

## MONTOURSVILLE AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT

### ATHLETIC HANDBOOK

#### Principal

The high school principal is responsible to the Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association (P.I.A.A.) in all matters pertaining to interscholastic athletic relations. He may delegate some of these powers but such delegation shall not relieve him of responsibility for any infraction, by his school, of the Constitution and By-Laws of the P.I.A.A.

The principal shall have the following powers and duties:

- A. To have control over all interscholastic athletic relations in which his school participates. This applies to interscholastic athletics for both boys and girls.
- B. To sanction all contests in which his school participates, and to notify the P.I.A.A. Executive Director, within ten days, if his school has entered a contest that he has not sanctioned.
- C. To exclude any contestant who, because of bad habits, or improper conduct, would not represent his school in a becoming manner, and also to exclude any contestant who has suffered serious illness or injury until the contestant is pronounced physically fit by the school physician, or if none is employed, by another licensed physician.
- D. To be responsible for the treatment of all visitors and officials attending contests conducted by his school. Penalties may be imposed upon a member school whose principal fails to provide reasonable protection for officials and visitors at home games. If a game is played at a neutral place, the principals of the participating schools shall be held jointly responsible for this protection. In such a case, penalties may be imposed upon either or both of the schools.
- E. Policy 824 Applies (See last section of handbook)

#### Athletic Director

The athletic director shall be the coordinator of all athletic activities and shall be the representative of the principal in athletic matters involving the school. He/she shall have the delegated authority and responsibility to fulfill the following duties and responsibilities:

- A. Schedule all interscholastic games not scheduled by the league.
- B. Contact, assign, and pay officials for all home games.
- C. Arrange for transportation for all away games.
- D. Arrange all details of home games.
- E. Arrange to receive all visiting teams.
  1. See that dressing rooms are available.

- 2. Advise visiting faculty manager and coaches of details such as time of game, officials, etc.
- F. Take care of seating of the students, band members, and adults at the games.
- G. Arrange for operation of the scoreboard and the chains for football, also scoring tables and clocks for basketball, wrestling and soccer.
- H. Take care of newspaper publicity, advertising, and programs.
- I. Arrange for the mats to be placed in the gym for wrestling matches and to be put away after the matches.
- J. Arrange all details for the sale and collection of tickets at athletic contests.
- K. Work with the coaches to take care of details that are not the coaches' responsibility.
- L. Solicit and summarize all athletic requisitions.
- M. Work with administration in preparation of the athletic budget.
- N. Conduct an annual inventory of athletic supplies and equipment.
- O. Any other duties deemed necessary for carrying out the athletic program assigned by the administration.
- P. Policy 824 Applies (See last section of handbook)

### **Game Managers**

The Game Managers shall assist the Athletic Director in running home events. They shall be responsible for/to:

- A. Opening the facility.
- B. Arrange to receive all visiting teams.
  - 1. See that dressing rooms are available.
  - 2. Advise visiting faculty manager and coaches of details such as time of game, officials, etc.
- C. Arrange details for the sale and collection of tickets at all athletic events for which they are responsible.
- D. Any other duties deemed necessary for carrying out the athletic program assigned by the administration or athletic director.
- E. Policy 824 Applies (See last section of handbook)

### **Head Coach (All Sports)**

The head coach and assistants shall be leaders of young men and women. It is expected that the head coach and assistants will be consistent and fair in developing and implementing all rules and regulations that apply to the athletes whom they coach. The coaches will model personal behavior by their example as well as by their words.

The head coach shall be primarily responsible for:

- A. Traveling with the team and being responsible for each team member's behavior.
- A. Monitoring player conduct on the bus, in the locker room, on the playing field or gym, and any place where the athlete is affiliated with our athletic team.

- B. Follow the athlete's academic progress and attendance and helping the athlete maintain his/her academic eligibility.
- C. Assuming responsibility for all school district equipment for their sport.
- D. Being in charge of team discipline.
- E. Assigning all duties to assistant coaches under their jurisdiction.
- F. Checking the locker room, showers and equipment room after each practice session and game.
- G. The head coach or a designated staff member should not leave the practice, game, or locker area until the players have all departed.
- I. Cooperating with the athletic director concerning schedules, time of games, officials, transportation, dressing facilities and eligibility lists. The athletic director shall have the sole responsibility for scheduling all scrimmages and games.
- J. Being responsible for submitting all medical reports for a player or a coach, within 24 hours following an injury to the principal's office.
- K. Informing the athletic director of the equipment needed for a game at least two days prior to the game.
- L. Developing a set of rules governing the conduct of all squad members and informing the players and staff that all rules should be followed.
- M. Determining the eligibility of any player who refuses to adhere to the rules of conduct set by the coach.
- N. Developing a student eligibility list and completing any additional duties assigned by the athletic director or the administration.
- O. Ensuring that all team members are on the bus when returning to MAHS from an away event.
- P. All coaches are strongly encouraged to have a parent meeting before the beginning of the season.
- Q. All coaches are required to have a Code of Conduct which is to be distributed to athletes prior to or at the first practice. Parents should receive a copy at the parents' meeting. The Code of Conduct should include the players' rules and responsibilities, disciplinary actions for rule infractions, and any other pertinent information. The Code of Conduct must be reviewed and approved by the Athletic Director before distribution.
- R. Checking the condition of the playing fields or surfaces and notifying the Athletic Director of any unsafe playing conditions.
- S. No Coaches (Head, Assistant or Volunteer) are permitted to consume alcoholic beverages on any trips or athletic events in which they are supervising athletes from our school district.
- T. Policy 824 Applies (See last section of handbook)

