



COACH'S HANDBOOK

Board Approved May 8, 2023

Statement of Purpose

This handbook is to clarify and establish policies and proper procedures for the East Porter County School Corporation Athletic Departments. It is expected that you read this handbook closely, follow the policies and procedures as outlined, and bring your suggestions for improvement of the sports program to the attention of the Athletic Director. Thank you for your dedication and involvement in our student's lives.

Statement of Philosophy

Interscholastic athletics shall be an integral part of the total secondary school education program which has, as its purpose, to provide educational experiences not otherwise provided in the curriculum. The development of confidence, self-control, and sound character are essential. Emphasis shall be placed upon academic achievement of our student-athletes.

Participation in interscholastic activities is a privilege to be granted to those students who meet the eligibility standards established by the IHSAA, the Porter County Conference, and the East Porter County School Corporation.

Responsibility for the Program

Everyone involved in the athletic program as a participant, coach, supervisor, or spectator shares the responsibility of ensuring a successful program. However, the principal of the school is ultimately responsible for the program. The success of programs is not measured solely on the basis of win/loss records of the teams. More important is the development of student-athletes as responsible and productive persons.

Student-athletes are expected to be outstanding school citizens and conduct themselves in a manner beyond reproach at all times. Such conduct is imperative since younger students look up to these individuals, and we solicit and need the support of the community for the operation of the entire program. Each team's coach is responsible for the operation of his/her team. Each varsity coach is responsible for the development of a total program for his/her sport. Varsity coaches will establish general guidelines for all teams in that sport for the team coach to implement. These guidelines will allow the team coach latitude in the operation of his/her team, and will provide a framework for them to work under.

Coaches of teams must specify locker room expectations, team expectations, and travel expectations, as well as remain in the general area until all athletes have departed. When an injury occurs, coaches will evaluate the athlete and respond with appropriate first aid and/or emergency response techniques. At the high school level, coaches will communicate with the athletic trainer to help with the situation. In the case of severe or life-threatening injuries, coaches will immediately call 911.

General Duties of the Head Coach

Academic Eligibility of Athletes

Athletes must have at least a 2.0 and be passing all classes. Please see the Athletic Handbook and familiarize yourself with all scenarios. It is the responsibility of the coach to do the check on academic eligibility, however the athletic director will verify once a final roster is completed. Any questions can be directed to the athletic director.

Camps Run By Coaches

Coaches are to advise the Athletic Director of all camp dates, times and locations, and to give adequate notification regarding facility needs. Coaches will also need to complete the paperwork for facility use located in the main office or the link below.

[Camp Form](#)

Professional Development/Required Courses

Most of our sports have meetings that are set by the IHSAA to review contest rules. The head coach is required to attend the rules meeting for their sport, or if unavailable to attend in person coaches must do the meeting online. The dates, sites, and times are on the IHSAA website, which every head coach has access to. Head coaches need to make sure all coaches within the high school programs take the required courses and maintain certification. The following are links with available coursework:

- Concussion in sports
 - <https://nfhslearn.com/courses/concussion-in-sports-2>
- Engaging Effectively with Parents
 - <https://nfhslearn.com/courses/61154/engaging-effectively-with-parents>
- Heat Illness Prevention
 - <https://nfhslearn.com/courses/heat-illness-prevention-2>
- Sudden Cardiac Arrest
 - <https://nfhslearn.com/courses/sudden-cardiac-arrest>
- Bullying, hazing and inappropriate behaviors
 - <https://nfhslearn.com/courses/28000/bullying-hazing-and-inappropriate-behaviors>
- Student Mental Health and Suicide Prevention
 - <https://nfhslearn.com/courses/student-mental-health-and-suicide-prevention>
- Protecting Students from Abuse
 - <https://nfhslearn.com/courses/protecting-students-from-abuse>

Locking and Care of Facilities

Each coach is responsible for the actions of members of his/her team from the moment they report to practice until they have left the school. A coach must be present before the athletes report and stay until the last athlete has left. Coaches are not to give their keys to athletes at any time. Coaches will keep locker rooms locked during the school day. All non-teaching coaches will return their keys to the athletic director immediately following their season, unless specific permission has been granted. Athletes are not to be in any area of the school (including the weight room and training room) unsupervised. Doors should never be propped open.

