

# **POLSON HIGH SCHOOL**



## **ACTIVITIES HANDBOOK**

**2021-22**

- I. Purpose of activities handbook

- Objectives
- Sportsmanship
- Duties of Head coach/Sponsor/Asst. Coach

II. Polson School District Rules

III. MHSA Rule and Regulations

IV. Polson School Travel Regulations

## **PURPOSE OF AN ACTIVITIES HANDBOOK**

**The purpose of this handbook is to establish rules, procedures, policies, and philosophy as it pertains to the activities program at Polson High School.**

### **PHILOSOPHY OF EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**

A balanced activities program is an essential component in the educational goals of Polson High School. The activities programs provide opportunities for youth to further develop interests and talents in areas such as speech & debate, music, and sports. Participation in these activities should provide many students with a lifetime basis for personal values, work, and leisure activities.

The opportunity for participation in a wide variety of activities from which students may select is a vital part of the student's educational experience. Such participation is a privilege that carries with it responsibilities to the school, the activity, the student body, teammates and the community. The development of learning skills and emotional patterns enables the student to make maximum use of his or her education. Knowledge and skills gained in classes may be applied and developed further through participation in extracurricular activities.

Young people learn a great deal from their participation in activities. Lessons in sportsmanship, teamwork, cooperation, and how to win and lose gracefully are integral parts of all activities. Activities also play an important part in helping the individual student develop a positive self-concept, alert mind, and a chemical free healthy body. Competition enhances school spirit and helps spectators, as well as participants, develop pride in both themselves and the school.

The School District will support both the boys and the girls activities programs with equal treatment and quality in the areas of staffing, scheduling, facilities, and equipment. Sponsors and coaches, through leadership and example, should teach the specific skills necessary for improvement. Sponsors and coaches should provide guidance in the development of self-esteem, good sportsmanship, cooperation, leadership, ethical behavior, and an appreciation for the importance of hard work and dedication.

Sponsors and coaches will provide the opportunity for each individual to learn through practice and participation. At the high school level, the emphasis shifts to a higher grade of competition requiring selective participation with the concept that "winning" becomes an important aspect of the activities program.

## **OBJECTIVES OF THE ACTIVITY PROGRAM**

1. To recognize the purpose of activities is to help develop the physical, social, mental, and emotional well being of each individual.
2. To develop a sense of teamwork and commitment toward common goals.
3. To teach sportsmanship and encourage responsible citizenship in the student who participates.
4. Provide for group cooperation with the development of such commitments as loyalty, cooperation, fair play and other desirable social traits.
5. Provide directed leadership and supervision stressing self-discipline, self-motivation, excellence and the ideals of good sportsmanship that make for winning and losing graciously.
6. Provide a focus of interests on activity programs for the student body, faculty and community that will generate a feeling of unity.
7. To create a desire to succeed and excel.

## **PRIORITY OF OBJECTIVES**

At times coaches/sponsors must make decisions and choices regarding the pursuit of winning weighed against the participant's welfare and development. Every choice coaches/sponsors make should be based first on what is best for the team and second on what will help the individual. Winning is important but coaches/sponsors must see that the participants receive quality experiences in a positive environment. Striving to win is essential to competition. Winning, in and of itself, is not the final product.

## **SPORTSMANSHIP**

Recognizing that participation in extracurricular activities is a privilege, Polson High School requires that the conduct of coaches/sponsors and student participants be exemplary at all times. Coaches/sponsors and athletes are representatives of the Polson School District and must conduct themselves appropriately both in school and out of school. Student participants who violate this policy are subject to being removed from the activity by the coach, athletic director, assistant principal or principal. The rules and conduct of students is part of the athletic training policy and failure to abide by them may result in removal from the activity. (Recommendations in accordance with MHSA guidelines.)

## **DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF A HEAD COACH/SPONSOR**

1. Conduct a program for which he/she is responsible within MHSA and Polson High School rules and guidelines.
2. Understand all rules pertaining to the MHSA handbook, NFHS/MHSA rules and Polson High School athletic and school policies.
3. Show self-control and poise in areas relating to coaching.
4. Enforces sportsmanship like behavior in his/her athletes/participants.
5. Displays enthusiasm and shows interest in coaching.
6. Is cooperative with the media, community, parents, etc.

