlete, the coaching staff, the parents, and the site/district administration.

## **ATHLETIC GUIDELINES**

### ***SPORTSMANSHIP***

Participation in the athletic program requires adherence to the highest standards of good sportsmanship. Aspects of good sportsmanship include ensuring fairness in competition and exhibiting respect for the people and institutions associated with athletic contests. In order to promote fairness in competition, the following 16 principles of "Pursuing Victory with Honor" should be followed. Athletes of this school will be required to comply with the rules of each sport and to ensure that fairness in competition is not limited by their actions in any way.

1. The essential elements of character building and ethics at Pulaski County Middle Schools' sports are embodied in the concept of sportsmanship and six core principles: trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring, and good citizenship. The highest potential of sports is achieved when competition reflects these "six pillars of character."
2. It's the duty of School Board, superintendent, school administrators, parents and school sports leadership – including coaches, athletic directors, program directors and game officials – to promote sportsmanship and foster good character by teaching, enforcing, advocating and modeling these "six pillars of character."
3. To promote sportsmanship and foster the development of good character, school sports programs must be conducted in a manner that enhances the academic, emotional, social, physical and ethical development of student athletes and teaches them positive life skills that will help them become personally successful and socially responsible.
4. Participation in school sports programs is a privilege, not a right. To earn that privilege, student athletes must abide by the rules and they must conduct themselves, on and off the field, as positive role models who exemplify good character.

5. School Board, superintendent, school administrator, parents and school sports leadership shall establish standards for participation by adopting and enforcing codes of conduct for coaches, athletes, parents and spectators.
6. All participants in middle school sports must consistently demonstrate and demand scrupulous integrity and observe and enforce the spirit as well as the letter of the rules.
7. The importance of character, ethics and sportsmanship should be emphasized in all communications directed to student athletes and their parents.
8. School Board, superintendent, school administrator, parents and school sports leadership must ensure that the first priority of their student athletes is a serious commitment to getting an education and developing the academic skills and character to succeed.
9. School Board, superintendent, principals, school administrators and everyone involved at any level of governance in Pulaski County Middle Schools must maintain ultimate responsibility for the quality and integrity of school programs. Such individuals must assure that education and character development responsibilities are not compromised to achieve sports performance goals and that the academic, social, emotional, physical and ethical well-being of student athletes is always placed above desires and pressures to win.
10. All employees of member schools must be directly involved and committed to the academic success of student athletes and the character building goals of the school.
11. Everyone involved in competition including parents, spectators, associated student body leaders, and all auxiliary groups have a duty to honor the traditions of the sport and to treat other participants with respect. Coaches have a special responsibility to model respectful behavior and the duty to demand that their student athletes refrain from disrespectful conduct including verbal abuse of opponents and officials, profane or belligerent trash-talking, taunting and inappropriate celebrations.
12. School Board, superintendent, and school administrators of Pulaski County Middle Schools must ensure that coaches, whether paid or voluntary, are competent to coach. Training or experience may determine minimal competence. These competencies include basic knowledge of 1) The character building aspects of sports, including techniques and methods of teaching and reinforcing the core values comprising sportsmanship and good character. 2) The physical capabilities and limitations of the age group coached, as well as first aid. 3) Coaching principles and the rules and strategies of the sport.
13. Because of the powerful potential of sports as a vehicle for positive personal growth, a broad spectrum of school sports experiences should be made available to all of our diverse communities.
14. To safeguard the health of athletes and the integrity of the sport, school sports programs must actively prohibit the use of alcohol, tobacco, drugs and performance enhancing substances, as well as demand compliance with all laws and regulations, including those related to gambling and the use of drugs.
15. Schools that offer athletic programs must safeguard the integrity of their programs. Commercial relationships should be continually monitored to ensure

against inappropriate exploitation of the school's name or reputation. There should be no undue influence of commercial interest. In addition, sports programs must be prudent, avoiding undue dependence on particular companies or sponsors.

16. The profession of coaching is a profession of the mental and physical dimensions of their sport. Coaches, through words and example, must also strive to build the character of their athletes by teaching them to be trustworthy, respectful, responsible, fair, caring and good citizens.

Any person who is unable to comply with these standards must understand that his/her opportunity for participation may be limited or removed.

### **CODE OF CONDUCT FOR PARENTS/GUARDIANS**

The role of the parent in the education of a student is vital. The support shown in the home is often manifested in the ability of the student to accept the opportunities presented at school and in life.

There is a value system established in the home, and nurtured in the school that young people are developing. Their involvement in classroom and other activities contributes to that development. Trustworthiness, citizenship, caring, fairness and respect are lifetime values taught through athletics. These are the principles of good sportsmanship and character. With them, the spirit of competition thrives, fueled by honest rivalry, courteous relations, and graceful acceptance of the results.