Proper Appearance

Proper appearance means that the coaching staff and student athletes are neat in appearance and well-groomed. Proper attire of the staff and student-athletes for games and when representing the school and corporation is the responsibility of the coach of each sport and should be representative of the school and corporation dress code.

Assistant Coaches

Discuss these duties of an assistant coach with all your coaches. Many of these duties will be your responsibility. Promotion of corporation and school, loyalty, cooperation, and support are essential to any successful program. They are a reflection of yourself. Make sure if they use social media, it is in a positive manner. Make sure they assist you at all times. Your concerns or complaints should be discussed privately with him/her and with the athletic director as needed. All coaches - Assistant, Volunteer, and Lay - need to go through training and have volunteer checks completed. **All coaches, paid and volunteer, must have graduated 2 full years prior to coaching in the district and go through an interview process with the Athletic Director and School Administration to determine maturity, experience, and cultural fit.**

Concessions

Coaches are asked to help in the running of the concession stand. It is the coaches responsibility to find parents/athletes to staff the concessions for the date of coverage. The concessions are a vital part of revenue for athletics.

Reporting Contest Results

Following contests, the varsity head coach will call or email the appropriate media and email the final results along with a copy of the scorebook to the athletic director.

Transfer Students

Any student new to the school will need to complete an IHSA transfer before they can participate in any contest. This transfer needs to be completed by the athletic director and one of the parents. This does not apply to incoming freshmen at the start of the school year, but applies to any athlete who has attended any other high school. Once school has started it would apply to freshmen, as well.

Athletic Trip Information

Before your contest season, you will provide a schedule of departure and return times for your contests. Athletic Directors will check this schedule and report any discrepancies to the coach.

Bus Trips

Coaches will instruct athletes as to departure times and approximate return times for away contests. All team members are to ride with the team bus to and from the contests. The only exception is if the parent of a player asks for their son/daughter to ride back with them for a legitimate reason (if you allow this to happen, be sure the parent comes to you and signs your sheet and must see the athlete leaving with the parent.) THIS IS YOUR DECISION-USE GOOD JUDGMENT. If you decide to let students ride home with parents and use a sign out sheet, make sure you or an assistant coach witness the parents signing the sheet. Coaches are responsible for the actions of their athletes during the bus trip. Coaches will disperse themselves throughout the bus. When possible there will be coaches seated in the rear seats of the bus. After all players have left the bus, a coach will check the bus for equipment, clothing, and trash. The coach is responsible for seeing that the bus is neat after each trip.

Purchasing Policy

All purchases made on behalf of the school or its students must be approved by the athletic director and principal. You must first discuss the purchase with the athletic director, then seek a vendor, and bring the vendor's quote to the athletic director for approval. If the purchase is approved, the order must be placed by completing the purchase request form. If using private donation-funds (non-school), money must be collected prior to the placement of the order. Any money collected must be given to the treasurer, with the proper forms completed. If the amount is over \$1000, it must go through the corporation business office.

Fundraising

Fundraising is an important aspect as resources for an athletic department as funds can sometimes be scarce. It is the policy for coaches to submit proposals for all fundraisers to the athletic director for approval by the athletic director and building principal. All fundraising must be approved before submitting the fundraising request form to the corporation. We need to make certain we do not continually inundate our community with fundraising requests so they will continue to see the benefits of giving.

School Attendance

Student athletes are expected to attend all practices, meetings, and scheduled contests for their team unless excused in advance by the coach. The head coach of each sport will establish rules for attendance.

A student athlete has to be in school at the start of school, and remain in school the rest of the day in order to attend practice or a game. If a student athlete is not in school during this time period, the student athlete will not be allowed to participate in that night's practice or game. The student athlete is not to be present, even if he/she is not participating. Exceptions to the rule include: prearranged doctor's appointment, field trip, college visit, unforeseeable circumstances

or funeral. All must be prearranged. Exceptions such as unforeseeable circumstances need to be substantiated by building principal. Student athletes may not practice or play in a contest on any day they are assessed an in or out of school suspension.

Any student athlete who is absent from school for five consecutive days due to illness or injury must present to the Athletic Director and coach a statement from a licensed physician that he/she is again physically fit to participate.