## **Programs Coordinated by the Head Coach**

The high school head coach shall be the coordinator of all activity in his/her program, grades 7 through 12. The junior high athletic program shall be considered an extension of the high school program. The coaches at these levels are considered assistant coaches who are required to follow the program set up by the head coach and perform duties assigned by the head coach. Should a JH position become available, it is the head coach's responsibility to present a candidate to the Principal and Athletic Director for hire.

## **Guidance on Team Prayer**

When acting in their official capacities as representatives of the school district, teachers, school administrators, and other school employees, including paid coaches and volunteer coaches, are prohibited by the Establishment Clause from encouraging or discouraging prayer, and from actively participating in such activity with students and student-athletes.

### **Student led prayer is constitutionally protected.**

The Establishment Clause of the First Amendment prohibits schools from supporting religion, and the Free Exercise Clause permits students to exercise their religious freedoms.

## **Assistant Coaches**

Assistant coaches shall carry out the responsibilities delegated to them by the head coach. Assistant coaches are expected to fulfill all obligations in the sport for which they have been appointed. Policy 824 Applies (See last section of handbook).

## **Disqualification Rule**

Any player/and or coach who is disqualified from a PIAA athletic event shall receive the minimum one (1) game suspension as specified by the PIAA. Upon that player's/and or coach's second disqualification, they shall receive the minimum one (1) game suspension by the PIAA and an additional one (1) game levied by the district (total 2 games). Upon the player's/ and or the coach's third disqualification they shall receive the minimum one (1) game suspension by the PIAA and an additional two (2) game suspension levied by the district (total 3 games). The third disqualification may result in the player's/ and or coach's dismissal from the team. After each disqualification the player/and or coach will be required to meet with the principal and or athletic director to discuss the reasons for disqualification and to determine if any other suspensions are necessary. Any coach that is disqualified may NOT accompany the team to the next team event and is prohibited by the PIAA to be at the site of the event.

## **Purchasing Uniforms**

The purchasing of all uniforms for athletic teams must be approved by the Athletic Director **and** the Principal.

## **Team Pictures**

Any team pictures that include Athletes out of team uniforms and used for promotional purposes must adhere to the school dress code.

## **Equipment (in cooperation with the Athletic Director)**

The cost of equipment ordered each year shall not exceed the amount specified in the athletic budget.

The head coach shall be responsible for:

1. Scheduling and distributing equipment
2. Cleaning of equipment during the season
3. Reporting the loss or damage of equipment to the athletic director
4. Submitting a complete inventory of equipment and storing equipment at the end of the season.
5. Checking to see that all equipment is used properly and worn correctly
6. Collecting **all** equipment.

## **Sports Insurance**

Montoursville Area School District has purchased sports accident insurance for the athletes who participate in senior and junior high interscholastic sports, band, cheerleading as well as gym classes (grades K-12) and intramurals (grades K-12). In the event of an injury to your child while participating in one of these activities, the incident should be reported immediately to either a coach, athletic director, or school nurse. Procedure for filing a claim and a breakdown of the benefits are available from the building secretary and will be distributed along with a claim form for completion following an injury.

Voluntary insurance is available to be purchased for your child for activities other than those listed above, as they are not covered by the school district's insurance. While the school district is making the insurance available to you, it is not underwriting the plan or guaranteeing the payment of claims. Responsibility for the settlement of claims rests entirely between the policyholder and the company.

Coaches who are injured should notify the business office and file a Workman's Compensation claim.

### **Expenses/Meal Allowance**

All planned trip expenses, coaching clinics, scouting, and other expenses must be approved by the school board and/or the superintendent. There is a meal allowance of \$10.00 per day for all participants in tournament or team competition involving long-distance travel. Before utilizing this allowance, you must receive prior approval from the high school principal. All receipts submitted must be itemized and received within 1 month of the date of the receipt.

### **Injury Procedures**

Each coach shall verify that every participant is properly insured before permitting him or her to participate in any practice or contest.

1. In the event of an injury, the coach will work with the trainer (if available) to see that the injured player receives the necessary first aid and emergency care. The coach, in the absence of a trainer, will do what is necessary but not go beyond his/her training or what is expected of him/her.
2. In the event that any player is in serious need of a physician's aid, the coach shall be responsible for obtaining the services of a doctor or ambulance in the absence of a trainer. The coach (trainer) shall be responsible for notifying the parents of the player as to the nature and extent of the injury.
3. In the event of an injury that requires professional aid, the coach (trainer) shall be responsible for seeing to it that the injured player has reported the necessity of this professional aid to the high school secretary.
4. For those athletes that do not have school insurance, the coach shall assist the trainer in filling out the accident and injury forms and sending the original to the principal's office.
5. The coach must abide by the trainer's decision as to whether a player may participate in practices or in a game. A physician may make the final decision.

