

Philosophy and Objectives of the Extracurricular Activity Program

The purpose of education is to develop each student to his or her fullest potential. Participation in extracurricular activities is one facet of the total education of a student in the Cambria Heights School District. Athletic training and competition are intended to contribute to the overall physical, intellectual and moral development of our students. It is the policy of the Cambria Heights School District to offer all students the opportunity to participate in our extracurricular activity program. Therefore, all coaches/advisors must make every effort to facilitate this policy.

To these ends, the interscholastic extracurricular activity program in the Cambria Heights School District aims to:

- Encourage students' self-discipline.
- Foster students' skills and talents.
- Enhance self-concept through students' assumption of responsibility and achievement of goals.
- Teach problem solving within an ethical framework.
- Develop good sportsmanship and good citizenship.
- Promote the productive use of leisure time for worthwhile recreation.
- Contribute to students' recognition of the worth and dignity of the individual and of the value of cooperation.

Philosophy of Extra and Co-Curricular Personnel

A classroom can be any location where students meet with a school employee who has been assigned the task of teaching. The learning situation may be formal or informal, specific or incidental, carefully programmed or a spontaneous response.

A classroom can be a designated location within a school building, a corridor, the locker room, the cafeteria, a school bus, the gymnasium, the athletic field, even the street corner. As long as a student and a teacher meet for a specific purpose or assigned activity, a classroom situation exists. A teacher and/or coach has no specifically assigned hours during which he/she must maintain a professional relationship with students or the public. His/her personal behavior outside the

assigned classroom can influence his retention or dismissal from his position. Regardless of the time of day, week or month; regardless of circumstances or location, a teacher or coach has a status and stature to maintain at all times. Any misconduct of a serious nature, as outlined in the School Code, makes a teacher or coach liable for dismissal from a given activity, assignment, or professional position.

When an individual changes from his/her regular full-time job clothing to that of a coach or other activity sponsor, he does not become a different person, governed by another set of responsibilities and duties. He/she is a teacher in every respect. In fact, he or she becomes even more vulnerable since the students he meets in such informal or co-curricular activities tend to form a closer personal relationship with the coach or sponsor. They tend to idolize such persons; to emulate their habits, actions, speech and conduct. In such situations, the coach or sponsor teaches more by example than by any other method.

If all this is true, it becomes vitally important that the coach or sponsor conduct himself or herself in a manner comparable to that of the classroom. His speech, actions and examples should be professional at all times. In the formal classroom, the teacher would not use vulgar, uncouth or abusive language. He/she would not degrade, humiliate or physically abuse a student. He/she would not use tobacco in any form, or permit his students to do so. In the formal classroom, the teacher would give all students the opportunity to participate or demonstrate his ability to perform or learn; he/she would not favor certain students because of location of residence, family background or reputation.

While athletics and co-curricular activities require different instructional methods, habits and procedures, they can still be taught in a professional manner. The good coach or sponsor builds character, teaches good sportsmanship, the will to win, and the playing of the game fairly.

The Cambria Heights School District desires its representatives, whether staff or students, to excel to the best of their ability in all phases of school activity. In addition, the school district desires that staff and students represent the school and the district on all occasions in a manner that will bring credit and positive acclaim to the institution. **No individual can be expected to do more, and no individual should be permitted to do less.**

PIAA Philosophy

It is unconscionable that a school or any of its professional employees would circumvent the high purposes of interscholastic athletics by

condoning any violation of the rules that is inimical to the intent of the By-Laws. To involve boys or girls in any procedure or practice which “gets around the rules” is unworthy of a professional person associated with athletics.

Athletics and Liability

Our society is litigious. Because people are likely to bring suit when they feel they have been injured, and because of our special relationship or “duty of care” toward our students, school people must be particularly careful to make every effort to safeguard students.

According to the Pennsylvania School Board Association, the “ingredients” of a successful lawsuit are:

- A duty to protect;
- A breach of that duty;
- An injury; and,
- A casual connection of the “foresee ability” of that injury.