Days Missed: 8-14 number of practices required: 4

Days Missed: 14+ number of practices required: 6

Note: only one practice may be valid for any one day

Parent and Athlete Communications

Communications with parents and student athletes will be done using EventLink Messaging or via email using FinalForms email feature. Social media and group texting are not to be used as a communication method.

Contest Schedule and Schedule Changes

Our schedules are relatively firm, but there can be changes because of various reasons. No changes can be made without the consent of the Athletic Director. The key here is communication with your players and parents. When there are changes you will communicate with your players, and also the parents using Eventlink Messaging or FinalForms email.

Holidays/Vacations

Family time should be protected during school breaks and holidays. An athlete will not be dismissed from a team or adversely treated because of family obligations. Practices during breaks are optional and practices are prohibited on Christmas, Thanksgiving, and Good Friday. However, absent student-athletes may have to work hard to regain their previous playing status. Athletes will inform their coaches well beforehand if they plan to miss practice or contests because of family vacations.

Practice Schedules and Schedule Changes

A practice schedule will be provided to athletes in advance by having practices entered into their teams EventLink calendar. This is especially true for those coaches having athletes who do not drive. Provide the schedule link to the athletes and for their parents. Please let the athletic department know your schedule. Coaches will plan, implement, and document practice plans which are laid out daily. Changes due to weather or other factors are at the discretion of the superintendent.

Problems

If you are having problems with a student-athlete or parent, please advise the athletic department, but do all you can to resolve it. East Porter County School Corporation's practice is to not talk about issues for 24 hours, never talk about other players, your strategies, or playing time. Encourage student-athletes to work on needed skills or work ethic, etc.

Hazing

Harassment, bullying and hazing are inappropriate and potentially dangerous. Students ~~should~~ will report any incidents of harassing or hazing behavior to their coaches, teachers, or school administrators. Coaches and school personnel will report any incidents of harassing behavior or hazing among their athletes/students to the athletic director or school administrators. Coach to student-athlete harassment or hazing will be reported to the athletic director or school. School personnel to student harassment or hazing will be reported to school administrators. For more detailed information, refer to the Athletic Handbook.

Senior Night

In an effort to be hospitable to our opponents we will follow these guidelines concerning senior night: Please notify the athletic director of the date you are selecting for senior recognition early in your season to allow sufficient time for distribution of information forms and so that family members may include the event in their calendars. Please be reasonable about the length of senior night and the amount of time taken for the ceremony. The script for each athlete will be provided by the athletic office if requested by the coach. The athletic office reserves the right to revise each script. Please communicate to your parents that the athletic department will have flowers for each senior unless other arrangements are made. You as the coach are the contact person for senior night and may want to arrange the gift for each senior. You are in charge of this ceremony as the coach!

Team Awards

Each school is responsible for establishing their own requirements for individual/team sports awards.

Parent/Coach Relationships

The following is something you share with parents at your annual parents meeting. This is in regards to procedures for parents/coach conflicts and what is appropriate and inappropriate to discuss. Copy and paste into your own team policies and rules as needed.

"We are pleased that your child has chosen to participate in the East Porter County School Corporation Athletic Program. We will do all we can to provide a positive experience for your student-athlete. To achieve this outcome, it is important that lines of communication are developed between the coach, parent, and athlete to allow for two-way communication and resolution of issues before they become conflicts. As a parent, you have the right to know what expectations are placed on your child. This is intended to clearly delineate all levels of communication so that coaches, parents, and student-athletes are aware of the steps they have available to aid in resolving issues."

Inappropriate Issues to Discuss

Playing time, coaching strategy, and matters concerning other student-athletes.

Appropriate Issues to Discuss

The mental or physical treatment of your child, ways to help your child improve, and concerns about your child's behavior. We expect our coaches to conduct themselves in a professional manner and make judgments based upon what they believe to be in the best interest of all students involved.