**As a parent/guardian of a student athlete at our school, your goals should include:**



- Promote a healthy lifestyle that does not include the use of performance enhancing drugs or supplements;
- Realize that athletics are part of the educational experience, and the benefits of involvement go beyond the final score of a game;
- Encourage our students to perform their best, just as we would urge them on with their class work;
- Participate in positive cheers that encourage our student athletes; discourage any cheers that would redirect that focus – including those that taunt and intimidate opponents, their fans and officials;
- Learn, understand, and respect the rules of the game, the officials who administer them and their decisions;
- Respect the task that our coaches face as teachers; and support them as they strive to educate our youth;
- Respect our opponents as student athletes, and acknowledge them for striving to do their best; and
- Develop a sense of dignity and civility under all circumstances.

You can have a major influence on your student's attitude about academics and athletics. The leadership role you take will help influence your child, and our community, for years to come.

**Violation of the above code of conduct could result in one or more of the following consequences: a warning, removal from the venue, suspension, or further discipline to be determined by the administration.**

## **CODE OF CONDUCT FOR INTERSCHOLASTIC STUDENT ATHLETES**

*Interscholastic athletic competition should demonstrate high standards of ethics and sportsmanship and promote the development of good character and other important life skills. The highest potential of sports is achieved when participants are committed to pursuing victory with honor according to six core principles: trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring, and good citizenship. This Code applies to all student athletes involved in interscholastic sports in Virginia. I understand that, in order to participate in middle school athletics, I must act in accord with the following:*

### **TRUSTWORTHINESS**

1. *Trustworthiness* – be worthy of trust in all I do.
  - *Integrity* – live up to high ideals of ethics and sportsmanship and always pursue victory with honor; do what's right even when it's unpopular or personally costly.
  - *Honesty* – live and compete honorably; don't lie, cheat, steal or engage in any other dishonest or unsportsmanlike conduct.
  - *Reliability* – fulfill commitments; do what I say I will do; be on time to practices and games.
  - *Loyalty* – be loyal to my school and team; put the team above personal glory.

### **RESPECT**

2. *Respect* – treat all people with respect all the time and require the same of other student athletes.
3. *Class* – live and play with class; be a good sport; be gracious in victory and accept defeat with dignity; give fallen opponents help, compliment extraordinary performance, show sincere respect in pre- and post-game rituals.
4. *Disrespectful Conduct* – don't engage in disrespectful conduct of any sort including profanity, obscene gestures, offensive remarks of a sexual or *racial* nature, trash-talking, taunting, boastful celebrations, or other actions that demean individuals or the sport.

5. *Respect Officials* – treat contest officials with respect; don't complain about or argue with official calls or decisions during or after an athletic event.

## **RESPONSIBILITY**

6. *Importance of Education* – be a student first and commit to getting the best education I can. Be honest with myself about the likelihood of getting an athletic scholarship or playing on a professional level and remember that many universities will not recruit student athletes that do not have a serious commitment to their education, the ability to succeed academically or the character to represent their institution honorably.

7. *Role-Modeling* – Remember, participation in sports is a privilege, not a right and that you are expected to represent your school, coach and teammates with honor, on and off the field. Consistently exhibit good character and conduct yourself as a positive role model.

***Suspension or termination of the participation privilege is within the sole discretion of the school administration.***

8. *Self-Control* – exercise self-control; don't fight or show excessive displays of anger or frustration; have the strength to overcome the temptation to retaliate.

9. *Healthy Lifestyle* – safeguard your health; don't use any illegal or unhealthy substances including alcohol, tobacco and drugs or engage in any unhealthy techniques to gain, lose or maintain weight.

10. *Integrity of the Game* – protect the integrity of the game; don't gamble. Play the game according to the rules.

## **FAIRNESS**

11. *Be Fair* – live up to high standards of fair play; be open-minded; always be willing to listen and learn.

## **CARING**

12. *Concern for Others* – demonstrate concern for others; never intentionally injure any player or engage in reckless behavior that might cause injury to self or others.

13. *Teammates* – help promote the well being of teammates by positive counseling and encouragement or by reporting any unhealthy or dangerous conduct to coaches.

## **CITIZENSHIP**

14. *Play by the Rules* – maintain a thorough knowledge of and abide by all applicable game and competition rules.

15. *Spirit of Rules* – honor the spirit and the letter of rules; avoid temptations to gain a competitive advantage through improper gamesmanship techniques that violate the highest traditions of sportsmanship.

## **SCHOOL ATTENDANCE**

Attending all classes is a high priority for all student athletes: making it very important for all student-athletes to establish good attendance patterns and communicate with their teachers about assignments to be done.

1. Students must attend 50% (minimum) of the school day, excluding lunch, in order to participate in practice or competition that day.
2. Student athletes in violation of this rule, as it relates to competitions, will be suspended for a minimum of one contest or game. (Subject to review with head coach and athletic director.)

### **Board Policy JFC-R6: PULASKI COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS MIDDLE SCHOOL ACTIVITIES CODE OF CONDUCT**

Pulaski County Public Schools are dedicated to producing competitive, successful, well-behaved, and respected students, coaches, and activity sponsors.