Because of a Pennsylvania law passed in 1978 (The Political Subdivision Tort Claims Act), the reasons for which a school district and its personnel can be successfully sued have been limited. Nevertheless, coaches should be aware that successful suits are likely to occur in the following situations:

- Negligent maintenance of real estate – Coaches have a duty to inspect playing fields, locker rooms, and other similar areas for safety hazards and to report any problems they see. It is the school district’s responsibility to investigate the problems reported and to make any necessary repairs or adjustments.
- Willful, intentional, and reckless acts – Apply the “reasonable and prudent man” standard. Do not act hastily or in anger. Keep in mind that our highest duty is toward our students.
- Failure to warn adequately – While it is true that participation in sports entails some assumption of risk, that defense has been seriously eroded in recent court decisions, particularly when plaintiffs have shown that they were not warned of the danger of an activity or did not understand the danger. For that reason, coaches should meet with the parents and players prior to the beginning of the season to discuss the sports program, coaching

expectations, and safety measures used routinely. Communicate with parents. Safety films are also helpful in this area.

- Supervision of students – Students must be supervised at all times.
- Alumni – Alumni may NOT participate in practices or open gyms/fields.

General Guidelines for Coaches/Advisors

Student Handbook – Coaches should know and make certain that their athletes know the provisions of the Cambria Heights School District Student Handbook as they relate to the student-athletes. A copy of this book can be obtained from the principal. For the convenience of the coaches, a summary of the general rules for athletes is included in this manual. It is not all-inclusive, but includes some salient points from the handbook.

Use of Facilities – Athletic facilities are available for coaches' use with their sports and should be scheduled through the Athletic Director and Principal/Assistant Principal. Student-athletes must be supervised at all times when using district facilities and coaches must make sure that students stay in the assigned area.

Keep in mind that numerous school and community groups request the use of school facilities. District policy is to give in-season athletic teams first priority, other school sports or groups second choice, and community groups next choice in scheduling school facilities. In cases where sports overlap seasons, the Principal/Assistant Principal will set practice schedule times.

If no custodian is present in the building, the coach should make sure that doors used by student-athletes to enter and exit are closed and locked before leaving the building.

Coaches who wish to use school facilities for VOLUNTARY off-season conditioning or play as described in the PIAA guidelines, must schedule times through the Principal/Assistant Principal and/or the Athletic Director.

Budgeting – Each year, during the budgetary process, head coaches will submit a budget to the athletic director for their sport for the following school year, including supplies, clinics, and any items the coach deems necessary for the safe and efficient conduct of their particular sports program. Budget/ inventories must be submitted to the Athletic Director prior to February 1.

Awards and Honors – Methods of determining awards and honors vary from sport to sport and coach to coach. Each head coach should submit the method he/she uses to determine awards and honors to the principal and athletic director for approval.

Athletic Forms – The proper handling of athletic forms is of critical importance because the health and safety of the student athletes is directly involved.

No student may begin practicing for a sport without first having had a physical, and a student may be eligible for practice or participation in a sport only when there is on file, with the principal, a certificate of consent, which is signed by his/her parent or guardian.

If a student is injured in practice or competition, the coach must submit a notice of injury form, available in the high school office, to the school nurse at the earliest opportunity.

Out of Season Rules

Each sport has a defined season which includes the first legal practice date, the first legal scrimmage date, the first legal playing date, the last playing date for the regular season, the district deadline, the dates for the PIAA championships, the maximum number of contests for the regular season, the maximum number of scrimmages of interschool practices for the regular season.

Outside of the defined season for sports, member schools may not sponsor teams, but member schools may be involved with sports activities such as training programs, recreational activities, “open gyms,” clinics and camps, provided that the school does not sponsor teams and provided that any participation by coaches and/or students is as private citizens and is voluntary as described below.

1. The coach, or other personnel representing the school, shall not require an athlete to participate in a sport or a training program for a sport outside of the PIAA “defined sports season.” The participation of students in any sports activity that occurs outside its defined season, must be voluntary.

2. In order to maintain eligibility to represent a member school in football, a student shall not participate in organized contact football camps, clinics, drills, practices, games, scrimmages or similar contact activities outside the PIAA defined football season.
3. The school's name, nickname, interscholastic athletic uniform, interscholastic athletic equipment, and interscholastic athletic health/first aid supplies may not be used by community organizations and groups. The school's name, nickname and interscholastic athletic uniforms may not be used by students, however, the principal may permit students to use the school's interscholastic athletic equipment and the school's interscholastic health/first aid supplies.

Head Coaches/Advisors – Duties and Responsibilities

The head coach shall possess the necessary leadership characteristics that shall enable the development, within the coaching staff, of a common philosophy toward the athletic program that all coaches shall energetically support.