### **Safety in Youth Sports Act**

1. All coaches must complete an online training course in concussion management. This applies to any member of the staff, paid or volunteer at all levels.
2. Each coach must print a completion certificate and submit to the athletic office before the first day of practice, but not prior to July 1<sup>st</sup>.
3. This is to be done each year of employment.
4. Every athlete will be required to complete baseline testing via ImPACT with the Athletic Trainer every two years.
5. The school physician has the final say in any disagreements regarding an athlete's return to play after suffering a concussion.

In accordance with Section 3(F) of the Safety in Youth Sports Act, the following penalties apply to coaches who either (1) do not remove an athlete from play who displays signs/symptoms of a concussion or (2) attempts to return an athlete to play who has been removed after displaying concussion signs/symptoms and has not been evaluated and cleared for return to play in writing by an appropriate medical professional:

1. For the first violation, suspension from coaching any athletic activity for the remainder of the season.
2. For the second violation, suspension from coaching any athletic activity for the remainder of the season and for the next season.
3. For a third violation, permanent suspension from coaching any athletic activity.

### **Awards for Interscholastic Athletics**

The criteria for awarding a letter shall be an evaluation by the coach or coaches concerning the amount of game and/or meet time played by the athlete. The criteria should be listed in the Code of Conduct for each sport.

### **Parent Consent**

A pupil shall be eligible for practice or participation in any sport only when there is on file with the principal a PIAA certificate of consent which is signed by his/her parent or guardian.

### **Physical Examination**

No pupil shall be eligible to represent the high school in any interscholastic athletic contest unless they have been examined by a licensed physician of medicine before the first sports season of that academic year. ***No pupil shall be permitted to practice until they have turned in paperwork stating that they have satisfactorily passed a physical. It is the coach's responsibility to enforce this policy.*** This includes cheerleaders. No physicals may be administered before June 1<sup>st</sup> according to PIAA guidelines. Physicals are not to be accepted at practice. Once an athlete has passed a physical he/she needs only to be re-certified for participating in another sports season or re-evaluated if an injury or illness occurs.

The coach will receive a list everyday for the first week of practice stating who is eligible for practice. Any student not on the list is not permitted to practice for one or both of the following reasons: No physical on file, no pay to play fee on file.

### **Scholastic Eligibility**

Scholastic eligibility shall be determined by the pupil's progress in each subject of an approved curriculum. In order to be eligible for interscholastic athletic competition, an athlete may not be failing more than 1 class at any given time.

Pupils who are enrolled for the first time must comply with the requirements of the scholarship rules. The standing required for the preceding semester shall be obtained from the record of the last school which the pupil has attended.

Students who are scholastically ineligible are not permitted to participate in any PIAA event. However, they are permitted to practice upon the coaches' request.

Students who are scholastically ineligible are not permitted to ride on the team bus if it involves losing school time. Students may ride the bus upon coaches' request if no loss of school time is involved.

Students who fail to meet the weekly scholastic eligibility rules shall be ineligible from Sunday thru Saturday of the following week in which eligibility is determined. Students who fail

to meet the scholastic eligibility rules at the end of a marking period shall be ineligible for 15 school days beginning the day the report cards are issued or the first 15 days of the season for Fall Athletes. Students who are ineligible for a consecutive period of time may be dismissed from the team at the coach's discretion.

### **Attendance at School**

In order to be eligible to participate in any interscholastic contest, a pupil must have been regularly enrolled in a secondary school and in full-time attendance thereafter.

Students are required to be in school by **10:41am** on the day of an athletic event/practice if they wish to participate in that event/practice. Please note that the student will still be marked tardy, and the school tardy policy will be followed in these instances. If it appears that a student will miss part of the academic day, he/she must get approval from the principal or assistant principal before the start of school (8:20 a.m.). The student must report at the agreed-upon time. Exceptions, for extenuating circumstances such as a doctor's appointment (**a doctor's note will be required**), college visitation, or funerals may be granted by the administration. Students not eligible for practice due to tardiness may not practice or accompany the team on any trips. Students may observe practice upon coaches' request, but may not participate. If there is an athletic event, the student may ride the team bus if he/she does not miss any school time. If loss of school time is involved the student is not permitted to ride the bus. The coach will decide whether or not the student can ride the team bus or attend the athletic event, if this takes place after school.

### **Cutting Players:**

The following applies for cutting players at all levels:

- 1.) Notify players and parents that cuts will be made.
- 2.) Notify players of the date cuts are to be made – there must a minimum of three days of practice.
- 3.) Make sure you have an evaluation sheet for each player.
- 4.) Players cut are to be notified by posting the names of the players who made the team (not the names of the players that are cut).
- 5.) Coaches must offer the cut players the opportunity to meet and discuss the evaluation and areas of improvement if player requests so. If player does not request a meeting, then no meeting is necessary.

