

Portage Middle School Athletic Handbook

I. Purpose

This handbook explains the policies of the interscholastic athletic program at Portage Middle Schools. It is a privilege, not a right, to take part in extra-curricular activities, thus the athlete is required to abide by the rules as written in this book. As noted in the Indiana High School Athletic Association (I.H.S.A.A.) by-laws: any school may establish their own set of guidelines above and beyond those set by the state.

II. Philosophy

Portage Middle Schools believe it is their responsibility to provide and organize a sound program of athletics which will make a positive contribution to the student-athlete, his or her school, and to the community.

We believe the middle school student-athlete is at a pivotal time in their life where they must learn to balance the responsibilities of the classroom with the responsibilities and commitments of athletics. It is our intent to help students to learn how to experience success in both areas simultaneously.

We believe the opportunity to participate should be viewed as a privilege.

We believe that good sportsmanship should be taught, modeled, and demonstrated by coaches, athletes, and fans.

We believe that the mental, physical, and emotional growth of a student can be greatly enhanced by participating in athletics.

We believe that many participants can find a purpose in their schoolwork and in their lives through athletics.

We believe that a student-athlete should positively represent oneself, the team, and the school not just during their season of competition but throughout the entire duration of the school year.

We believe that athletics are a vital component to a positive school culture.

III. Student-Athlete's Responsibilities

The privilege of participating in the Portage Middle School programs are extended to each Portage Middle School student regardless of sex, creed, race, or national origin provided that he/she is willing to assume certain responsibilities related to our athletic program. We ask that

each student-athlete and his/her parents read and understand our philosophies and regulations in order for the Portage Middle School athletic programs to function smoothly.

We are certain that our student-athletes will benefit from the time they will spend in athletics. If at any time parents/legal guardians wish to discuss any phase of their child's athletic experience, contact the coach or athletic director. We strive to offer our student-athletes the best athletic program possible based on our available resources. We need and depend on parent/guardian cooperation and support to aid coaches and athletic directors in promoting a successful athletic program for our students.

IV. Physicals

All athletes must have a physical on file with accompanying acknowledgements in the athletic office before they can participate or tryout for an athletic team. The physical must be completed on the IHSA form, which is available on our athletic website or main office. Any physical **performed after April 1** is good for the entire following school year. In addition, the student-athlete must turn in all paperwork for the physical to be complete, additional paperwork includes;

- consent and release certificate
- consent to administer emergency treatment
- concussion/cardiac awareness acknowledgement
- guidelines for social media acknowledgement
- athletic handbook acknowledgement

It is the athlete's responsibility to verify with the athletic office prior to the start of the season if they have a physical on file. It is recommended the athlete does this well in advance to the start of the season.

V. Academic Eligibility

All athletes must be passing ALL classes on report cards and progress reports. Two F's on a report card or progress report will result in the athlete being ineligible for all games/contests until the next marking period. The player can practice at the coach's discretion. One F on a progress report or report card will result in being ineligible (for a minimum of one week) for all games/contests until the grade rises to passing; during the time an athlete is ineligible for games/contests, he/she must attend study table. Grades are checked on Thursdays and the enforcement period is Monday through Saturday of the following week. Study table requires an athlete to study for the first half of practices when any grade falls below passing. Study tables are enforced and monitored by the coach. It is possible for an athlete to be assigned to study table but still have eligibility for games/contests when grades fall below passing at times other than on a report card or progress report.

The responsibility of determining athletic eligibility rests with the coach who will submit rosters to the administration. The administrator will then verify the academic standing of the student-

athlete. The coaches will be informed as to which athletes have had eligibility either revoked or study tables assigned, the coach will then communicate that to the student athlete.

VI. Participation

Student-athletes are encouraged to participate in as many sports as possible as seasons of play do not overlap. This effort will strengthen the entire athletic program and make the student-athlete better rounded.