Extra-curricular activity programs are a privilege and are completely voluntary for students. Students participating in extra-curricular programs are considered to be in positions of leadership. They represent the school and the community.

This Code of Conduct is designed to establish reasonable, high standards for participants in all extra-curricular activities, which are sponsored by Pulaski Middle School and Dublin Middle School. This code is designed to help students choose not to participate in activities, which are illegal or unhealthy. It is also designed to help support parents in their efforts to guide children towards healthy lifestyles. **The principal and head coach/ sponsor of each activity are responsible for the enforcement of the provisions of the Code of Conduct.**

All students participating in extra-curricular activities shall abide by the following rules at all times *including* those activities scheduled during school vacations, weekends, and non-school hours:

1. Strict compliance with Pulaski County School Board's policies related to student discipline (JFC, JFC-R).

2. No possession or use of tobacco (smoking, chewing, or snuff or other related products), alcohol, or illegal drugs at any time or place. Further, participants shall not engage in behavior that enables others to illegally use these substances.
3. Good citizenship and conduct at all times as a representative of the school, team, and community. This includes:
  - a. Displaying cordial behavior to opposing teams at all times.
  - b. Displaying good sportsmanship.
  - c. Respecting the integrity and judgment of officials, coaches, and fans.
  - d. Avoiding derisive action or words
  - e. Avoiding all profanity, vulgarity, rowdiness, obscene gestures, and taunting.
4. Conformity to additional rules established by coaches or sponsors.
5. Meet the Virginia High School League eligibility requirements for secondary athletics.
6. Regular and prompt attendance of all practices, games, and activity functions is mandatory. If it becomes necessary to miss such an activity, prior arrangements must be made with the advisor/coach. An athlete who has been injured and has seen a physician may not return to activity until a signed release form from a physician is presented to the head coach.
7. Regular and prompt attendance of all classes is mandatory.
8. Good standing at the end of the season or school year in order to be eligible for post-season honors or awards.
9. Financial responsibility for all athletic equipment and uniforms issued. If any financial obligation is incurred during a season, the obligation must be paid in full by the end of the season.
10. Administration respects the fact that parents may wish to periodically take their child after an athletic contest for various reasons. If this is the case; this request is to be provided in writing, by the parent, prior to the first contest of the season. This information must be made available to the head coach, the athletic director and the school building administrator. Furthermore, the student-athlete must be signed out by the parent/guardian before taking the child home from **each** "away" contest. The parent must be positively identified by the head coach or assistant coach prior to signing the child out to leave the venue.



### **ATHLETIC ELIGIBILITY (Non-Academic components)**

Every student who wants to participate in a sport must complete and have signed by a parent/guardian the following forms:

1. Physical Form
2. Emergency Information
3. Parent Consent, Field Trip Permission, Physical, Injury, Risk, Drug Pledge, Concussion Education Materials Review- Acknowledgment.

Athletes must have a yearly physical from a qualified physician who completes the medical examination report. In order to be accepted for athletics, the physical must be completed *after May* 1 of the school year in which the athlete plans to compete. **Completed papers should be given to the Head Coach or Athletic Director.**

### **ATHLETIC ELIGIBILITY (Academic components)**

Students' eligibility will be based on VHSL guidelines. Entering 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students' fall and winter eligibility will be based on their prior year's final grades. The requirement will be that student/athlete have earned no more than one failing grade on their report card. All students' spring eligibility will be based on their first semester grades for the current year. Again, the requirement will be no more than one failing grade on their report card. Entering 6<sup>th</sup> grade students will automatically be eligible for fall and winter athletics.

Furthermore, to be eligible for middle school athletics, the student must be a "student in good standing" with administration.

### **AGE ELIGIBILITY**

A student may not participate in Middle School Athletics if they turn 15 years of age before September 1<sup>st</sup>.

### **EQUIPMENT**

Pulaski County Middle School's provides a great deal of money to maintain and purchase proper equipment. Equipment is to be handled properly for financial reasons and also to teach students responsibility.

1. All equipment will be inventoried, numbered, and checked out by coaches.
2. Students are responsible for the security of their equipment and uniforms. In some cases, particularly with game uniforms, the replacement fee may be higher than the original purchase price because special processing and printing may be required to duplicate the uniform.
3. Students are expected to turn in the same piece(s) of equipment checked out to them.

4. Equipment should be returned in the same condition as it was received. Equipment and uniforms should be cleaned and washed before being returned. Students are expected to make arrangements to have torn or ripped clothing repaired prior to turning it in to the coach.
5. All equipment must be returned within one week of the last contest.
6. No awards (letters, trophies, etc.) or grades will be issued until all equipment is returned and/or paid for by the student-athlete.
7. Students must return or pay for all equipment before they can practice or participate in another sport. In unusual circumstances when a significant amount of money is owed, arrangements for repayment can be made with the coach and the administrator in charge of athletics.
8. Students who leave a team prior to the end of the season must turn in their equipment and uniform immediately.