### **Scouting**

The school district provides scouting expenses for coaches to aid the coaching staff in their preparation for opponents. Therefore, head coaches should use good judgment in the assignment of scouting. The following guidelines should be followed in scouting.

1. Funds for scouting expenditures shall be established by the board and set forth in the athletic budget for each sport. Each coach is expected to operate within the amount set in the budget.
2. An opponent should not be scouted more than two (2) times.

3. Any scouting that does not fall within these guidelines must be approved by the administration.

### **Publicity--Reporting Scores of Games**

Each coach should work to gain publicity for his/her teams; in order to get this deserved recognition, please contact the local media by **calling in all scores to the Sun-Gazette @ 326-1551 ext. 3127**, fax 326-0314 Attn: Sports Dept. or email [newsroom@sungazette.com](mailto:newsroom@sungazette.com) .

### **Sunday and Holiday Practices**

1. P.I.A.A. rules permit Sunday practices. PIAA limits the number of practices or games to 6 days in a calendar week. ***These will be scheduled only after approval has been granted by the principal and the athletic director.***
2. There will be no JH practices on Sundays.
3. Teams will be permitted to practice in school facilities on holidays when arrangements are made with the building principal and the athletic director. However, practices should not be scheduled on Thanksgiving or Christmas day. It shall be the responsibility of the coach to notify the Athletic Director as to the time of practice.

### **Transportation**

All buses will be ordered by the athletic director. The coach and the athletic director will discuss the itinerary necessary for all trips. It shall be the responsibility of the coach to have members of his/her squad ready to board the bus at the designated time. The head coach must exercise control and maintain proper supervision of his/her squad so that the bus is not damaged in any way.

It is the responsibility of the coach to make sure that all the members of his/her squad are on the bus for the return trip home. All athletes will be required to ride to and from all away events on the team bus. Any athlete whose circumstances require that he/she cannot ride the bus must submit a written note by his/her parents asking that their son/daughter ride with his/her parents. The coach will then decide as to whether or not this permission will be granted. If any other circumstances arise, then the principal or athletic director will make the decision.

### **Practice**

It shall be the responsibility of each coach to ensure that his/her players do not enter any part of the building or use any facilities except those necessary for practice. To assure observance, the coach must:

1. Wait until all players have left before the coach leaves. (This includes athletes who ride the activity bus.)
2. Make sure the practice area and locker rooms are secure and all lights are turned off before departing.
3. ***All practices involving the three district gyms MUST be scheduled through the Athletic office. You run the risk of losing the gym for another organization that is scheduled.***

Students shall be ineligible to practice if:

1. They are tardy to school (after 10:41 a.m.).
2. They are scholastically ineligible (they are not permitted to ride the team bus to any game if it involves missing school time).
  - a. Students who are scholastically ineligible are permitted to practice, but are not permitted to scrimmage or play in any PIAA events.
3. They have in-school suspension (they are not permitted to ride the team bus to any games if it involves missing school time). They may observe practice upon the coaches' request.
4. They have out of school suspension (they may not attend practice or participate in any games) until suspension has been served.

### **Suspensions**

Students may not practice or participate in any PIAA events while satisfying in or out of school suspension. A student satisfying out of school suspension shall not be eligible for any practices or games until the suspension has been served.

Students satisfying in-school suspension are not permitted to practice or play during the days of suspension. Students may attend practice to observe upon coaches' request. Students may attend games if there is no loss of school time upon coaches' request. In-school suspensions will not apply to Saturday events. Athletes serving Saturday school will be permitted to participate in Saturday events, if the event begins after 11:30 am. Athletes serving out of school suspension will not be permitted to participate in Saturday events if the suspension is Thursday, Friday, Monday or Friday, Monday, Tuesday.

### **Scrimmages**

Pre-season scrimmage games shall be scheduled at times when student athletes will not be required to be dismissed from school. The athletic director shall schedule all scrimmages.

### **In-Service Days/Days School is not in Session**

Please note the following in your practice organization:

1. Intramurals will not be held on in-service days or days school is not in session.
2. Activity buses will not run on in-service days or days when school is not in session.
3. On in-service days, interscholastic athletics will not begin practice until 3:30 P.M.; no athletes will be permitted in the locker room area before 3:30 P.M.

### **School Closing and Co-Curricular Events**

In the event of a weather emergency, all co-curricular events, practices, performances or meetings will automatically be cancelled when school is closed for the day.