7. Communicates with the parents and players effectively.
8. Keeps the PHS administration informed of unusual and/or controversial events.
9. See that the activity area is in safe and proper condition, which includes keeping the locker room or dressing area, training area and buses clean and presentable.
10. Oversee the proper care of equipment including issue, collection, storage and inventory.
11. Organize daily practice schedules.
12. Work to improve background in the coaching area and profession.
13. Organize and direct the staff.
14. Provide seasonal evaluations of each assistant coach.
15. Make sure all pre-season paperwork is complete before a student may practice or compete.
16. Provide supervision of athletes on all out of town trips and overnight trips.
17. Maintain a valid First Aid card and a valid CPR/AED card on record with the district office. In addition, the coach will have a valid certificate of the NFHS coaching course, a valid certificate of completion of the Concussion in Sports course and a valid certificate of the MHSA rules clinic on record with the athletic director.
18. Attend and organize the pre-season parent meeting. The coach will be responsible for explaining all rules and procedures directly related to his/her program.

#### **DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF AN ASSISTANT COACH/VOLUNTEER COACH**

1. Follow all rules and regulations of Polson High School, the MHSA and any rules of the head coach of the specific program.
2. Show self-control and poise in areas relating to coaching.
3. Enforces sportsmanship like behavior in his/her athletes/participants.
4. Displays enthusiasm and shows interest in coaching.
5. Provide supervision of athletes on all out of town trips and overnight trips.
6. See that the activity area is in safe and proper condition, which includes keeping the locker room or dressing area, training area and buses clean and presentable.
7. Maintain a valid First Aid card and a valid CPR/AED card on record with the district office. In addition, the coach will have a valid certificate of the NFHS coaching course, a valid certificate of completion of the Concussion in Sports course and a valid certificate of the MHSA rules clinic on record with the athletic director.
8. Attend a pre-season coaching meeting.

#### **POLSON SCHOOL DISTRICT GENERAL RULES**

#### **A. BUILDING/FACILITY SECURITY**

---Coaches are reminded that they are responsible for athletes before, during and after practices and games. Coaches should try to be at practice 30 minutes before practice starts. Supervision at the beginning and end of practice is as important as supervision during the practice. **Coaches are responsible for filling out a facility request for any use of the facilities that are not part of their season. The facilities are reserved for Monday – Friday for practices or games. The weekends are only reserved for games.**

**When leaving your practice or contest facility, please follow the checklist below:**

1. Make sure all students have exited the facility and have made arrangements for a ride home.
2. **Turn off all lights and make sure the facility is securely locked. Including locker rooms and all doors leading into the school.**
3. Make sure all equipment is secure. The district facilities are used by outside groups throughout the school year and summer.
4. Make sure uniforms are put away properly or secure in the laundry facilities. Check to make sure the athletes have not left any of their practice gear or uniforms out in the open.
5. Make sure the alarm system has been activated, if needed.

#### **B. KEYS TO STUDENTS**

Keys to the facilities should not be given to students unless under the supervision of the coaching staff. The liability of a student being hurt at the facility while not being properly supervised could lead to you as an individual being named in a lawsuit for negligence.

#### **C. WEDNESDAY NIGHT CHURCH NIGHT**

Wednesday night has been designated as church night by the Polson School District. All activities must be concluded by 6:30 p.m.

#### **D. ORDERING OF MATERIALS**

No coach/sponsor may order materials without approval from the athletic director. Items purchased without approval may be subject to the coach paying out of pocket for the items ordered. Coaches/sponsors must fill out a requisition form in order for school funds to be used in the purchasing of the material. If money has been raised by the activity and the money has not been placed in a PHS fund then the coach/sponsor may purchase material without filling out the requisition.

#### **E. ATTENDANCE/PARTICIPATION REQUIREMENTS**

Any student absent from school one or more periods of the day of an after-school activity/practice may not participate in the activity/practice without the approval of the principal, assistant principal, or athletic director. Approval will be granted if the absence

in question is a result of a previously scheduled medical/dental appointment, or appointment to satisfy the requirements of the law, or if the absence results from a family emergency.