### **GENERAL BEHAVIOR**

Profanity, unsportsmanlike conduct, throwing of equipment or any similar displays of immaturity, and disrespect to any person or institution will not be tolerated. Athletes accept responsibility for their actions both on and off the field. An athlete's language and behavior should not embarrass himself/herself, the team, the school, the district, or the community. Defiant behavior and back-talk toward any coach, school official, or game official will also not be tolerated. Any disagreements should be handled by private discussions.

Violation of any of the above behavior guidelines could result in one or more of the following consequences: benching, suspension, or dismissal.

### **VHSL Physicals**

Pulaski County Middle Schools operate on the policy that every student who participates in a sports activity must have a completed VHSL form (**only the VHSL form is accepted and it must be dated after May 1 of previous spring**) on file at the base middle school before participating in tryouts, practice, or competition.

Physicals will be scheduled at PCHS during the spring for all PCHS and Dublin-Pulaski middle school athletes.

The physicals are conducted by local physicians who provide their services free of charge on that day. **The physicals are offered for \$10.00 to our students on that day only!**

### **Out of School / In School Suspension**

Students will not be allowed to participate the day they serve ISS or OSS. If ISS or OSS assignment carries from Friday into a Monday, the student will not be allowed to participate on that Saturday. Students may participate the day following suspension. Students are allowed to watch practice on days of ISS.

## **ROAD TRIPS**

The district provides transportation to some away contests. Students are expected to go and return on the district-provided transportation.

1. Bus departure times are often determined by the coach, athletic director, and principal.
3. All athletes will dress in an appropriate manner for bus trips. Coaches will establish requirements for proper attire.
4. Students are expected to conduct themselves in a mature, responsible manner. Profanity and inappropriate behavior will not be tolerated.
5. Ipod's and other electronic devices may be allowed at the coach's discretion.
6. Students are expected to follow all rules set forth by the bus driver and to be courteous and respectful at all times.

## **UNREST PLANS**

If a physical conflict should occur on the playing field/court during a contest, the following action will take place. All athletes in the sideline/bench area will remain there, and all athletes on the field/court are to move immediately to the sideline/bench area. All parents/guardians, fans, etc., are to remain in the stands or in the sideline/bench area if there are no stands. No unsportsmanlike words or actions are to come from any players, fans, or coaches. Violation of the above policy by a student can result in disciplinary action from both the school administration and the Athletic Department. It is the responsibility of every coach to inform, demonstrate, and practice the above action plan.

## **EXTRA-CURRICULAR DISCIPLINE CONSEQUENCES**

Student athletes, performers or competitors involved in a fight, while in uniform and/or at a performance/competition will have the following consequences:

***First Offense*** - One game or performance suspension/and school suspension;

***Second Offense*** - Complete removal from the team and school suspension;

Each situation will be evaluated on an individual basis by the administration. Input will be provided by the appropriate coach or advisor.

## **LEAVING A TEAM**

Students are encouraged to try a variety of sports and students may leave a team prior to the first contest, excluding scrimmages, without penalty, by personally notifying the coach that they no longer wish to participate. After this "try-out" period, students may leave a team under the following conditions:

1. It is the student's responsibility to notify the coach that he/she no longer wishes to participate. The coach may request that the student explain the reason(s) for leaving the team. If the coach and student mutually agree that the student can leave the team, the student may leave without penalty. If the previous coach does not agree, the student may not begin practicing another sport until the season (including play-offs if applicable) has ended. This will include off-season programs such as weight lifting.
2. If a student communicates with a coach, but no mutual agreement can be reached, and the coach recommends that the student not be allowed to leave without penalty, the student may appeal the coach's recommendation to the athletic director. If the student feels the decision is still unfair, he/she may appeal the athletic director's decision to the principal.

***THESE RULES ARE NOT INTENDED TO BE PUNITIVE, AND PENALTIES WILL BE IMPOSED ONLY AFTER CAREFUL CONSIDERATION. THE INTENT OF THESE RULES IS TO ENCOURAGE STUDENTS TO BE RESPONSIBLE IN THEIR ACTIONS AND TO COMMUNICATE IN AN ADULT MANNER WHEN THEY PLAN TO END A COMMITMENT TO A SPORT OR WHEN THEY DISAGREE WITH A COACH.***

**Board Policy: JFC-R7**  
**STUDENT-ATHLETE SUBSTANCE ABUSE POLICY**

Definitions:

Student-Athlete – Any 6th-12th grade student established as an athlete at the middle school, junior varsity or varsity level. An established athlete is one who is on a middle school roster or high school Master Eligibility List (MEL) until the next roster or MEL for any VHSL-sanctioned, competitive, extracurricular activity.

Consequences for Violation of the Student-Athlete Substance Abuse Policy:

1. In the event that a substance-use violation occurs on school property, in a school vehicle, at any school-sponsored event, going to or from school, or while participating in school-sanctioned activities, then the Substance Use Policy JFC, JFC-R1, JFC-R3 shall be followed. In addition, the Pulaski County Schools Pledge Program shall be enforced.
2. If a substance-use violation occurs other than as provided in I. above, then the Pulaski County Schools Pledge Program shall be enforced.