## **Factors to be Considered in Postponing Games**

If a game is considered for postponement due to weather or any other factor not conducive to good game conditions, the athletic director, coach, principal and superintendent will consider the following:

1. Playing conditions of the playing surface
2. Safe travel
3. Damage to the playing surface
4. Factors involving gate receipts
5. Consideration of band members and uniforms

## **P.I.A.A. BY-LAWS (ATHLETIC COURTESY)**

**Section 1. Athletics should foster clean sports. It is the privilege and duty of every person connected with athletics to exemplify these principles in his own actions and earnestly advocate them before others.**

- A. The rules of the game are to be regarded as mutual agreements, the spirit or letter of which no honorable person would break. The stealing of advantage in sport is theft.
- B. No advantages are to be sought over others except those in which the game is understood to show superiority.
- C. Unsportsmanlike or unfair means are not to be used even when opponents use them.
- D. Visiting teams are to be honored guests of the home team, and should be treated as such.
- E. No action is to be taken nor course of conduct pursued that would seem unsportsmanlike or dishonorable if known to one's opponent or the public.
- F. Remember that a student spectator represents his school the same as does the athlete.
- G. *Any spectator who continually evidences poor sportsmanship should be requested not to attend future contests.*
- H. Decisions of officials are to be abided by, even when they seem unfair.
- I. Officials and opponents are to be regarded and treated as honest in intention. In games when opponents conduct themselves in an unbecoming manner, and when officials are manifestly dishonest or incompetent, future relationship with them should be avoided.
- J. Good points in others should be appreciated and suitable recognition given.
- K. The practice of "booing" is regarded as discourteous and unsportsmanlike.

## **ETHICS PERTAINING TO HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETICS**

The Code of Ethics Pertaining to High School Athletics is to be regarded, not only as recommendation, but as rules governing the conduct of schools, the coach, officials, athletic directors, principals, and the public. **Policy 824 Applies (See last section of handbook)**

### **Section 1. The School Should:**

Conduct itself in a sportsmanlike manner.

### **Section 2. The Coach Should:**

- A. Have a fair, unprejudiced relationship to players.

- B. Teach athletes to win through legitimate means only. Striving to win at any cost is distinctly unethical.
- C. Give opponents full credit when they win.
- D. Control his temper at all times.
- E. Discourage profanity and obscene language at all times.
- F. Recommend the use of competent officials and support their decision. He should not criticize the actions or decisions of officials before players or spectators.
- G. Counteract unfounded rumors of questionable practices by opponents. To establish the truth or falsity of these rumors he should refer them directly to the authorities of the school concerned.
- H. Not solicit players from other schools.

**(Section 3 is purposely omitted)**

**Section 4. The Athletic Director Should:**

- A. Arrange only schedules that are educationally and physically sound for the athlete.
- B. Have a definite and mutual understanding with other athletic directors regarding officials.
- C. Treat visiting teams and officials as guests.
- D. The Athletic Director and the community should co-operate in developing a wholesome athletic program.

**Section 5. The Principal Should:**

- A. Be honest in certification of players, refusing certification of any player where a lack of thoroughly reliable information makes possible his ineligibility.
- B. Endeavor to foresee possible misunderstandings with other schools, and as far as possible settle them before they materialize.
- C. Pass on to another school's officials any seemingly authentic information that calls into question the eligibility of any of their players.
- D. Encourage the school's support of its teams, but never at the expense of friendly relations.

**ASSUMED NAME**

A pupil who participates in an interscholastic athletic contest under a name other than his own shall be ineligible for one year from the date of such participation.

**ATHLETIC RELATIONS**

**Section 1. Teams Which Member Schools May Play.**

- A. No contest shall be played with another school not belonging to this Association (P.I.A.A.), unless its eligibility rules, for both schools and contestant, meet the requirements of the P.I.A.A.
- B. Contests with Alumni where sponsored by school authorities are permitted except in Football and Wrestling.

**Section 2. Contests and Practices Limited to Six Days Per Calendar Week During Regular Season.**

No team representing any P.I.A.A. member school, no individual member or members of such team, and no individual representing any P.I.A.A. member school, may practice or

participate in any interscholastic athletic contest on more than six days in any calendar week during the regular season.

### **DISQUALIFICATION FROM NEXT CONTEST**

The PIAA NEWSLETTER will publish the name of any member school that experiences an ejection of a player or a coach from the interscholastic athletic contest by a P.I.A.A.-registered official in that sport for unsportsmanlike conduct or flagrant misconduct. **Any coach or player ejected for unsportsmanlike conduct or flagrant misconduct shall be disqualified from coaching or participating in the next contest at the same level.**

### **Athletic Hydration Guidelines**

Fluid Needs During Exercise:

- ✓ Weight loss during exercise should be less than two percent of pre-exercise body weight. This can be tracked on a weight chart.
- ✓ Water should be administered during the course of each practice.
- ✓ Water is recommended for the best results with fluid replacement.
- ✓ Salt should never be added to drinks, and salt tablets should be avoided.
- ✓ A Heat Index chart should be followed to determine if practices/contests should be held:
  - The chart should come from a reputable source like the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Association.
  - A relative humidity of 35 percent and a temperature of 95 degrees Fahrenheit are likely to cause heat illness, with heat stroke very likely.
  - A relative humidity of 70 percent and a temperature of 95 degrees Fahrenheit are very likely to cause heat illness, with heat stroke very likely.

It is the responsibility of the Head Coach to provide cool water at all practices and games. Ice is available in the Athletic Training Room at the high school and in the gym closet at the middle school.