There are situations that may require a conference between the coach and the parent. These are to be encouraged. It is important that both parties involved have a clear understanding of the other person's position. When these conferences are necessary, the following procedure will be followed to help promote a resolution to the issue of concern:

- Request a meeting with the coach at least 24 hours after the incident has occurred. Meeting immediately after a contest or practice does not promote resolution and can even exacerbate the issue.
- If the request to meet with the coach is not honored within a reasonable amount of time, call the athletic director to set up an appointment.
- If the issue does not get resolved by meeting with the coach, call and set up a meeting with the athletic director to discuss the situation. The athletic director will also follow East Porter County School Corporation's policy of not discussing playing time, coaching strategies, or other student-athletes.
- If the problem is still not resolved, an appeal can be made with the school principal (see the chain of command below)

Proper Chain of Command

The East Porter County School Corporation follows the chain of command listed below. We ask that you observe the following if you elect to pursue any concerns you may have regarding the athletic program:

- Player/Coach Meeting
- Head Coach Meeting
- Athletic Director Meeting
- Building Principal Meeting
- Superintendent Meeting

Code of Conduct for Coaches

The function of a coach is to properly educate students through participation in interscholastic competition. The East Porter County School Corporation Athletics Programs are designed to enhance academic achievement and should never interfere with opportunities for academic success. Athletes should be treated as young men and women whose physical, intellectual, and moral development is of primary concern at all times.

- Coaches will constantly uphold the honor and dignity of the profession. In all dealings with students, parents, officials, school administration, the IHSAA, the media, and the public, the coach shall serve as an example of the highest ethical and moral standards.
- Coaches will be mindful not to use foul language around or react in anger towards others, especially student athletes
- Coaches will take responsibility for athletes' well-being and development, at all times

- exhibiting sound injury and risk-management practices during practices and games.
- Coaches will provide a physically and emotionally safe environment for athletes during practice, as well as during competition. Coaches will practice safe training and conditioning techniques that are considered current to the respective sport or activity he or she is coaching.
- Coaches are expected to be knowledgeable about nutrition, hydration, safe and healthy weight loss or gain, and healthy eating behaviors.
- Coaches are expected to remain mindful of their student-athletes' academic progress and standing, and to conform to the guidelines for academic eligibility established by the IHSAA/School.
- Coaches shall take a proactive role in the prevention of drug, alcohol, vaping, and tobacco abuse, and discourage the use of performance-enhancing substances. Any known violation will be reported to the school administration.
- Contest officials shall have the respect and support of the coaches and players, and coaches should promote conduct that positively supports this ideal. Coaches should never indulge in unsportsmanlike conduct or conduct which might result in unsportsmanlike conduct by players and spectators toward opponents or officials.
- If a coach is removed from a game at any grade level, a one game suspension may be issued after an incident review by the Athletic Director. The action will be further evaluated and consequences could result in a longer suspension or removal of coaching position.
- Coaches are not to have inappropriate relationships with any player. They are to be mindful of legal responsibilities as adults working with minors.

Injury Procedures and Concussion Protocol

Listed below are the procedures a coach should follow for an injury to a student/athlete under your supervision. All injuries should be documented with the correct forms and turned into the athletic director.

- Evaluate the injury to decide if medical assistance is needed.
- If the injury is life threatening, call an ambulance immediately and contact parents (check Emergency Medical Authorization form for restrictions).
- If the injury is severe, but not life threatening, immobilize the athlete and the area of the injury.
- If the athletic trainer is available, ask for assistance.
- Check to see if the athlete's parents are at the event. Give them your advice and let them decide on a course of action. If the parents are not present, contact them.
- Do not send an injured athlete with another parent unless you have consent of that athlete's parent.
- If the injured athlete is assisted off the playing area, have an assistant coach, or yourself monitor the athlete.
- If a doctor is available, ask that the injury be checked.
- For minor injuries, such as sprains or pulled muscles, apply ice and use discretion regarding further participation.
- Follow up with the athletic trainer
- Check with the athlete and/or the athlete's parents either later that evening or the next day.
- If a head injury or concussion is suspected, the athlete will be removed from play at time of

injury and may not return to play until the student athlete has received a written clearance from a licensed health care provider trained in the evaluation and management of concussions and head injuries, and at least twenty-four hours have passed since the injury occurred.

IHSAA Rules

Eligibility Rules to be reviewed by Coaches with Student/Athletes. Additional rules and regulations for the student-athlete are available in the Athletic Handbook.

YOUR STUDENT-ATHLETES ARE INELIGIBLE IF:

- **Age**

A student who is, or shall be 20 years old prior to, or on the scheduled date of the IHSAA State Finals in their sport shall be ineligible for any competition during the regular season prior to that tourney.