Pulaski County Schools Pledge Program

Refusal by the student-athlete or the parent/guardian(s) to participate in the Pulaski County Schools Pledge Program will preclude the student-athlete's further participation in athletics at the school.

First Violation: When the principal or his/her designee confirms, following an opportunity for the student to be heard, that a violation occurred, the following will take place.

1. The student-athlete shall be suspended from play for a period of time equivalent to, and not less than, 20 percent of the total number of VHSL contest limitations for each sport to be played during the regular season (any fraction of the calculation will be dropped). The penalty will be applied immediately and include the next contest(s) including playoffs, and/or to the next sport season in which the student athlete participates within 365 calendar days. During the suspension period, the student-athlete will be allowed to attend practices and contests; however, the student-athlete will not be permitted to dress in team uniform for contests. Additionally, in the event the season concludes while the student-athlete is suspended, the student-athlete may be allowed to participate in try-outs for the next sports season only to the extent to determine placement on the team and only if the student-athlete has been retested, at the parent/guardian(s) expense, and the test results must be negative. After which time the student-athlete will be ineligible until all conditions of reinstatement have been completed.
2. The parent/guardian(s) will contact the Student Assistance Program (SAP) coordinator at the student-athlete's school within five (5) school days of the suspension start-date to arrange Counseling and Preventive Services (CAPS). This counseling must be completed before the student-athlete may be reinstated.
3. The student-athlete and parent/guardian(s) must agree to have the student-athlete tested by the current company who provides Pulaski County Public Schools with our student-athlete drug-testing service at the end of the suspension or another drug-testing company approved by Pulaski County Public Schools administration that operates under SAMHSA (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration) certified laboratory guidelines. This will be done at the parent's expense, less extenuating circumstances and the test results must be negative.
4. The student-athlete must also agree to regular testing for illegal drugs at the discretion of Pulaski County Public Schools administration for the remainder of the school year for any/all sports the student-athlete wishes to participate. This will be done at the school system's expense as part of the normal drug-testing schedule.
5. Once items one (1) through four (4) have been successfully completed, a letter of reinstatement from the superintendent or superintendent's designee must be granted stating the student is in good standing before they may continue participation with athletics.

Second Violation: When the principal or his/her designee confirms, following an opportunity for the student to be heard, that a violation occurred, the following will take place.

1. The student-athlete shall be suspended from play for a period of time equivalent to, and not less than, 50 percent of the total number of VHSL contest limitations for each sport to be played during the regular season (any fraction of the calculation will be dropped). The penalty will be applied immediately and include the next contest(s) including playoffs, and/or to the next sport season in which the student athlete participates within 365 calendar days. During the suspension period, the student-athlete will be allowed to attend practices and contests; however, the student-athlete will not be permitted to dress in team uniform for contests. Additionally, in the event the season concludes while the student-athlete is suspended, the student-athlete may be allowed to participate in try-outs for the next sports season only to the extent to determine placement on the team and only if the student-athlete has been retested, at the parent/guardian(s) expense, and the test results must be negative. After which time the student-athlete will be ineligible until all conditions of reinstatement have been completed.
2. The parent/guardian(s) will contact the SAP coordinator within 5 school days of the suspension start date to arrange Counseling and Preventive Services (CAPS). This counseling must be completed before the student-athlete may be reinstated.
3. The student-athlete and parent/guardian(s) must agree to have the student-athlete tested by the current company who provides Pulaski County Public Schools with our student-athlete drug-testing service at the end of the suspension or another drug-testing company approved by Pulaski County Public Schools administration that operates under SAMHSA (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration) certified laboratory guidelines. This will be done at the parent's expense, less extenuating circumstances and the test results must be negative.
4. The student-athlete must also agree to regular testing for illegal drugs at the discretion of Pulaski County Public Schools administration for the remainder of the school year for any/all sports the student-athlete wishes to participate. This will be done at the parent's expense, less extenuating circumstances and the test results must be negative.
5. Once items one (1) through four (4) have been successfully completed, a letter of reinstatement from the superintendent or superintendent's designee must be granted stating the student is in good standing before they may continue participation with athletics in Pulaski County Public Schools.

Third Violation: When the principal or his/her designee confirms, following an opportunity for the student to be heard, that a violation occurred, the following will take place.

1. A student-athlete who is found responsible for a third violation during their VHSL eligibility is ineligible to participate in all VHSL sanctioned events while enrolled

**Board Policy: JFC-R8**  
**Drug Testing of Student-Athletes**

**Purpose and Intent**

In keeping with the mission of Pulaski County Public Schools, the role of the student-athlete drug testing policy and substance abuse programs is to protect student health, safety and welfare, and to strengthen partnerships among faculty, administrators, coaches, parents, and students in order to reduce alcohol and other drug related barriers and hazards to academic, athletic and personal development success.