### **Board of School Directors**

The board of school directors has established general policies regarding the conduct of athletic programs within the Montoursville Area School District and makes all such decisions as are required by law.

### **Athletic Team Participation – gender discrimination and participation policy**

The Montoursville Area School District shall not discriminate against student athletes on the basis of their gender, and will operate its athletic program in accordance with the requirements of Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (20 U.S.C. Section 1681) and regulations properly promulgated thereunder.

In most fields of athletic endeavor, the District operates separate teams for members of each gender, including, at the time of adoption of this policy, basketball, baseball/softball, soccer, tennis and track. Where separate gender-based teams are available, a student athlete is eligible only to participate on the team that matches the athlete's gender.

### **Athletic Coaching Policies**

The following athletic coaching policies will apply to all coaches in this district.

1. Coaches will not proselytize for the particular sport.
2. Coaches will not place undue pressure on athletes to attend summer camps.
3. Coaches will limit all interscholastic practice sessions to two hours.
4. Coaches will be limited to one two-hour practice session on any day that school is in session.
5. Coaches will not allow athletes to wear individual names on their school athletic uniforms.
6. Coaches will not administer, or cause to be administered, psychological or attitudinal examinations of any kind to prospective players or members of athletic teams.
7. Coaches who willfully violate any of these policies will place their coaching position in jeopardy.
8. Coaches will comply with all P.I.A.A. and district rules and regulations pertaining to athletic programs.
9. Coaches will vacate the coaching room after their individual coaching season has ended in order that the other coaches may utilize the facility.

### **Participation in High School Athletic Programs**

1. Any student in grades 7, 8, or 9 will be eligible for selection to the junior high team. Students selected will remain with that team for the entire season unless the student chooses otherwise. Ninth graders are eligible for selection to the JV or Varsity teams according to P.I.A.A. regulations.
2. No limit will be established on the number of students that may be selected from grades 7, 8, or 9 for the junior high school teams.
3. Selection of students for the junior high teams will be made solely by the junior high coaches in consultation with the head coaches.
4. All students comprising the junior high team will be eligible for participation in junior high school tournaments.

5. Preliminary scrimmages or matches may be arranged by the head junior high school coach for non-varsity members (grades 7, 8, or 9) of the junior high team at regularly scheduled junior high matches or games.

Each junior high athletic team will be authorized to participate in no more than two post-season tournaments. Additionally, individual junior high athletes may participate in no more than two post season tournaments.

### **P.I.A.A.**

The Montoursville Area School District's Interscholastic Athletic Program will abide by all athletic regulations set up by the P.I.A.A. constitution and by-laws.

### **Intramural Programs: Middle School and High School**

1. The number of intramural coaches will be determined by the number of students in these programs.
2. Selection of intramural coaches will be made by the administration.
3. Intramural coaches will be paid on the basis of a rate approved by the board.
4. Intramural programs will be offered in specific areas of primary interest to the students.

### **Ineligibility for Participation in Co-Curricular Activities and School Sponsored Events**

The Montoursville Area School District expects reasonable and responsible behavior from all members of the student body. For students who choose to participate in co-curricular activities or school-sponsored events, the School Board recognizes that coaches or advisers have the right, and are expected, to establish and enforce their own rules regarding behavior. However, with regard to use of alcohol, unlawful controlled substances (hereafter generically referred to as "drugs"), and criminal activity, the School Board wishes to establish certain minimum standards. The School Board believes that students who wish to participate in these activities, and who therefore act as role models for other students and representatives of the District in the community, should be expected to refrain from using alcohol, drugs or engaging in criminal activity. Therefore, students who use alcohol or drugs or are convicted of misdemeanors or felonies during the school co-curricular activity year shall be subject to the conditions stated below. For purposes of this policy, an adjudication of delinquency by a juvenile court based upon a finding of commission of an act that violates the Pennsylvania Crimes Code shall be considered the equivalent of a conviction.

Any student who, on the first offense, is observed or is known to have been drinking alcohol or using drugs by any school employee or others having authority in such matters shall be ineligible for participation in any co-curricular activity or school-sponsored event for 30 calendar days. The date of ineligibility shall begin on the latter of (a) the date of the infraction or (b) the date on which the Superintendent learns of the infraction.

Any student who, on the first offense, is convicted of any type of misdemeanor or felony shall be ineligible for participation in any co-curricular activity or school-sponsored event for 30 calendar days. The date of ineligibility shall begin on the latter of (a) the date of the conviction or (b) the date on which the Superintendent learns of the infraction.

Any student who commits a second offense involving alcohol, drugs or conviction of

misdemeanor or felony shall be ineligible for participation in any co-curricular activity or school-sponsored event for an additional 90 calendar days. The date of ineligibility shall begin on the latter of (a) the date of the infraction /conviction or (b) the date on which the Superintendent learns of the infraction/conviction.

Any student who commits a third or subsequent offense involving alcohol, drugs or conviction of misdemeanor or felony shall be ineligible for participation in any co-curricular activity or school-sponsored event for the remainder of that school year.