#### **F. SUBSTANCE USE AND ABUSE POLICY**

The use of tobacco, including e-cigarettes, alcohol or any other controlled substance will result in suspension from interscholastic competition for 21 calendar days from the date of confirmation of the 1<sup>st</sup> offence. Confirmation must be by a school administrator. Violations occurring on the weekend will be dealt with on the next school day unless during a major school vacation. I.e.. Christmas break or spring break. To be athletically reinstated, the affected student must participate in all practices during the suspension, finishing the season in good standing. If the suspension days are not fulfilled during the remainder of the affected season, the athlete must complete remaining calendar days upon start of any PHS activity that follows. A second offense will result in suspension of 45 calendar days and a third offense will result in removal from athletics for the remainder of the student's high school career, with the chance to appeal in 1 year if the student completes a chemical dependency program.

#### **G. INITIATION, HARASSMENT, HAZING, INTIMIDATION**

The Polson High School athletic program will not tolerate any form of initiation, harassment, hazing, or intimidation of any student athletes by other students, parents, coaches, or spectators. This includes, but is not limited to, practices, bus trips, overnight trips, locker rooms and games. Those involved in any form of initiation, harassment, hazing, or intimidation will face disciplinary action in the activity and by the school per school policy. Adults or spectators who violate this rule may face suspension from attending Polson High School Activities. Reference School Board Policy #3226.

#### **H. FAN/SPECTATOR BEHAVIOR**

Spectators and fans at PHS events are expected to exhibit good sportsmanship toward the officials, coaches and athletes on both teams. Spectators and fans who exhibit unsportsmanlike behavior toward officials, coaches and/or athletes to include but not limited to actions during events or practices, Facebook postings, text messaging, or any other social media sources, emails and phone calls may face suspension from attending PHS events and possibly future MHSA events.

#### **I. ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF RISK, ATHLETIC TRAINING POLICY, MEDICAL CONSENT FORMS, PARENT/STUDENT CONCUSSION AND PHYSICAL FORMS**

Participants must have all of these forms properly filled out and all required signatures before they are allowed to participate in a practice or competition. The forms are required by the MHSA and/or PHS. These forms must be turned into the athletic director before the start of the first practice.

## **J. CONFLICT RESOLUTION-5-STEP COMMUNICATION PROCESS**

Polson High School has a 5-step process of communication to use in resolving conflicts. Communication in this order helps to ensure strong relationships and trust amongst all who are involved in resolving problems. The process is as follows:

1. Student meets with coach/advisor. (If a student is uncomfortable meeting with the coach/director by himself or herself, a varsity captain can assist in starting the dialogue with the coach/director. The captain's role in the communication process will end at this step.)
2. Student and parent meet with the coach/advisor.
3. Student, parent, and coach/advisor meet with the activity director.
4. Student, parent, coach/advisor, and activity director meet with the principal.
5. Student, parent, coach/advisor, activity director and principal meet with the superintendent.

## **K. USE OF ACTIVITY CREDIT CARDS/VOUCHERS**

Polson School District allows coaches/sponsors to pay for their meals on the school issued credit card. If an activity voucher is used the coach/sponsor must fill out the name of the restaurant, the full mailing address, the activity amount, the cost of the meal (receipt if possible), sign the voucher and have the manager of the restaurant sign the voucher. The white copy is to be left with the restaurant and the yellow copy is to be given to the Athletic Director on the next regularly scheduled school day. On overnight trips, the school district credit card will be used for the motel bill and meals on the trip.

**Please refer to the insert regarding meals for divisional and state events.**

Coaches/sponsors may choose how to break down the meals as long as it does not exceed the above limits.

## **L. VOLUNTEER COACHES**

Volunteer coaches will be used at the discretion of the head coach. All volunteer coaches must be approved by the school board. A volunteer coach must complete the NFHS coaching online certification program, hold a current first aid certification card, hold a current CPR/AED card and complete the Concussion in Sports training on the NFHS website. Volunteer coaches may not be used as the primary supervisor on trips. Any transportation of individuals will not be covered by the school district in case of an accident.