It is the responsibility of each head coach to choose the starting team and the players who will participate during the athletic contest. The head coach is also responsible for informing players and parents that, if he/she chooses, all practice sessions are closed.

The head coach of varsity sports is directly responsible to the principal. The duties and responsibilities of the head coach shall include, but not be limited to, the following in his/her sport:

1. Attend all PIAA competitions and plan and schedule a regular program of practices for the season. Be responsible for recommending the coaching assignments of all assistants, and for the assignment of all other duties related to the sport, including scouting and clinics.
2. Control the style of play to be used and direct coaches to adhere to this system.
3. Hold staff meetings according to need, as he/she may see fit and shall delegate as many of his/her responsibilities to members of the coaching staff as he/she deems necessary.

4. Discuss any problems regarding assistant coaches with the principal and athletic director.
5. Attend PIAA rules interpretation meeting prior to season.
6. Acquaint all participants of the PIAA rules and regulations pertaining to eligibility, etc., as well as conference or league rules in which Cambria Heights is associated.
7. Oversee any pre-season training program and supervise or assign supervision of all activities. Insure compliance with participation criteria for eligibility in interscholastic competition in his/her sport or activity consistent with school district policies and procedures.
8. Emphasize to staff and players good sportsmanship and fair play. He/she shall stress to his/her staff and players that visiting teams are guests of the Cambria Heights School District and shall be treated accordingly. He/she shall always endeavor to foster cordial relations between Cambria Heights School District and all athletic opponents.
9. Emphasize that athletics is a means to an end – to build confidence in the individual student in athletics, to teach sportsmanship and fair, clean play, and build determination and character.
10. Distribute physical and consent forms to participants and be present for supervision on physical examination day(s).
11. Provide the athletic director with rosters, eligibility list, and insurance information prior to the first practice.
12. Be responsible for establishing standards of reasonable safeguards against possible injury to athletes.
13. Be responsible for the proper care and protection against loss of all equipment.
14. Protect against damage to and emphasize the proper use of all school facilities, school buses, and other property at athletic contest.
15. Open the building for practice sessions and check showers and lights before locking the building after practice. Remain on school property until all participants have left or been picked-up.

16. Emphasize that the use of alcohol, drugs, or tobacco in association with the participants is prohibited and may be cause for dismissal.
17. Be responsible for completing requisitions and presenting a budget to the athletic director for purchasing of equipment, supplies, and uniforms.
18. Collect equipment and turn in complete inventory within a reasonable time frame at the conclusion of the season.
19. Eliminate as many physical hazards as possible through proper coaching techniques and the proper use of equipment. Oversee the safety conditions of the facility or area in which assigned sport or activity is conducted at all times that students are present. Report such conditions to the athletic director or building principal.
20. Be responsible for proper behavior of staff and team on away trips. Check locker room before leaving the school to make sure it is in order.
21. Expect and inform participants of proper dress when representing Cambria Heights in association with athletic events.
22. Be responsible for reporting all injuries resulting from participation in interscholastic athletics and fill out the necessary forms.
23. Offer consultation to the athletic director in scheduling of interscholastic contests and hiring officials.
24. Submit the season rules to the principal for approval prior to distributing them to the players. Also submit the method he/she uses to determine awards and honors for their athletes, to the principal, for approval.
25. **Review team rules and regulations with parents at a mandatory pre-season parent meeting.**

Assistant Coaches/Advisors- Duties and Responsibilities

All persons employed as coaches shall have a knowledgeable background in the sport to which they are assigned to coach. They shall be able to demonstrate a genuine interest in and ability to work with the youth of the school district. Coaches shall recognize that successful athletic teams are developed by coaching staffs cooperating fully with the head

coach and school administration, and that loyalty and dedication to the head coach and the team are essential.

The duties and responsibilities of the assistant coaches in the Cambria Heights School District shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

1. Shall be under the direct supervision of the head varsity coach for that sport and expected to attend staff meetings and to carry out all assignments and/or directives given to him/her by the head varsity coach.
2. Shall be responsible to the head varsity coach for carrying out scouting and other game assignments.
3. Be responsible for the conduct and well being of all athletes assigned to them for practice sessions or games. Report all injuries to the head coach.
4. Proper care and protection of equipment.
5. If assigned by the head coach, open the building for practice and check showers and lights before locking the building after practice. Remain on school property until all participants have left or been picked-up.
6. The use of profanity in association with the athletes is prohibited and may result in dismissal.
7. The use of alcohol, drugs, and tobacco in association with the athletes is prohibited and may result in dismissal.
8. Report to the first varsity practice or appropriate staff meeting called by the head coach to receive, and subsequently carry out, all assignments.

