

## **Interscholastic and Middle School Athletics**

The district recognizes the value of a program in interscholastic and middle school athletics as an integral part of the total school curriculum. The program of interscholastic and middle school athletics shall include all activities relating to competitive sport contests, games or events, or sports exhibitions involving individual students or teams of students of this district when such events occur between separate schools within this district or with any schools outside this district. It is expected that:

1. All interscholastic activities and events, grades 9-12, shall be in compliance with the rules and regulations of the Washington Interscholastic Activities Association (WIAA), as well as with additional rules and regulations as stated in the district's *Athletic Handbook* and the *Student Athlete Handbook*. Middle school athletic activities and events, grades 7-8, shall be in compliance with the rules and regulations of the Yakima Middle School Athletic League (YMSAL) and structured on an all-must-play concept. The district shall not be responsible or liable for non-school-sponsored programs or for programs that are organized, promoted, or participated in by staff members without school approval. The district shall not be responsible for, or control and incur liability for, summer and/or out-of-season activities unless specifically sponsored by the school district. The superintendent shall establish rules defining the circumstances under which school facilities may be used and under which announcements of summer sports leagues and/or clinics may be channeled to students.
2. An athletic coach must be properly trained and qualified for an assignment as described in the coach's job description.
3. A district *Athletic Handbook*, which outlines the philosophy, goals, general safety guidelines and requirements, academic eligibility requirements, and coaching responsibilities will be distributed to each coach.
4. Safety Guidelines
  - 4.1 In-service training opportunities will be afforded each coach so that he/she is trained to attend to the health care needs of participants. Prior to a sports season, the coach will prepare a plan for handling medical emergencies at practice sessions and games (home and away).
  - 4.2 Participants will be issued equipment that has been properly maintained and fitted.
  - 4.3 All facilities and equipment utilized in the interscholastic athletic program, whether or not the property of the district, shall be inspected on a regular basis.
  - 4.4 Non-prescribed medications must be approved by the superintendent or designee before they may be available for use by coaches and/or athletic trainers. After athletic training medications have been approved, the coach and/or trainer must secure authorization from the parent/guardian and the student's doctor before the medications may be used during the athletic season. If such release is not on file, the non-prescribed medications may not be used. This provision does not preclude the coach and/or trainer from using approved first aid items.

Signs will be posted to warn students that eligibility to participate may be denied if anabolic steroids are used solely for the purpose of enhancing athletic ability.

- 4.5 The district recognizes that certain risks are associated with participation in interscholastic sports. While the district will strive to prevent injuries and accidents to students, each participant and his/her parent(s)/guardian(s) will be required to sign a statement which indicates that the parent(s)/guardian(s) and the student acknowledge the risks of injuries resulting from such participation and give assurance that the student will follow the instructions of the coach; see operational procedure 3436.
  - 4.6 Each participant shall be required to furnish evidence of physical fitness prior to becoming a member of an interscholastic team. Prior to the first practice for high school participation in interscholastic athletics, a student shall undergo a thorough medical examination and be approved for high school interscholastic athletic competition by a medical authority licensed to perform a physical examination. This must be completed before a student is allowed to practice. The physical is valid for twenty-four (24) months from the date of the examination.
  - 4.7 A written report shall be completed when a student is injured while participating in a school-supervised activity; see exhibit 3436.2X. A participant shall be sufficiently recovered from injury or illness before being allowed to participate in any activity. To resume participation following an illness and/or injury serious enough to require medical care, a participating student must present to the school officials a physician's written release.
  - 4.8 Each student participating in interscholastic athletic activities is required to have or obtain medical insurance for expenses incurred as a result of injuries sustained while participating in the extracurricular activity. Students shall provide evidence of coverage with a minimum limit of twenty-five thousand dollars (\$25,000) in medical expenses or shall obtain such coverage through the insurance plan offered to all students participating in activities in the district. No student will be denied the ability to participate solely because the student's family, by reason of low income, is unable to pay the entire amount of the premium for such insurance. The superintendent or designee may approve partial or full waiver of premiums to permit all students to obtain the required medical insurance.
5. Meetings of Yakima School District coaches will be held as required to review concerns regarding athletic programs. These meetings will be under the direction of the district athletic director.

The superintendent's designee shall annually prepare, approve, and present to the board for its consideration a program of interscholastic athletics for the school year. Also prepared are rules for the conduct of student athletes including, but not limited to, use of alcoholic beverages; use of tobacco; use or possession of illegal chemical substances or opiates not prescribed by a physician; physical appearance; curfew; unsportsman-like conduct; absence from practice; gambling; or any infraction of civil law. Rules and disciplinary actions related to rule violations shall be distributed to each participant and his/her parents/guardians prior to the beginning of an athletic season.

