

STUDENT ACTIVITIES

“The other half of education”

Paine Mountain School District

Northfield Middle & High School

Williamstown Middle & High School



ATHLETIC/ACTIVITIES CODE OF CONDUCT FOR STUDENTS AND PARENTS

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Paine Mountain School District Athletic website: <https://www.cvsu.org>

Follow on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/NMHSAthleticsVT/#>

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TITLE IX – DISCRIMINATION COMPLIANCE ACT

The goal of the Central Vermont Supervisory Union is to ensure equal employment and educational opportunities regardless of race, color, creed, handicap, age, national origin, sex, or sexual orientation in compliance with state and federal laws.

The district's Director of Special Student Services is designated as the Title IX Compliance Coordinator.

A grievance procedure for students, parents, or employees has been adopted. The grievance procedure is posted on the bulletin board in the office of the Elementary Principal, Middle & High School Principal, Director of Special Student Services, and the Superintendent's Office.

Any student or employee complaint relative to Title IX should be directed to the Director of Special Student Services.

Welcome to the interscholastic athletic and activities program at Paine Mountain School District (Northfield Middle & High School, and Williamstown Middle & High School). In choosing to become involved in your school outside of the classroom, not only will you experience enjoyment, competition, and camaraderie, but you will also have made a commitment to your team, your school, and your community. There are a great many responsibilities which go along with becoming an athlete, or other representative of your school. You are a leader. Act accordingly! Remember you only have one chance to make a first impression. People will judge our schools and our communities by how you conduct yourself on and off the playing arenas, and performance venues. Participation in co-curricular activities is a **PRIVILEGE** not a **RIGHT!**

We are committed to providing well-organized programs that are properly supervised, have good coaches/advisors, appropriate recognition, and are open to all the youth within the Paine Mountain School District. The co-curricular department is available to all students of all ability levels who meet the standards set forth by the coaches of the particular activity.

The following defines many of the goals for the athletic program and the roles and responsibilities of the athletes and the coaches.

SPORTSMANSHIP

We expect our students to display good sportsmanship at all times. This means respecting opponents, fans and officials.

ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY

Paine Mountain School District recognizes the very valuable role that student activities play in engaging our students in their own personal development and the vital contributions they make to our larger community. PMSD is committed to ensuring that every student has access to and support in participating in these activities, as a means to increase their leadership abilities, cultivate new relationships, and assume personal responsibility. Students who elect to play sports, participate in student governance, or join a school group, club, or team make a voluntary commitment to these pursuits and earn the privilege of representing their school and community.

At PMSD, we have developed an eligibility system designed to foster perseverance in our students through academic support such as advisory, lab, and afterschool support, rather than punish them by removing opportunity. Our system is as follows:

Ongoing progress checks through our online reporting system, JumpRope

Activation of support when JumpRope indicates student level of progress is below a 2.01 or a staff member has concerns (extended absence/illness) - recommendation completed by teacher advisor and notification sent to student, family, athletic administration

The student will develop a plan with their teacher and be required to attend advisory, lab, or afterschool help for two weeks

The student will be permitted to attend and participate in co-curricular activity as long as they are making progress and attending assigned work times

If the student is making progress per the plan, they may continue participation

If the student is NOT making progress, the plan will be revisited and they will be suspended from representing the school in competitions and/or performances for two weeks

The student may return to participation if at the end of the two weeks they are making progress per their plan

(Family/Student Handbook SY 2022/2023 as of 6/24/22 page 17)

VPA ELIGIBILITY

VPA eligibility rules and activities policies apply to athletic, and non-athletic activities sanctioned or sponsored by the Vermont Principals Association. Waiver requests regarding undue hardships must be submitted through the school principal.

The following are VPA eligibility rules:

1. Contestants or participants must be bona fide students in their school. Students may only compete on school teams sponsored by their own school during the season.
2. In an activity season, players who have participated in practice or competition as a member of a school team shall not practice or compete as members of a non-school organized group in the same activity.
3. Transfer students are eligible at once provided they were bona fide students in the school from which they transferred according to the definition in #1 above.
4. Participants must be under 19 years of age, except that a student whose 19th birthday occurs on or after August 1st is eligible for all activities in the ensuing school year.
5. Students are ineligible if they have graduated from any course of study in a secondary school comparable to the Vermont system.
6. Students have four consecutive years (8 semesters) of eligibility. Attendance of 30 days of any semester will be regarded as a semester.
7. A student must have 10 sport specific practice sessions before participation in games or meets is permitted. If a student attempts more than one sport in a particular season they must have 10 practices in each of those sports.

ELIGIBILITY FOR GAME, PRACTICE, CONTEST/PERFORMANCE

If a student misses any part of the school day preceding a practice or contest/performance they must get approval from the administration in order to participate.

Participation in a weekend game/performance is not jeopardized by absence from school on Friday. However, a coach or individual team rule may apply that could impact playing time.

A student who is suspended from school is not permitted to practice, play in a contest/performance, or travel with the team in any capacity until the next full day after the suspension is completed. If it is an in-school suspension then participation can take place once the punishment has been carried out.