## **Policy 824: Maintaining Professional Boundaries**

### **Authority**

This policy applies to district employees, volunteers, student teachers, and independent contractors and their employees who interact with students or are present on school grounds. For purposes of this policy, such individuals are referred to collectively as **adults**. The term **adults** as used in this policy, does not include district students who perform services on a volunteer or compensated basis.

All adults shall be expected to maintain professional, moral and ethical relationships with district students that are conducive to an effective, safe learning environment. This policy addresses a range of behaviors that include not only obviously unlawful or improper interactions with students, but also precursor grooming and other boundary-blurring behaviors that can lead to more egregious misconduct.

The Board directs that all adults shall be informed of conduct that is prohibited and the disciplinary actions that may be applied for violation of Board policies, administrative regulations, rules and procedures. [\[1\]](#)

This policy is not intended to interfere with appropriate pre-existing personal relationships between adults and students and their families that exist independently of the district or to interfere with participation in civic, religious or other outside organizations that include district students.

### **Definition**

For purposes of this policy, **legitimate educational reasons** include matters or communications related to teaching, counseling, athletics, extracurricular activities, treatment of a student's physical injury or other medical needs, school administration or other purposes within the scope of the adult's assigned job duties.

### **Delegation of Responsibility**

The Superintendent or designee shall annually inform students, parents/guardians, and all adults regarding the contents of this Board policy through employee and student handbooks, posting on the district website, and by other appropriate methods.

The building principal or designee shall be available to answer questions about behaviors or activities that may violate professional boundaries as defined in this policy.

Independent contractors doing business with the district shall ensure that their employees who have interaction with students or are present on school grounds are informed of the provisions of this policy. [\[2\]](#)

### **Guidelines**

Adults shall establish and maintain appropriate personal boundaries with students and not engage in any behavior that is prohibited by this policy or that creates the appearance of prohibited behavior.

### Prohibited Conduct

#### *Romantic or Sexual Relationships -*

Adults shall be prohibited from dating, courting, or entering into or attempting to form a romantic or sexual relationship with any student enrolled in the district, regardless of the student's age. Students of any age are not legally capable of consenting to romantic or sexual interactions with adults.[\[3\]](#)[\[4\]](#)

Prohibited romantic or sexual interaction involving students includes, but is not limited to:

1. Sexual physical contact.
2. Romantic flirtation, propositions, or sexual remarks.
3. Sexual slurs, leering, epithets, sexual or derogatory comments.
4. Personal comments about a student's body.
5. Sexual jokes, notes, stories, drawings, gestures or pictures.
6. Spreading sexual or romantic rumors.
7. Touching a student's body or clothes in a sexual or intimate way.
8. Accepting massages, or offering or giving massages other than in the course of injury care administered by an athletic trainer, coach, or health care provider.
9. Restricting a student's freedom of movement in a sexually intimidating or provocative manner.
10. Displaying or transmitting sexual objects, pictures, or depictions.

#### *Social Interactions -*

In order to maintain professional boundaries, adults shall ensure that their interactions with students are appropriate.

Examples of prohibited conduct that violates professional boundaries include, but are not limited to:

1. Disclosing personal, sexual, family, employment concerns or other private matters to one or more students.
2. Exchanging notes, emails or other communications of a personal nature with a student.
3. Giving personal gifts, cards or letters to a student without written approval from the building principal.
4. Touching students without a legitimate educational reason. (Reasons could include the need for assistance when injured, a kindergartner having a toileting accident and requiring assistance, appropriate coaching instruction, or appropriate music instruction).
5. Singling out a particular student or students for personal attention or friendship beyond the ordinary professional adult-student relationship.
6. Taking a student out of class without a legitimate educational reason.
7. Being alone with a student behind closed doors without a legitimate educational reason.
8. Initiating or extending contact with a student beyond the school day or outside of class times without a legitimate educational reason.
9. Sending or accompanying a student on personal errands.
10. Inviting a student to the adult's home.
11. Going to a student's home without a legitimate educational reason.
12. Taking a student on outings without prior notification to and approval from both the parent/guardian and the building principal.
13. Giving a student a ride alone in a vehicle in a nonemergency situation without prior notification to and approval from both the parent/guardian and the building principal.
14. Addressing students or permitting students to address adults with personalized terms of endearment, pet names, or otherwise in an overly familiar manner.
15. Telling a student personal secrets or sharing personal secrets with a student.
16. For adults who are not guidance/counseling staff, psychologists, social workers or other adults with designated responsibilities to counsel students, encouraging students to confide their personal or family problems and/or relationships. If a student initiates such discussions, the student should be referred to the appropriate school resource.

17. Furnishing alcohol, drugs or tobacco to a student or being present where any student is consuming these substances.

18. Engaging in harassing or discriminatory conduct prohibited by other district policies or by state or federal law and regulations.[5][6]

### *Electronic Communications -*

For purposes of this policy, **electronic communication** shall mean a communication transmitted by means of an electronic device including, but not limited to, a telephone, cellular telephone, computer, computer network, personal data assistant or pager. Electronic communications include, but are not limited to, emails, instant messages and communications made by means of an Internet website, including social media and other networking websites.