**Guidelines**

A student-athlete becomes eligible for drug testing upon being listed on the Middle School Team Roster for middle school students and the Virginia High School League (VHSL) Master Eligibility List for high school students for any VHSL-sanctioned, competitive, extracurricular activity. Student-athletes will remain eligible for testing through the end of the sport season. In the event a student ceases to participate or withdraws from an athletic team, he or she will no longer be subject to random drug tests during that sport season.

**Non-Compliance**

If the student-athlete refuses to be tested or attempts to tamper with or assist others in tampering with the sample, the student-athlete will be dropped from the team, absent extenuating circumstances.

**Drug Testing Procedures**

This policy is not designed to be academically punitive, but to ensure the student's health while participating in athletics.

- A. Sample random selection with replacement will be used for the drug testing process.
- B. A Third Party Administrator (TPA) will be contracted to conduct all testing and will be responsible for the random selection with replacement and testing process.
- C. Testing will be performed at a minimum of two testing sessions on a sample population equating to 10% of the total population of student-athletes per sport, per school, per sports season (Fall, Winter, Spring).
- D. A copy of the Middle School Team Roster List and the Virginia High School League (VHSL) Master Eligibility List, identifying athletes for every sport, per sports season, will be used to determine who will be eligible for testing. For the purpose of

confidentiality, student-athletes will be identified by a unique number as designated by the school.

E. Drug testing will be performed by collecting a urine sample.

F. Testing will take place at each school by the TPA.

G. Students will remain under school supervision until an adequate sample can be provided. If a student has not provided a reliable sample by the end of the school day, then the student will be ineligible to participate in the remaining portion of that sports season absent extenuating circumstances.

H. The TPA will provide testing materials, testers and a Medical Review Officer (MRO).

I. In the event of a positive test result, the MRO will make direct contact with the parent/guardian to resolve any extenuating circumstances, medical or other, that may have contributed to an inability to provide a sample, or a positive test result. Pulaski County Public Schools will not be involved in resolving positive testing results.

J. After all testing and test results have been verified, the final report will be provided by the TPA to the Superintendent/Designee.

K. The Superintendent/Designee will provide the results to each school's principal.

### Positive Test Results

In the event the final report has identified any failures to provide a sample, or verified positive test results, the TPA will contact the Superintendent/Designee and then the Superintendent/Designee will notify the Principal. The Principal will contact the parent/guardian and a conference will be scheduled to present the test results to the parent/guardian.

For positive results, the Pulaski County Public Schools Pledge Program will be enforced, per School Board Policy JFC-R7, Student-Athlete Substance Abuse Policy. For positive results for the use of anabolic steroids, an athlete will also be ineligible to compete in interscholastic athletic competition for two years per School Board Policy, the Code of Virginia, and the Virginia High School League (VHSL). A failure to provide a sample will be considered a positive test result unless there are extenuating medical circumstances that physically prevent a student from providing a sample.

### Confidentiality

Confidentiality of test results must be maintained at all levels including the TPA, the School Board, the Superintendent, the Principal, the Athletic Director, and the coach. No penalties or restrictions will be placed on a student's participation in any other non-VHSL activities. Results will not be placed in the student's cumulative records.

### Drugs Tested

The substances commonly tested for, but not limited to, are: alcohol, tobacco, controlled substances, imitation controlled substances, and illegal drugs

- a. A try-out period of 3 to 5 days will be conducted for those sports that make cuts.



- b. Head Coaches will make the decision in determining the final roster.

**Board Policy: JJAC**  
**STUDENT-ATHLETE CONCUSSIONS DURING**  
**EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**

Pulaski County Public Schools desires the safe return to activity for all student-athletes participating in extracurricular physical activities following an injury, but particularly after a concussion. The goal of this policy is to ensure (i) that coaches, school staff, volunteers, student-athletes, and their parents or guardian are aware of the short-term and long term effects of concussions; (ii) that concussed student-athletes are identified, removed from play immediately, and referred appropriately; and (iii) that concussed student-athletes are returned to play only after receiving appropriate medical care, given adequate time to heal, and are symptom free.

**Definitions**

**Concussion:** *a brain injury that is characterized by an onset of impairment of cognitive and/or physical functioning, and is caused by a blow to the head, face or neck, or a blow to the body that causes a sudden jarring of the head (i.e., a helmet to the head, being knocked to the ground). A concussion can occur with or without a loss of consciousness, and proper management is essential to the immediate safety and long-term future of the injured individual.*

**Licensed Health Care Provider:** *a physician, physician assistant, osteopath or athletic trainer licensed by the Virginia Board of Medicine; a neuropsychologist licensed by the Board of Psychology; or a nurse practitioner licensed by the Virginia State Board of Nursing.*

**Return to Play:** *to participate in a non-medically supervised practice, game, or athletic competition.*

- I. Pulaski County Public Schools’ Concussion Management Team
  - a. The Pulaski County Public Schools’ Concussion Management Team (“CMT”) shall be appointed by the Superintendent of Schools and shall consist of a school administrator, an athletic administrator, a licensed health care provider, a coach, a parent or guardian of a student-athlete, a student athlete, and any such other person the Superintendent determines will assist the CMT in its actions.
  - b. The CMT shall develop concussion training materials for school personnel, volunteers, student-athletes, and parents of student-athletes. The CMT shall also develop concussion reporting, management, and

review protocols for the school division. The CMT shall maintain a record of all incidents where a student-athlete has been removed from a game, competition, or practice because he or she has been suspected of sustaining a concussion.