An athlete must be in attendance for at least 50% of the school day in order to be considered eligible to participate in a contest or practice that day unless permission is granted for unusual circumstances by an administrator. Students are not eligible to practice or compete in competitions/games on days serving “out of school suspension” or “in-school suspension”.

Athletes are expected to be picked up in a timely fashion after the completion of games or practices. Athletes who develop the pattern of not having arrangements to get home can be subject to suspension or removal from team.

VII. Tryouts

The athletic department is sensitive to the needs of the athletes during the tryout period. It is the school’s desire to see that as many student-athletes as possible are involved in the program during the athletic season. Unfortunately, due to facility space, staffing, time constraints, numbers of equipment, and additional factors, limitations are placed on sizes of teams for each individual sport.

1. Choosing the members of the various athletic teams is the responsibility of the coach.
2. Before tryouts begin, coaches will provide information to all candidates of the team at a callout meeting. Such information shall include:
 - a. Length of tryout period.
 - b. Objectives used to select the members of the team.
 - c. Explain the commitment/expectations necessary to join the team.

VIII. Appearance

Student-athletes are expected to:

1. Dress in a fashion that demonstrates self-respect and a respect for school.
2. Dress in a fashion that meets school dress code.
3. Take off and secure all jewelry/valuables during practices or games.

Individual coaches may set additional grooming requirements.

IX. Conduct, Character, and Discipline

Student-athletes and managers are expected to be citizens in good standing.

1. A middle school athlete is a good student.
2. A middle school athlete is a good sport. You show respect to all teammates, coaches, officials, opponents, and fans.
3. A middle school athlete is a good example/role model to others.
4. A middle school athlete is honest.
5. A middle school athlete is prompt to class, practice, and games.
6. A middle school athlete is dependable. If you cannot attend practice or a competition you will let your coaches know in advance.
7. A middle school athlete is aware of the impact that social media can have on one self, others, and the team.

X. Training Violations

A student athlete shall not engage in activities, which would reflect discredit upon the school, the athletic department, or the community.

CONSEQUENCES—the consequences for engaging in such activities will depend on the severity of the misconduct, as determined by the coach and/or the school administration. The above decision will determine whether the penalty would include suspension from athletic contests or even removal from the team. Continued violation will bring about progressively more severe consequences.

Training rules will be enforced and discipline for a violation of training rules is as follows; first offense would require the student athlete to be ineligible for competition in at least 40% of the regular season schedule, a second offense would result in ineligibility for 365 days. Reporting violations will be either by admission of wrongdoing by the student-athlete or by a school investigation.

Training violations include the following:

1. Use and/or possession of alcoholic beverages.
2. Use and/or possession of illegal drugs in any form.
3. Use and/or possession of tobacco, E-cigarettes, or tobacco paraphernalia in any form.

XI. Equipment

All equipment issued at the beginning of an athletic season must be returned at the end of that season before an athlete is eligible for another sport. Debt slips will be turned into the book keeper for lost or abused equipment as well as equipment that is not returned. Athletes will be

charged the replacement cost. It is the athlete's responsibility to make sure all issued equipment is securely locked up or brought home.

XII. Awards

For a student to receive a certificate of participation they must finish the season in good standing. Any awards or certificates of participation will be withheld until all fees are paid and equipment is returned.

XIII. Transportation

The Portage Township School Corporation shall provide authorized transportation services for all student-athletes and coaches of athletic teams to all away contests. A certified bus driver will transport athletes. In the event that a bus is not available, the coach will drive a vehicle with no more than 15 passengers including the driver.

All athletes are expected to ride the bus to and from the athletic event. Travel to and from an event is considered a component of team culture. Only in the case of an emergency, when a parent/legal guardian asks for an exception to this rule, may an exception be made. In cases where there is a known conflict with travel, exemption from traveling home on the team bus must be granted from the athletic director in advance.

XIV. Chain of Command

Questions or concerns in regards to athletic teams must be first addressed with the head coach prior to involving the athletic director or principal.