As with other forms of communication, when communicating electronically, adults shall maintain professional boundaries with students.

Electronic communication with students shall be for legitimate educational reasons only.

When available, district-provided email or other district-provided communication devices or platforms shall be used when communicating electronically with students. The use of district-provided email or other district-provided communication devices or platforms shall be in accordance with district policies and procedures.[7]

All electronic communications from coaches and advisors to team or club members shall be sent in a single communication to all participating team or club members, except for communications concerning an individual student's medical or academic privacy matters, in which case the communications will be copied to the building principal. In the case of sports teams under the direction of the Athletic Director, such medical or academic communications shall also be copied to the Athletic Director.

Adults shall not follow or accept requests for current students to be friends or connections on personal social networking sites and shall not create any networking site for communication with students other than those provided by the district for this purpose, without the prior written approval of the building principal.

### Exceptions

An emergency situation or a legitimate educational reason may justify deviation from the rules regarding communication or methods for maintaining professional boundaries set out in this policy. The adult shall be prepared to articulate the reason for any deviation from the requirements of this policy and must demonstrate that s/he has maintained an appropriate relationship with the student.

Under no circumstance will an educational or other reason justify deviation from the "Romantic and Sexual Relationships" section of this policy.

There will be circumstances where personal relationships develop between an adult and a student's family, e.g. when their children become friends. This policy is not intended to interfere with such relationships or to limit activities that are normally consistent with such relationships. Adults are strongly encouraged to maintain professional boundaries appropriate to the nature of the activity.

It is understood that many adults are involved in various other roles in the community through nondistrict-related civic, religious, athletic, scouting or other organizations and programs whose participants may include district students. Such community involvement is commendable, and this policy is not intended to interfere with or restrict an adult's ability to serve in those roles; however, adults are strongly encouraged to maintain professional boundaries appropriate to the nature of the activity with regard to all youth with whom they interact in the course of their community involvement.

### Reporting Inappropriate or Suspicious Conduct

Any person, including a student, who has concerns about or is uncomfortable with a relationship or interaction between an adult and a student, shall promptly notify the building principal or Title IX Coordinator. Reports may be made using the Discrimination/Sexual Harassment/Bullying/Hazing/Dating Violence/Retaliation Report Form or by making a general report verbally or in writing. Upon receipt of a report, school staff shall promptly notify the building principal.[5][8]

All district employees, independent contractors and volunteers who have reasonable cause to suspect that a child is the victim of child abuse, shall immediately report the suspected abuse, in accordance with applicable law, regulations and Board policy.[9][10]

An educator who knows of any action, inaction or conduct which constitutes sexual abuse or exploitation or sexual misconduct under the Educator Discipline Act shall report such misconduct to the Pennsylvania Department of Education on the required form, and shall report such misconduct to the Superintendent, Title IX Coordinator and his/her immediate supervisor, promptly, but not later than fifteen (15) days following discovery of such misconduct.[5][8][11][12]

If the Superintendent or designee reasonably suspects that conduct being reported involves an incident required to be reported under the Child Protective Services Law, the Educator Discipline Act or the Safe Schools Act, the Superintendent or designee shall make a report, in accordance with applicable law, regulations and Board policy.[9][10][11][12][13][14][15][16][17]

It is a violation of Board policy to retaliate against any person for reporting any action pursuant to this policy or for participating as a witness in any related investigation or hearing.[5][8]

### Investigation

The Title IX Coordinator shall promptly assess and address allegations of inappropriate conduct in accordance with the procedures for reports of discrimination or Title IX sexual harassment.[5][8]

It is understood that some reports made pursuant to this policy will be based on rumors or misunderstandings; the mere fact that the reported adult is cleared of any wrongdoing shall not result in disciplinary action against the person making the report or any witnesses. If as the result of an investigation any individual, including the reported adult, the person making the report, or a witness is found to have knowingly provided false information in making the report or during the investigation or hearings related to the report, or if any individual intentionally obstructs the investigation or hearings, this may be addressed as a violation of this policy and other applicable laws, regulations and Board policies. **Obstruction** includes, but is not limited to, violation of “no contact” orders given to the reported adult, attempting to alter or influence witness testimony, and destruction of or hiding evidence.[5][8][12][18][19][20][21][22][23]

### Disciplinary Action

A district employee who violates this policy may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination, in accordance with all applicable district disciplinary policies and procedures.[8][12][19][19][20]

A volunteer, student teacher, or independent contractor or an employee of an independent contractor who violates this policy may be prohibited from working or serving in district schools for an appropriate period of time or permanently, as determined by the Superintendent or designee.

### Training

The district shall provide training with respect to the provisions of this policy to current and new district employees, volunteers and student teachers subject to this policy.

The district, at its sole discretion, may require independent contractors and their employees who interact with students or are present on school grounds to receive training on this policy and related procedures.