- c. The CMT shall meet at least once per semester and shall evaluate the division's training materials, concussion reporting, management, and review protocols annually.

## II. Required Concussion Training for School Personnel and Volunteers:

- a. Every Coach, Assistant Coach, School Staff, Adult Volunteer, or other person serving in a coaching or advisory role over student-athletes during games, competitions, or practices shall receive training in the signs and symptoms of sports-related concussions, strategies to reduce the risk of concussions, how to seek proper medical treatment for concussions, and the process by which a concussed student-athlete may safely return to practice or competition. Each school and the CMT shall maintain a written record of the names and dates of completion for all persons completing the school's concussion training.
- b. Each school shall ensure that no person is allowed to coach or advise a student-athlete in any practice, game, or competition who has not completed the school's concussion training within the previous twelve months.

## III. Required Training for Student-Athletes and Parent/Guardian:

- a. Prior to participating in any extracurricular physical activity, each student-athlete and the student-athlete's parent or guardian shall review concussion training materials developed by the CMT and sign a statement acknowledging receipt of such information. The concussion training materials shall describe the short-and long-term health effects of concussions.
- b. The signed statements acknowledging the receipt of concussion training materials shall be valid for one calendar year and will satisfy the concussion training requirements for all of a student-athlete's extracurricular physical activities for a calendar year.

## IV. Removal from Extracurricular Physical Activities

- a. A student-athlete suspected by a student-athlete's coach, athletic trainer, or team physician of sustaining a concussion or brain injury in a practice, game, or competition shall cease the activity immediately, be evaluated, and if necessary be referred for further treatment. Special consideration should be taken regarding possible neck injury if the student-athlete is moved. A student-athlete who has been removed from play, evaluated, and suspected to have sustained a concussion shall not return to play that same day.
- b. In determining whether a student-athlete removed from play is suspected of having sustained a concussion, an appropriate licensed health care

provider or other properly trained individual, shall evaluate the student-athlete at the time of removal utilizing a standardized concussion sideline assessment instrument (e.g., Sideline Concussion Assessment Tool (SCAT-II), the Standardized Assessment of Concussion (SAC), or the Balance Error Scoring System (BESS)).

- c. The determination of whether a student-athlete removed from play is suspected of having sustained a concussion shall be the determination of the licensed health care provider or other properly trained individual conducting the concussion sideline assessment. Such determination may not be overruled by another properly trained individual, coach, assistant coach, school staff, or other person serving in a coaching or advisory role, the student-athlete, or the parent or guardian of the student-athlete. The only circumstance under which this determination may be overruled is when a licensed health care provider arrives on the scene after an initial determination that allows the student-athlete to return to play is made in the absence of a licensed health care provider. If the licensed health care provider arrives after the initial assessment is conducted and expresses concern regarding the student athlete's return to play, the licensed health care provider may reassess and follow the procedures set forth in this policy as if this assessment were the original.
- d. The coach of a student-athlete may elect not to return the student-athlete to play, even if after the concussion sideline assessment it is determined that the student-athlete is no longer suspected of having sustained a concussion.

#### V. Return To Play Protocol

- a. No student-athlete shall be allowed to return to extracurricular physical activities, which includes the student-athlete's practices, games, or competitions, until the student presents a written medical release from the student-athlete's licensed health care provider. The written medical release shall certify that (i) the provider is aware of the current medical guidance on concussion evaluation and management; (ii) the student-athlete no longer exhibits signs symptoms or behaviors consistent with a concussion at rest or with exertion; and (iii) that the student-athlete has successfully completed a progressive return to sports participation program. The length of progressive return to sports participation program shall be determined by the student-athlete's licensed health care provider but shall last a minimum of five calendar days.
- b. The coach of a student-athlete may elect not to allow a student-athlete to return to extracurricular physical activities, even after the production of written medical release from the student-athlete's licensed health care provider, if the coach observes signs and symptoms of sports-related concussions. If the student-athlete's coach makes such a decision, the coach shall communicate the observations and concerns to the student athlete's parent or guardian within one day of the decision not to allow such student-athlete to return to extracurricular physical activities.

- VI. Return to Learn Protocol. School personnel shall be alert to cognitive and academic issues that may be experienced by a student-athlete who has suffered a concussion or other head injury, including (i) difficulty with concentration, organization, and long-term and short-term memory; (ii) sensitivity to bright lights and sounds; and (iii) short-term problems with speech and language, reasoning, planning, and problem solving. School personnel shall accommodate the gradual return to full participation in academic activities by a student-athlete who as suffered a concussion or other head injury as appropriate, based on the recommendation of the student-athlete's licensed health care provider as to the appropriate amount of time that such student-athlete needs to be away from the classroom.
- VII. Helmet Replacement and Reconditioning
  - a. All helmets used in school physical activities must conform to the National Operations Committee on Standards for Athletic Equipment (NOCSAE) and certified as conforming by the manufacturer at the time of purchase.
  - b. Reconditioned helmets that have been purchased must be recertified as conforming to the NOCSAE by the reconditioner.