## 6. Athletic Eligibility and Recruitment Procedures

- 6.1 It is understood that the profession of education depends on ethical conduct and trust among all members in order for all children to be efficiently and effectively served. The spirit of the regulations governing athletic eligibility in the Yakima School District is that all people involved will work together for the benefit of students by personally seeing that no inducement is brought to bear as they make their personal decision as to what individual school program they want to invest their abilities. It is highly desirable and encouraged that the teachers of common athletic activities pool their resources and expertise to plan grades seven (7) through

twelve (12) off season athletic clinics and/or programs which would benefit students interested in such activities, such as basketball, baseball and football. Such clinics and/or programs will be planned, coordinated and funded through the district athletic director and will be open to all students interested and eligible in the Yakima School District. The district athletic director will make certain all interested parties have a chance for representation.

- 6.2 Athletic eligibility - Student athletes who choose to attend a Yakima high school from middle school or other schools will carry athletic eligibility with them if eligible under WIAA. If a student is enrolled at one high school and subsequently transfers to the other high school, the athlete will not be allowed to participate in competitive interscholastic athletics until clearance of his/her eligibility is established (transfer students face the possibility of being ruled ineligible for one (1) school year or portions thereof).

Review of the circumstances of the change of enrollment will be made by the district athletic director who may rule on the matter or present it to the Yakima School District Activity Review Board (ARB) for a decision. An appeal of the district athletic director's decision may be made to the Yakima School District ARB. Appeal of the ARB's decision may be made to the Yakima School District hearing officer.

- 6.3 Recruiting - School district employees shall not in any way try to recruit (influence/ persuade) athletes to attend a certain school. Comparison between school athletic and academic programs shall not be made for the purpose of athletic recruiting. High school athletes shall not be encouraged to enact recruitment activities among middle school students. If an employee is accused of this recruiting, he or she will be referred by the accusing party to the District ARB through the district athletic director. Proven acts of recruitment as judged by the District ARB will be considered as unethical and grounds for disciplinary action. Disciplinary action will be determined by the District ARB and recommended to the superintendent of schools for enforcement.

- 6.4 Not in Violation of Recruiting Regulations

**Interest:** It is entirely within order to express genuine interest by attendance at games, visiting with other coaches and verbally congratulating student athletes on a game well played. Such interest must remain on a casual, chance, and ethical basis.

- 6.5 In Violation of Recruiting Regulations

**Influence:** Coaches have power or station that is influential to athletes. Further, a subtle force may be exerted by coaches knowingly to their current athletes in order to influence prospective athletes. Letters of congratulations, sought-out contacts or invitations are non-normal genuine interest as described above. These types of influences are violations of the code.

**Persuasion:** Athletic personnel shall not urge either directly (coach to prospective student) or indirectly (current athlete, friend of the coach, etc., to the prospective student) that a prospective student attend a particular school.

**District ARB** - There shall be a district ARB consisting of the district athletic director and the following voting members: Two (2) high school principals or designees and the four (4) middle school principals or designees who will hear and render decisions regarding all cases of inducement that arise. A quorum of five (5) schools must be represented and vote to make the decision valid, particularly the schools involved.

The district athletic director will convene, chair, call witnesses (expert testimony), and keep records of all meetings and vote only in the case of a tie. Proceedings and conclusions will be sent to all committee members and the superintendent of schools. A decision of the board may be appealed by either party directly to the superintendent or designee for final determination.

Cross References:

- (cf.: 2151 – Co-curricular Activities)
- (cf.: 2152 – Philosophy of Athletics and Intramurals)
- (cf.: 2153 – Interscholastic and Middle School Athletics)
- (cf.: 2167 – Substance Use/Abuse)
- (cf.: 3210 – Nondiscrimination and Complaint)
- (cf.: 3410 – Student Health)
- (cf.: 3416 – Medication at School)
- (cf.: 3430 – Student and Staff Safety and Welfare)
- (cf.: 3431 – Emergency Treatment)
- (cf.: 3436 – Concussion and Head Injury in Youth Sports)
- [cf.: 3510 – Associated Student Body (ASB)]
- (cf.: 4330 – Public Use of School District Facilities)

WIAA Handbook

Legal References:

- RCW 28A.400.350 Liability, life, health, health care, accident, disability, and salary insurance authorized–Premiums
- RCW 28A.600.200 Interscholastic athletic and other extra-curricular activities for students, regulation of–Delegation, conditions
- RCW 69.41.330 Public Warnings–School districts
- RCW 69.41.340 Student athletes–Violations–Penalty

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