## **M. CLINIC EXPENSE ALLOWANCE**

Polson High School encourages the professional development of coaches through attendance at workshops and clinics. The school will provide \$1000 per year to help cover some of the expenses for coaches to attend the MCA coach's clinic in August. This amount will be divided equally among coaches who attend the clinic. If a coaching staff would like to attend a different clinic then the Head Coach must notify the Athletic Director in advance of the clinic and have it approved. At the conclusion of any clinic, the coach must turn in proof of attendance to the Athletic Director. The coach must be a current member of the PHS activity staff to receive the expense allowance. The Athletic



Director and Principal must approve other costs that may be reimbursed prior to the clinic.

#### **N. CUT POLICY**

Each sport at Polson High School where cuts must be made shall have a cut policy on record with the Athletic Director. The cut policy must include the time period in which tryouts shall take place. The policy will outline the procedure for students trying out if they are not able to meet the specific dates (conflict with other school activities, injury, new student in the district, etc.). The policy should explain what criteria would be used by the coach in determining the make-up of the team.

#### **O. LETTERING POLICY**

Each sport at Polson High School shall have a lettering policy on record with the Athletic Director. This information should include all possible criteria for a participant to letter. This information should be shared with the participants and their parents at the beginning of the year parent meeting.

#### **P. OPEN GYM**

**If a coach is going to hold open gym they must fill out a building use permit for that school to avoid any conflicts with ongoing activities.** It is up to the individual head coaches to properly supervise the open gym with a school employee. Coaches should respect the coaches and athletes of the “in-season” sports by not putting unreasonable demands on the athletes in those sports. It is the decision of each head coach whether to allow “in-season” athletes to participate in open gyms. I.e. A football player attending a basketball open gym in the fall.

#### **Q. FIRST AID, CPR/AED, CONCUSSION IN SPORTS AND NFHS COACHING CERTIFICATION**

The Polson School District requires that all personnel coaching interscholastic athletics hold a current First Aid Certificate and a current CPR/AED certification. This certification must be on record at the Polson administration office. Also, coaches, sponsors and volunteers must have a copy showing completion of the NFHS online coaching certification, a Concussion in Sports certification and MHSA rules clinic certificate on file with the Athletic Director. These must be on file before the coach is allowed to start practice for their specific sport. Failure to comply may result in the district holding your coaching stipend.

#### **R. DISPENSING OF MEDICATION**

Coaches may not issue medicine of any type to students. This does not preclude the coach from using approved first aid items.

#### **S. SCHOOL REPORT ON OFFICIALS**

A coach/sponsor may file a school report on officials regarding incidents, which occurred during a contest. The Athletic Director must be informed of the instance immediately. The form can be used to state information about an official’s performance during a game/contest. The information must be factual in content and free of personal opinion.

## **T. AWARDS BANQUETS**

All coaches/sponsors are responsible for setting the date, time and type banquet/social for their individual sport. It is the coach's responsibility to give all lettering information, award information and any other information pertinent to the ceremony one week in advance.

## **U. SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY**

Everything that is posted on any social media outlet should be considered information that is out of one's control once it is posted. It is understood that third parties including media, faculty, future employers, future schools and coaches could easily access profiles and view all personal information. If postings or messages are inappropriate, this could be detrimental at multiple levels. The use of social media by a student or portrayal of a student in social media considered to be "unbecoming" may result in discipline including suspension or removal from the activity, group, leadership position or team.

## **MHSA RULES AND REGULATIONS**

All rules and regulations of the Montana High School Association may be found in the MHSA Handbook or at [MHSA.org](http://MHSA.org) for the current year. Each Polson High School administrator has a current copy of the handbook. The following is a basic synopsis of the rules and regulations high school coaches/sponsors deal with each year.

### **A. ENROLLMENT/ATTENDANCE**

To be eligible to participate in a MHSA contest, a student must have regular attendance from the date of enrollment, enrolled in and receiving a passing grade in at least 25 periods per week (5 classes per day) of prepared class work at the school where the student participates. 10 periods must be inside of the bricks and mortar of the school building. A student is officially enrolled after 20 days of attendance in that school. This is the Polson School Districts rule for attendance.