- **Amateurism**

They play under an assumed name, they sign a professional contract, they accept money or merchandise for athletic participation.

- **Awards**

They accept gifts or honors from colleges or their alumni, they receive in recognition of their athletic ability any award NOT approved by their high school principal or the IHSAA, they use or accept merchandise as an award, prize, gift, or loan or purchase such for a token sum.

- **Enrollment**

- You must be enrolled in school during the first 15 days of a semester.
- You have been enrolled in no more than 8 consecutive semesters beginning grade 9.
- You have represented a high school in a sport for no more than 8 semesters.

- **Illness-Injury**

They are absent 5 or more consecutive days due to illness or injury, or if physically unable to practice for 5 consecutive days due to illness or injury and they do not present written verification from a physician indicating the athlete may return to practice. If 5-10 8-14 days are missed the athlete is required to have 4 practices before they can participate again. If they miss more than 10 14+ consecutive days, they must practice 6 days before they can participate.

- **Consent and Release Certificate**

They do not have the completed athletic physical on file in the athletic directors' office between April 1st and their first conditioning/practice.

- **Participation**

This rule concerns what athletes can and cannot do during their regular sports season, during the school year outside their regular sports season, and during the summer:

During Authorized Contest Season:

- Cannot play in games with students not in their school
- Cannot practice with or against players not in their school

- Cannot participate as an individual on a team other than their schools
- Cannot attend a non-school camp
- Can attend and participate in a student clinic during the school year, but out of season in which there are no more than 3 players from the same school on basketball or volleyball teams; no more than 5 players from the same school on baseball and softball teams; no more than 6 players from the same school on football and soccer teams.

During the Summer-OPEN FACILITY PROGRAMS:

- Coaches can coach athletes during the summer.
 - Coaches can organize contests with other schools.
 - Participation must be voluntary and be open to all students
 - Students must remain amateur. Merchandise and awards, other than those of symbolic value, may NOT be accepted for athletic proficiency.
 - Operation of open facility program must be terminated prior to Monday of IHSA Week #4 for all sports
 - A conditioning program may be extended through Saturday of IHSA Week #4
- **Required Number of Practices**
Athletes must attend a minimum of 8 days of practice before they can participate in a contest. This rule may be waived if practice time is limited due to conflicts with another IHSA tournament series or military service. Girls golf only requires two (2) practices.

IHSA Tourney Entry Lists

Be sure you know the deadline date for the entry list for the tournament in your sport. Complete the work copy from the IHSA link that the athletic director emails you. After completing the final entry form from the athletic department please check carefully. See the athletic department if you have questions concerning IHSA tourney lists.

IHSA Rule Interpretation Meetings

In the following sports, head coaches are mandated to attend the online rules meeting in their sport: Boys-Baseball, Basketball, Football, Golf, Soccer, Swimming, Tennis, Track and Field, and Wrestling and Girls-Basketball, Golf Soccer, Softball, Swimming, Tennis, Track and Field, and Volleyball. It is the responsibility of the head coach to be in attendance of the rules interpretation meeting. Failure for a coach to attend these required meetings, in person or online, results in your school being fined by the IHSA.

Conditioning and Open Gymnasium Programs

Member school personnel may organize and supervise conditioning and open gym program in the school, out-of-season, and summer so long as the rules and regulations found under the "Participation Rule (In the IHSA Bylaws Book)" are followed. If there are any questions concerning this rule, check with an athletic director before beginning "open gyms". Beginning IHSA week #4 open gyms cannot take place. Open gyms can begin again after the start of school. From week #5 until the start of school conditioning programs may take place.