Attendance and promptness at ALL practices are important. Being part of a team, even in those sports that are highly individual in nature is part of the very essence of athletics. Failure to attend or being late to practices or games conveys the unspoken message that your team and your teammates are not as important as the individual who decides not to

attend or to be late. Arriving late or missing practice-- in most cases will result in loss of playing time.

There are times when missed practices or a late arrivals are justified (i.e. make-up school work, extra academic help, doctor's appointment, etc.) In such cases it is the student's responsibility to inform the coach.

TRAINING RULES

Students are expected to abstain from the use or possession of tobacco/nicotine (smoke and smokeless), alcohol, illegal drugs, drug paraphernalia, and/or using legally prescribed drugs in an illegal fashion beginning with the activity's first practice and ending with its last practice, contest, or performance. Any student involved in any individual event beyond the activity's regular season is expected to abide by these rules (New England competitions, music festivals etc.).

Any violation of the training rules, which is reported to the coach/advisor, athletic director, or administration by a reliable, first-hand witness, will be thoroughly investigated. If the allegation is proven to be true, the following procedure will be implemented:

1. After the first offense during an academic year, the student will be suspended from game participation for a minimum of three weeks (or equivalent of $\frac{1}{4}$ of contests/performances). In addition, they will be required to attend substance abuse counseling. Upon successful implementation of substance abuse counseling the student will be reinstated after the conclusion of their suspension. If an athlete self-reports, which means initiating a meeting with the Activities Director or his/her designee and this meeting takes place BEFORE an investigation is started, the first offense would be reduced to two weeks, and a minimum of 2 games/performances (depending on total number of games/performances in the season). A first offense suspension will NOT carry over to the next year.
2. If a second offense occurs during an academic year, the student will be suspended from game participation for a minimum of five weeks (or equivalent of 10 contests). In addition, they will be required to attend substance abuse counseling. Upon successful implementation of substance abuse counseling the student will be reinstated after the conclusion of their suspension.
3. Should a third offense take place during an academic year the student will be suspended from all interscholastic participation for one calendar year. In addition, they will be required to attend substance abuse counseling. Upon successful implementation of substance abuse counseling the student will be reinstated after the conclusion of their suspension.
4. Attendance is mandatory for both practices and games/performances during the suspension. Failure to be in attendance may result in increased suspension time. The student will also be referred to the targeted/intensive social/emotional team.

The coach, parent(s), athletic director, or the athlete him/herself may do this referral.

TRYOUTS/CUTS FOR ATHLETIC TEAMS

It is our intent to provide athletic opportunities for any student who wishes to participate. However, to fulfill the purpose of the Paine Mountain School District athletics the schools recognize that from time to time we will need to "cut" prospective athletes from a given team. The objective of athletic tryouts and cuts is not to arrive at an arbitrary or predetermined number of players, but to fashion a team consistent with the nature of the particular sport, who can work well together; a team where every member has a meaningful role to play and can be assured a high level of instruction and participation. Please keep in mind that a meaningful role does not necessarily mean equal playing time. Sub-varsity levels are meant to increase the skill level of players and will have fair (not equal) playing time, while maintaining a competitive nature.

To achieve this goal, the number of athletes selected to participate on any given team will be based upon the following criteria:

1. The nature of the sport: team or individual;
2. The participation rules of a given sport (i.e. the number of participants that can actually play at one time);
3. The coach/athlete ratio relative to safety and the ability to provide each athlete with meaningful instruction;
4. The resources available to provide each participant with adequate and safe equipment;
5. The ability to ensure that each athlete will have a meaningful role to play on the team;
6. When cuts are necessary to form a team, the exact nature of the tryouts will be explained to the prospective athletes prior to cuts being made.

PHYSICALS, PERMISSION, INSURANCE

NMHS/WMHS require all athletes to have a physical once every two years. However, if an injury or illness has limited an athlete's ability to participate in athletics, a physical or doctor's release will be required before the athlete is allowed to participate. If a student did not participate in athletics either in their freshmen or junior year and tries out for a team as a sophomore or senior, they must have a physical before participating.

All athletes are required to turn in a Parental Permission Form prior to participation. Proof of health/accident insurance is required prior to participation. This is a VPA as well as a school rule.

Medical release forms and medication forms MUST be turned in before the first practice.

The Prevention of Harassment, Hazing and Bullying of Students

The CVSU is committed to maintaining an environment free from bullying, hazing, and harassment, as defined and required by state and federal laws. Please see the parent/student handbook and/or CVSU website for the complete policy.

CHANGE IN ACTIVITY/SPORT

Except in isolated and unusual cases, students will not be permitted to change activities during the season. Students should make every effort to honor their initial commitment. Before any change is made it is the student's responsibility to discuss the situation with the coach. A student may, however, participate in more than one activity per season, as long as one activity is chosen as a priority, and the student and coaches can agree on an appropriate plan for attending practices and games/performances.

UNIFORMS AND EQUIPMENT

Students are responsible for all uniforms and equipment issued to them. They are responsible for keeping them clean and in good condition before returning them at the end of the season, or if they quit or are dismissed from the team for any reason. Athletes are financially liable for lost or damaged items. The cost will be determined by the amount needed to replace the lost or damaged items. Athletes will be issued a bill for that cost at the end of the school year.