Athletes must have in and have passed (in the previous semester) at least two brick-and-mortar classes, and the following three passed classes can be online to total five classes.

### **B. ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY**

In order for a student to participate in activities, the student must be passing 5 solid subjects the preceding semester. A solid class meets five days per week and generates .5 credits toward graduation per semester. Freshman are automatically academically eligible their first semester of their freshman year. Summer school and correspondence courses may not count toward an athlete's eligibility. Any student found ineligible may not compete at any level of an association contest until five classes have been passed during the preceding semester.

### **C. TRANSFER RULE**

Any student who transfers from one high school or junior high to another high school is **ineligible to participate in a varsity contest** for 90 pupil instruction days from the date of enrollment in the school to which he/she transfers. This rule applies to a student who transfers after twenty days of attendance or after he/she participates in an athletic contest while enrolled in grades 9, 10, 11, 12 EXCEPT the following students may be declared eligible if:

1. There is a corresponding change of residence by the parent or guardian.
2. A student who is a ward of the court or state is placed in a district or school attendance area by court order.
3. The student is a member of an accredited MHSA approved foreign exchange program.
4. The student applies for and receives a hardship ruling from the MHSA Director.
5. A home school student may enroll in the Polson School District one time and become eligible upon enrollment, assuming they have not participated in high school activities in another school district.

Transfer rules apply only to athletic participation. Students who are ineligible due to the transfer rule may compete at the non-varsity level, against non-varsity competition but not in any MHSA varsity level events.

### **D. ATHLETIC PHYSICAL RULE**

A physical examination is required for each student, each year, in order to be considered eligible to be approved for participation in a MHSA contest. The physical must be completed on the MHSA approved form and must be after May 1 of the previous school year. The physical must be completed and on record before the student is allowed to practice.

### **E. MINIMUM PRACTICE PRIOR TO COMPETITION RULE**

No individual shall play in any Association contest until he/she has a minimum of 10 days of practice with at least one practice session per day on 10 different days (no practice on Sunday is permitted) prior to the date of the first allowable game. The 10 days is for all sports except football requires 12 days and Golf requires 3 days. If a student begins his/her ten days of required practices and that period of days is interrupted by sickness, injury or academic ineligibility for a period of two weeks, then the student shall be required to practice an additional 5 days and to produce a doctor's release.

### **F. SUNDAY PRACTICE/TEAM MEETING RULE**

The MHSA prohibits participation in any interscholastic activity practice or contest on Sunday. This includes team meetings of any nature.

### **G. COACHING/PRACTICE REGULATIONS**

1. Only students who meet all MHSA eligibility requirements (enrollment, age, semesters, academics, physical examinations etc.) are eligible to practice with and participate on member school teams. Exception: students who are eligible in every way except academics may participate in practice if the school allows.

2. Regular season practice is defined as a potential player(s) reporting to the practice field or court, with or without uniforms, under the supervision of a sport-specific school-approved coach, and receiving coaching in game skills and techniques.

**The following are recommended pre-season and regular season practice guidelines:**

- a. If a practice lasts two hours or less the athlete must have two hours of rest between practices.
- b. If a practice is more than two hours the athlete must have three hours of rest between practices.
- c. Practices should last a maximum of 2 1/2 hours in length, but if a team chooses to have one practice per day that practice shall be no longer than three hours in length.
- d. There should be no more than five hours of practice per day.

3. Athletes participating on teams competing in MHSA post season play, which overlaps the beginning of the next MHSA sanctioned activity starting practice date, may be credited for practices during the overlap period toward meeting the minimum practice requirement of the overlapped activity season.

4. **Open gym/field** is an arrangement whereby the school's facilities are scheduled for volunteer play for all the student body. Only athletes enrolled at PHS in grades 9 – 12 may participate in open gym. **There is no such thing as an open gym during your season. Any contact with your current athletes is considered a practice.**

5. **Individual instruction** is acceptable out of season on a one to one basis, i.e. one athlete per coach (es). This means that one or more coaches could instruct one athlete but two or more coaches could not coach two or more athletes. This rule does **not** provide the coach, or any coach on that schools high school coaching staff, the opportunity to coach his/her athletes in any post-season competition.

