

Open Gym, Conditioning and Weight Training Cautionary Statement and Permission to Participate Form

PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS INTERPRETATION OF "OPEN GYM" POLICY

Participants must have a signed Open Gym, Conditioning and Weight Training Cautionary Statement and Permission to Participate Form on file with the school based athletic director (**an accurate list of approved students shall be provided to the staff member supervising the activity by the athletic director**) prior to participating in any of the activities.

In order to conform to the letter and spirit of state and county rules governing out-of season practice restrictions:

Any after-school athletic activity (such as weightlifting, open gym/field for any sport, conditioning programs, etc.) **conducted and supervised by coaches or school staff** should meet all of the following criteria:

- Open to the student body as whole, not just athletes.
- Not open to the general public or students from other schools.
- Dates and times announced and publicized to the student body as a whole.
- Be conducted immediately before or after school when possible.

Coaching or instruction may not take place! **Instruction may occur during weight training to ensure proper lifting techniques.** Coaches may be present for supervision and liability purposes only.

These activities are:

- Subject to approval by principal
- Recommended as out of season activities

Must not interfere with in-season team practices or games. In-season teams will have first priority of facility use, followed by any out of season teams or conditioning programs as coordinated and approved by the athletic director.

Open gym/fields and conditioning cannot be held on days when schools are closed for students.

These activities are physical in nature and students can be injured while participating.

Note: Persons responsible for supervision of the activities listed above must review the Administrative Procedures below and have completed the MPSSAA Care and Prevention of Athletic Injuries Course, and the online Strength and Conditioning Course offered by the National Federation of High Schools Associations:

1. 5154 Heat Acclimatization Awareness and Education Program
2. 5155 Concussion Awareness Program
3. 5160 Performance Enhancing Substances

7 tips for a safe and successful strength-training program (Harvard Medical School – Harvard Health Publications)

Healthbeat

Strength or resistance training challenges your muscles with a stronger-than-usual counterforce, such as pushing against a wall or lifting a dumbbell or pulling on a resistance band. Using progressively heavier weights or increasing resistance makes muscles stronger. This kind of exercise increases muscle mass, tones muscles, and strengthens bones. It also helps you maintain the strength you need for everyday activities — lifting groceries, climbing stairs, rising from a chair, or rushing for the bus.

The current national guidelines for physical activity recommend strengthening exercises for all major muscle groups (legs, hips, back, chest, abdomen, shoulders, and arms) at least twice a week. One set — usually 8 to 12 repetitions of the same movement — per session is effective, though some evidence suggests that two to three sets may be better. Your muscles need at least 48 hours to recover between strength training sessions.

These seven tips can keep your strength training safe **and** effective.

1. Warm up and cool down for five to 10 minutes. Walking is a fine way to warm up; stretching is an excellent way to cool down.
2. Focus on form, not weight. Align your body correctly and move smoothly through each exercise. Poor form can prompt injuries and slow gains. When learning a strength training routine, many experts suggest starting with no weight, or very light weight. Concentrate on slow, smooth lifts and equally controlled descents while isolating a muscle group.
3. Working at the right tempo helps you stay in control rather than compromise strength gains through momentum. For example, count to three while lowering a weight, hold, then count to three while raising it to the starting position.
4. Pay attention to your breathing during your workouts. Exhale as you work against resistance by lifting, pushing, or pulling; inhale as you release.
5. Keep challenging muscles by slowly increasing weight or resistance. The right weight for you differs depending on the exercise. Choose a weight that tires the targeted muscle or muscles by the last two repetitions while still allowing you to maintain good form. If you can't do the last two reps, choose a lighter weight. When it feels too easy to complete add weight (roughly 1 to 2 pounds for arms, 2 to 5 pounds for legs), or add another set of repetitions to your workout (up to three sets). If you add weight, remember that you

should be able to do all the repetitions with good form and the targeted muscles should feel tired by the last two.

6. Stick with your routine — working all the major muscles of your body two or three times a week is ideal. You can choose to do one full-body strength workout two or three times a week, or you may break your strength workout into upper- and lower-body components. In that case, be sure you perform each component two or three times a week.
7. Give muscles time off. Strength training causes tiny tears in muscle tissue. These tears aren't harmful, but they are important: muscles grow stronger as the tears knit up. Always give your muscles at least 48 hours to recover before your next strength training session.

For detailed workouts and more on the benefits of exercise and how to develop a plan stick with it, buy [Exercise: A program you can live with](#), a Special Health Report from Harvard Medical School. (January 1, 2015)

Weight-Training and Weight-Lifting Safety (taken from FamilyDoctor.org)

Be safe.

Lifting weights, whether you do it for general fitness, to train for sports or for competition, can cause serious injury or even death. Follow these basic guidelines to lift weights more safely.

Set goals.

With your teacher's help, decide on the goals of your weight-training program. The goals of your training program will depend on your age, physical maturity and the reason you are lifting weights. You need to consider which exercises you will use, how often you will do each exercise, what weight you will start with and when you will increase this weight.

Wait until you're ready.

Most people should wait until they are at least 15 years old before trying the major lifts. At age 15, most people's bodies are mature enough for these exercises. The major lifts, performed with barbells, include the clean and jerk, power clean, snatch, squat, dead lift and the bench (incline and overhead presses). These exercises are likely to cause injury if you lift heavy weights without proper technique and the help of spotters.

Warm up and cool down.

Warm up and cool down for each session. Your warm-up session before lifting weights should include stretching exercises, calisthenics and jogging. When you begin each lifting exercise, use small amounts of weight at first and then progress to heavier weights. Stretching is also important during your cool down.

DOs

- Do use spotters when you try the major lifts.
- Do keep your back straight when lifting.
- Do use proper lifting technique when moving weights around the room.
- Do wear shoes with good traction.
- Do make sure the equipment you use is in good condition.

DON'Ts

- Don't hyperventilate (breathe in and out fast) or hold your breath when you lift heavy weights. You may faint and lose control of the weights. Breathe out when you lift.
- Don't continue lifting if you feel pain. Stop the painful exercise for a few days, or try it with less weight.
- Don't exercise any set of muscles more than 3 times a week.
- Don't "cheat" on your technique to lift heavier weights than you can handle.
- Don't lift heavy weights without spotters.
- Don't lift more than you know you can lift safely.

Students are to drink water as needed. It is important to stay hydrated before, during and after workouts.

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Please sign and return this completed page to the school athletic director.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

By signing below we certify that we have read the information provided and understand that the activities are physical in nature and my son/daughter

(student's name) _____ may be at risk of Injury while participating.

School: _____

Activity: _____

Parent/Guardian Printed Name

Parent/Guardian Signature

_____/_____/_____
Date

Athlete Director's Signature

_____/_____/_____
Date