Coaches Checklist

Pre-season

- ☐ Attend your mandatory IHSAA rules interpretation meeting and any other requirements per the IHSAA
- ☐ Register Athletes - Physicals, Rules, Concussion forms, and consent to treat must be on file for each student-athlete before participation can occur. It is your job to verify that these have been turned in using FinalForms.
- ☐ Conduct team tryouts if necessary, in a fair and just manner, allowing every person equal opportunity to become a team member. Inform student-athletes how tryouts will be conducted and the criteria being used to determine team selection
- ☐ Check your practice area and equipment to be certain it is ready for use
- ☐ Team rules/guidelines/expectations on file in the athletic office and in FinalForms
- ☐ Submit calendar of practices/athletic contest dates for athletes/parents and athletic director using team's EventLink Calendar
- ☐ Team roster to the athletic office and enter into FinalForms, notify the athletic director if changes occur
- ☐ Join your coaches association
- ☐ Conduct a parent/athlete meeting
- ☐ Transfer students must complete IHSAA transfer form before competition
- ☐ All coaches (paid or volunteer) must have a background check and course certificates on file in FinalForms
- ☐ Ensure budget is correct for coaches pay
- ☐ Obtain badges and keys if needed
- ☐ Conduct equipment inventory/checklist using FinalForms
- ☐ Conduct uniform inventory/checklist using FinalForms
- ☐ Check grades

In-season

- ☐ Call or email media outlets
- ☐ Email scores and a copy of the scorebook to athletic director
- ☐ Carry emergency medical release forms for athletes to away contests or have a way to communicate with parents in case of emergency using the FinalForms App or printing records from FinalForms
- ☐ Carry a medical box provided by the school to away contests, refill as necessary
- ☐ Notify the athletic office immediately of ejections, behavior problems, injuries, or anything out of the ordinary
- ☐ Make certain that all athletes in your program are supervised at all times, this includes before games and practices
- ☐ Report and fill out any injury reports, an accident report must be filled out for every injury using FinalForms
- ☐ Plan and implement daily practice plans
- ☐ Maintain required record keeping and submit to athletic department by using FinalForms
- ☐ Ensure storage rooms, activity areas, entrances, locker rooms are secured, cleaned, and maintained

- ☐ Nominate Athletes for All State, Academic Teams, and all PCC requirements
- ☐ Send all necessary statistics to IHSA/Digital Sports
- ☐ Continue grade checks
- ☐ Be sure any and all volunteer coaches have been approved by the AD and all necessary paperwork has been completed

Post-season

- ☐ Athletic award lists turned into the athletic office within two weeks of end of season using FinalForms
- ☐ Submit end of season summary
- ☐ Conference and IHSA tournament patches have been ordered for championships
- ☐ Uniforms, Warm-Ups, other gear turned in and stored
- ☐ List to the athletic office of equipment/uniforms lost or damaged by athletes using FinalForms
- ☐ All equipment is inventoried using FinalForms and secured
- ☐ Turn in score books to Athletic Director

AWARDS

These awards are presented on the basis of requirements and qualifications of this award system and are to be displayed by the athlete in compliance with the terms of the award system.

SPORT AWARD REQUIREMENTS

Baseball

Major Letter.....1/4 of total varsity innings played.
 Minor Letter.....Less than 1/4 of varsity innings played or 1/4 of JV
 innings played.

Basketball

Major Letter.....1/4 of total Varsity quarters played.
 Minor Letter.....Varsity team member or 1/4 of JV quarters played.

Cheerleading

Major Letter.....1/4 of total Varsity quarters played.
 Minor Letter.....1/4 of total Junior Varsity quarters played.

Cross Country

Major Letter.....First 7 runners on team based on all meets.*
 Minor Letter.....Runners 8-10 in all meets eligible to run in.
 *must run in Conference and Sectional meets, unless ill, to qualify.

Dance

Major Letter.....Perform in a majority of games played
 Minor Letter.....No minor letters given

Golf

Major Letter.....1/4 of total Varsity quarters played.
 Minor Letter.....Varsity team member or 1/4 of JV quarters played.

Soccer

Major Letter.....1/4 of total Varsity Halves played.
Minor Letter.....Varsity team member or 1/4 of JV halves played.

Softball

Major Letter.....1/4 of total varsity innings played.
Minor Letter..... Less than 1/4 of varsity innings played or 1/4 of JV
innings played.

Volleyball

Major Letter.....1/2 games played as a varsity member
Minor Letter.....6 Varsity games played or 1/2 of JV games played.

Track

Major Letter.....Average one (1) point per Varsity meet.
Minor Letter.....Average less than one (1) point per Varsity meet.

Managers and Statisticians

Major Letter.....3rd and 4th years as manager or statistician in the same
sport.
Minor Letter.....2nd year as manager or statistician in the same sport.