6. **Coaching rules: The team-coaching rule is in effect from August 1<sup>st</sup> – May 31<sup>st</sup>.** This means there is to be no coaching of one's team sport (team sports being football, basketball, volleyball, softball and soccer) out of season other than the one on one provision allowed presently. Coaches of individual sports (individual sports being cross country, wrestling, track and field, golf and tennis) are not affected by this rule. Students cannot be required to attend out-of-season practice, camps or contests. **The team-coaching rule is suspended from June 1<sup>st</sup> – July 31<sup>st</sup>.**

## **H. AWARDS RULE**

No award exceeding fifty dollars (\$50.00) in value shall be given per event in any MHSA sanctioned sport or in any MHSA sanctioned interscholastic activity by a member school, by any person or by an organization to a student in recognition of that student achievement or participation in any interscholastic activity. An event is defined as a sports camp, an invitational tournament/meet, a postseason recognition function (i.e. sports banquet) or a fundraiser or similar function. An award is defined as any symbolic item. **Cash cannot be awarded.** Violation of this rule will render the student ineligible in the MHSA sponsored sport or activity for which the student received the award.

## **I. MANDATORY RULES CLINIC AND CONCUSSION TRAINING**

The MHSA requires that the administrator of each member school assure each coach, including volunteer coaches in that sport, of the annual rules clinic for each sport, including cheerleading, in which a clinic is conducted and sponsored by the MHSA.

**Fines assessed for failure to attend the above clinics may result in the coach or sponsor required to pay the fine.** The MHSA currently imposes a fine of \$50 per activity plus public reprimand for failure to attend the above rules clinics.

## **SCHOOL TRAVEL REGULATIONS**

### **A. BUS TRIPS**

Students who attend school-sponsored activities via school transportation are considered to be representing the school. The following rules apply for bus trips:

1. Use of tobacco is prohibited.
2. No student shall be under the influence of, or have in his/her possession, any form of drugs or alcohol on a bus or on a school trip.
3. Students participating in any out-of-town activity must travel to and from that activity on school provided transportation. Any exception to this policy must be made in advance between the student, parent/guardian, coach/sponsor and administration.
4. Students going on the bus are required to return on the bus unless written arrangements were made by the parent/guardian prior to leaving. Only the parent/guardian, in person, can request the student to be released once the trip is underway. Any other situations must be pre approved by the administration.
5. The coach/sponsor and bus driver are in charge and must be obeyed. If there are problems, report them to school authorities following the trip. The coach/sponsor is expected to enforce all rules and regulations.
6. Students shall be required to limit noise to that acceptable for the safe operation of the bus. Profanity, abusive language, misconduct and acts of vandalism will not be allowed.
7. Students will remain seated while the bus is moving.
8. Buses are to be left in clean, good condition following all trips. Coaches/sponsors and supervisors are to hold students responsible for the condition of the bus to ensure that no damage occurs and that students are held accountable for any such damage. Bus drivers will be responsible to clean the buses following the trip.
9. Students under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol or are flagrantly disobedient may be removed from the bus and turned over to local law authorities. This shall be done only after contact with the administration. Administrators will then contact the parents of the student to notify them of the problem and advise them to make arrangements to pick up their child. Under no circumstances will the child be left alone with the local authorities. A coach/sponsor must stay with the student until his/her parents have made arrangements for their return.

**B. OVERNIGHT TRIPS**

Students will be given an agenda and tentative time schedule for student and parent information. Students will be responsible for seeing that their parents receive this information. Appropriate behavior is expected by the team and the individual when at motels, restaurants and schools. No student shall remove, damage or deface property of any motel, restaurant, school, etc. Riding in vehicles other than school provided or sponsored will not be permitted.

**C. DRESS FOR TRAVEL ACTIVITIES**

Coaches/sponsors are expected to set and exemplify the standards for good and acceptable grooming and dress for the out-of-town trip. Students are representatives of Polson High School and are expected to follow the dress code outlined in the student handbook.