TRANSPORTATION

The school will arrange or provide transportation to all away contests. This may include carpooling, and/or riding with a coach. If busses are scheduled students are to ride the bus to and from those contests. If the coach agrees, and the athletic director has granted permission ahead of time with a signed note, a student may ride home from an activity with his/her parents. Under no circumstance will blanket permission be given to an athlete to ride home for the entire season.

Parents cannot assume responsibility for other athletes, and therefore, cannot provide transportation other than for their own child. The only exceptions would be prior written approval given by BOTH sets of parents and approval by the athletic director, and/or carpooling has been the arranged method of transportation. It is not the school's responsibility to arrange transportation to practices that may be off campus (i.e. alternate school fields, Kreitzberg arena, Memorial Park, the "Falls" etc.) Students and their parents are to come up with arrangements for such circumstances.

AWARDS

Awards will be given based on the traditions at each school. Awards may include, but are not limited to: certificates, varsity letters, pins, plaques, etc.

COMMUNICATIONS

All coaches will be given a school email address for communication purposes with participating students. Each student enrolled has a school email assigned to them. This should be the way all coaches communicate with athletes. Personal emails and texting should be avoided. For important information that needs to get out to everyone the Athletic Director or Principal may send out a Connect-5 message in the form of an email or phone call to the registered home phone number. Coaches will not have access to sending out these messages.

Social media outlets are also a common way of communicating. The schools, teams, coaches, and Athletic Director may have “pages” you can follow for information (ie. Facebook, Twitter etc.). Students being “friends with a coach/advisor’s personal account is strongly discouraged!

COMMUNICATIONS OF ATHLETES CONCERNS: This section is intended to help improve communications between parents, coaches, and administrators, ultimately for the benefit of the students. Involvement in co-curricular activities will allow the student to experience some of the most rewarding times of their lives. However, there will likely be times when things do not go their way or they may disagree with a coach. Therefore, we strongly encourage students to address this directly with their coach. If this doesn't remedy the situation, then a parent/guardian should support their child with addressing the said concern(s).

We ask you to please adhere to the following communication guidelines.

- ◆ Appropriate concerns to discuss with coaches:
 1. The treatment of your child, mentally and physically.
 2. Ways the parents can help the child to improve.
 3. Concerns about your child's behavior
- ◆ Issues not appropriate to discuss with coaches:
 1. Playing time
 2. Team strategy.
 3. Play calling.
 4. Other student-athletes.

Parents should never believe that talking to a coach will either increase or decrease the involvement of the child. Any parent who believes that because of a discussion with a coach that their child is being unfairly singled out is asked to report this to the Director of Athletics or his/her designee, immediately.

Protocol for registering concerns:

1. **Contact the Coach FIRST.** If you cannot reach him/her, call the athletic office and a meeting with the coach will be set up for you.
2. If the meeting does not provide satisfactory resolution, call to set up an appointment with the Director of Athletics.
3. The chain of command will be followed. The coach is the first step and you will be encouraged to speak with them first. If this meeting is unsatisfactory the next step would be the Athletic Director, followed by the Principal, then the Superintendent, and if necessary the last step would be the school board. It is a rare case that a problem cannot be settled by speaking with the coach first so that they are aware of a problem you, or your child, may be having with them. Often coaches are unaware that there may even be a problem.
4. Please do not attempt to confront a coach before or after a practice or contest. These can be emotional times for both parties and meetings of this nature are rarely productive.

NON-SCHOOL ATHLETICS

There is considerable pressure on athletes to work on their sport year-round. The Athletic Department is concerned that some athletes are overdoing it. However, we recognize that some athletes, in order to realize their goals, need to put in additional time beyond that of a high school season. We urge parents to help their children find "balance" in their busy lives.

In the event that there is a conflict between a NMHS/WMHS sport and a non-school sport, it is expected that the athletes of NMHS/WMHS will first honor their commitment to the school team.

If any athlete is "pressured" to play a sport in or outside of the school setting it must be reported immediately to the administration, without fear of reprisal. It should also be noted that playing a sport outside of school while playing the same sport for the school is against VPA by-laws.

DUE PROCESS

Any violation of rules, regulations, and/or policies will require a meeting between the athlete and the Athletic Director or his/her designee. The athlete's parents will be contacted of such a meeting and can attend, should they choose to do so. The athlete will not be permitted to participate in the program until the due process meeting is held to determine the athlete's status.

DISCLAIMER

Co-curricular activities by their nature, have an inherent risk of injury. These injuries may include- but not limited to (cuts, bruises, broken bones, sprains, strains, concussions, or even more serious injuries). The Paine Mountain School District will make every reasonable effort to ensure safety of all participants.

By signing this document you are accepting the inherent risk and will not hold the Paine Mountain School District responsible for injuries incurred during participation. You are also acknowledging that you have read and understand this Co-curricular contract and have received the proper information about concussions and return to learn/play guidelines.

Parent/Guardian: _____ Date: _____

Student Participant: _____ Date: _____