Volunteer Coaches

1. Volunteer coaches should be supervised by the head coach/assistant coach at all practices and events.
2. Volunteer coaches, approved by the Board of Education, shall adhere to the same duties and responsibilities as listed under assistant coaches.
3. Volunteer coaches should **NOT** be in charge of practices/activities without the head coach/assistant coach being present.

Cheerleading Advisors – Duties and Responsibilities

The duties and responsibilities of the cheerleading advisors employed by the Forest Hills School District will include, but not be limited to, the following:

1. Be directly responsible to the principal and assistant principal.
2. Schedule, organize and conduct try-outs for the squad using criteria approved by the principal.
3. Schedule practice, when deemed necessary, giving the squad sufficient notice of the scheduled practice.
4. Responsible for the care, use and storage of all school equipment.
5. Supervise squad at home and away interscholastic games, including football, basketball, and wrestling and any other cheerleading activity.
6. Select a competition squad from candidates on the cheering squad.
7. Present awards and honors according to criteria approved by the principal.
8. Prepare and submit to the principal a budget for cheerleading activities.
9. Submit the season rules to the principal for approval prior to distributing them to the players. Also submit the method he/she uses to determine awards and honors for their athletes, to the principal, for approval.

10. **Review team rules and regulations with parents at a mandatory pre-season parent meeting.**

PIAA Restrictions on Cheerleading Activities

The PIAA Board of Control is most concerned with dangerous activities performed by cheerleaders at interscholastic events. In an effort to eliminate or minimize injury to cheerleaders, the following shall be in effect for all PIAA District, PIAA Inter-District, PIAA Regional and PIAA Final athletic events:

1. No cheerleader shall stand on another person unless that other person has at least one (1) foot on the ground.
2. No flips are permitted from another person unless that person has both feet on the ground.
3. Trampolines and/or mini tramps shall not be used.

The above regulations are also recommended to PIAA member schools for implementation during regular season interscholastic events.

Any further restrictions on cheerleading activities must be determined at the advisor's discretion based on the training and abilities of the individual cheerleaders and subject to the approval of the principal.

Band Director – Duties and Responsibilities

The band director shall possess the necessary leadership characteristics that shall enable the development of a common philosophy that shall energetically support the marching band. The duties and responsibilities of the band director employed by the Cambria Heights School District will include, but not be limited to, the following:

1. Provide the Principal or Athletic Director with rosters, eligibility list, and the names of booster office holders prior to the first practice.
2. Be responsible for establishing standards of reasonable safeguards against possible injury to marching band members. Seek approval from the Principal, Athletic Director, or Superintendent before leaving events for inclement weather.

3. Be responsible for the proper care and protection against loss of all equipment.
4. Protect against damage to and emphasize the proper use of all school facilities, school buses, and other property at athletic contest.
5. Open the building for practice sessions and check showers and lights before locking the building after practice. Remain on school property until all participants have left or been picked-up.
6. Emphasize that the use of alcohol, drugs, or tobacco in association with the participants is prohibited and may be cause for dismissal.
7. Be responsible for completing requisitions and presenting a budget to the principal for purchasing of equipment, supplies, and uniforms.
8. Collect equipment and turn in complete inventory within a reasonable time frame at the conclusion of the season.
9. Eliminate as many physical hazards as possible through proper coaching techniques and the proper use of equipment. Oversee the safety conditions of the facility or area in which assigned sport or activity is conducted at all times that students are present. Report such conditions to the athletic director or building principal.
10. Be responsible for proper behavior of staff and marching band members on away trips. Check locker room before leaving the school to make sure it is in order.
11. Expect and inform participants of proper dress when representing Cambria Heights in association with athletic events.
12. Be responsible for reporting all injuries resulting from participation in interscholastic athletics and fill out the necessary forms.
13. Submit the season rules to the Athletic Director for approval prior to distributing them to the players. Also submit the method he/she uses to determine awards and honors for their athletes, to the principal, for approval.
14. **Review band rules and regulations with parents at a mandatory pre-season parent meeting.**