### **TRY-OUT PROCEDURES**

The following is an outline of some of the basic guidelines/timelines that the Athletic Department follows prior to and at the start of a sport season. There are three sport seasons: fall, winter and spring. Because of the unique nature of each individual sport, this outline may include or exclude some items that the coaching staff does or does not use.

1. Pre-season sign-up meetings: 1 - 3 months prior to the start of the season.
  - a. Fall season begins in late August or early September.
  - b. Winter season begins in October.
  - c. Spring season begins in March.
2. Necessary forms and paperwork.
3. Eligibility - refer to academic eligibility.
4. Try-outs.
  - a. A try-out period of 3 to 5 days will be conducted for those sports that make cuts.
  - b. Head Coaches will make the decision in determining the final roster.

### **CONFERENCES**

In our continuing effort to establish and maintain clear lines of communication between the Athletic Department Staff and the parents/guardians of our student-athletes, the coaching staff will be available for conferences. *Please do not attempt to confront a*

*coach before or after a contest or practice.* Those can be emotional times for both the parent and the coach. Meetings of that nature, and at those times, do not promote resolution. The following guidelines will help make any conference a productive and positive experience.

### **PARENT INVOLVEMENT GUIDELINES**

- Each head coach will be available, upon request, for conferences.
  - Parents can use this time to ask questions and obtain information.
  - The coach will discuss what the student-athlete needs to work on or improve in order to maintain or increase his/her playing time.
  - The coach will only talk to a parent/guardian about his/her own child.
  - If the guidelines are not adhered to, the discussion will be terminated.
  - If satisfaction is not obtained, the parent/guardian should then follow the instructions under Parent Complaints or Concerns.
  - **Parents who verbally abuse a coach may be liable for harassment/slander/defamation of character.**
- \*\* It is the intent of the Athletic Department to provide an avenue for meaningful dialogue and communication between coaches and parents. Working together we can and will accomplish great things.

### **PARENT COMPLAINTS OR CONCERNS**

\*To express a concern about school personnel:

If you have a concern or complaint, it helps to bring it to the attention of the correct people. In general, a parent should communicate first with the school and then with the appropriate office in the district administration.

- a. Every effort should be made to resolve a complaint with the coach involved.
- b. If the concern is not resolved with the coach, it should be submitted to the athletic director in writing.
- c. If the concern is not resolved with the athletic director it should be submitted to the principal in writing.
- d. If the principal cannot resolve the problem, it will be submitted to the assistant superintendent.
- e. Concerns are resolved at the assistant superintendent level will be submitted to the superintendent.

***Parent Consent, Field Trip Permission, Physical, Injury, Risk, Adherence to Codes of Conduct and Acknowledgment of Athletic Handbook Form***

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Student # \_\_\_\_\_

Birthdate \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_

Parent's/Guardian's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone # \_\_\_\_\_

Home Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_

Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Daytime Phones:

Father \_\_\_\_\_ Mother \_\_\_\_\_

**Consent Statements - Please read carefully and sign below.**

- \* I hereby give my consent for the above-named student to participate in athletics.
- \* I hereby give my consent for the above-named student to have his/her picture and/or statistics published. This may include print/electronic media.
- \* I hereby authorize the PCMS or a representative to transport and supervise the above named student on any athletic trip.
- \* I hereby give my consent, in case this student is injured or becomes ill, for the school and/or its representative to secure medical aid, ambulance transportation, and for the medical agency to render treatment.
- \* I hereby give my consent to the team physician, emergency doctor, nurse, athletic trainer, and/or coach to apply first aid treatment until the family doctor can be contacted.
- \* We realize that there is a risk of our son/daughter being injured while participating in sports and the risk of injury may be severe, including the risk of fracture, brain injuries, paralysis, or even death. We are assuming all risks inherent in this athletic activity.
- \* I, as a student athlete, have read and will adhere to the Code of Conduct for interscholastic student Athletes Drug Testing Policy and Concussion Policy.
- \* I, as a parent/guardian, have read and will adhere to the Code of Conduct for parents/guardians and will promote adherence to the policies stated in the Student-Athlete/Parent Handbook.

***WE HAVE READ AND UNDERSTAND ALL OF THE RESPONSIBILITIES AS OUTLINED IN BOTH THE STUDENT ATHLETE AND PARENT ATHLETIC HANDBOOK AND ANY ADDITIONAL GUIDELINES (IF APPLICABLE) ATTACHED BY THE COACH.***

_____	_____
Parent's/Guardian's Signature	Date
_____	_____
Athlete's Signature	Date