

# **HESPERIA COMMUNITY SCHOOLS ATHLETICS**



**Coaches Code of Conduct**

# Hesperia Panther Athletics

This handbook is designed for coaches of Hesperia Community Schools of all athletic activities sponsored by the Hesperia Athletic Department. Its content will help define the philosophy, goals and objectives as well as the policies and procedures used within the Department of Athletics.

Coaches are responsible for the contents of this handbook. It will be added to as necessary. This publication will assist in the ever important areas of communication and consistent application of policy. It serves as criteria for evaluation both for individual coaches for the entire program. Coaches are expected to be familiar with and abide by the given policies and contribute input when policies and procedures need to be revised or changed.

When forming your own team rules and expectations, please keep these guidelines and policies in mind. Please make sure your requirements are in line with this handbook.

## Notice Regarding Non-Discrimination Policy

No person shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participating, be denied the benefits of, be treated differently from another person or otherwise discriminated against in any interscholastic athletic program at Hesperia Community Schools.

Any person believing Hesperia Community Schools has inadequately applied the principles and/or regulations of Title IX of the Educational Amendment Act of 1972 may bring forward a complaint to the Director of Athletics at Hesperia High School, with a copy to the Superintendent of Hesperia Community Schools at the following address:

**Superintendent of Hesperia Community Schools  
96 South Division  
Hesperia, Michigan 49421**

## Athletic Department Philosophy

Hesperia Community Schools believes that it is critical to provide a variety of activities, in addition to the academic requirements, as we meet the educational needs of our students. The athletic programs are a vital extension of the educational process and we remain dedicated to providing opportunities for our students. Through participation in these extra-curricular programs, student athletes are able to utilize and further develop their character, loyalty, discipline, leadership, teamwork and sportsmanship.

Student-athletes should understand that participation in athletics is an honor and carries responsibilities to the team, school and community. It is important that we teach and practice good sportsmanship, respect, self-discipline, teamwork and self-esteem. While winning is always desired, it should not be the driving motivation of our program. Our goal should be to help guide the student-athlete in their quest to be the best athlete and person they can be and to teach the values of responsibility, respect, integrity, compassion and honesty.

## Athletic Code of Conduct for Coaches

The coach is the official representative of the school at interscholastic athletic activities. In this important capacity, these standards should be practiced. He/she is expected to:

1. Develop an understanding of the role of interscholastic athletics and communicate it to players, parents and the public.
2. Develop an up to date knowledge of the rules, strategies, safety precautions, and skills of the sport, and communicate them to the players and parents.
3. Develop, communicate, and model policies for athletes' conduct and language in the locker room, at practice, during travel, during competition.
4. Develop fair, unprejudiced relationships with all squad members.
5. Allow athletes to prove themselves anew each season and do not base team selections on previous seasons or out-of-season activities.
6. Allow athletes time to develop skills and interests in other athletic and non-athletic activities provided by the school and community groups.
7. Give the highest degree of attention to the athletes' physical well being.
8. Teach players, by precept and example, respect for school authorities and contest officials, providing support for them *in* cases of adverse decisions and refraining from critical comments in public or to the media.
9. Teach players strict adherence to game rules and contest regulations.
10. Present privately, through proper school authorities, evidence of rule violations by opponents; and counteract rumors of unproven allegations of questionable practices by opponents.
11. Attend required meetings, keep abreast of MHSAA policies regarding the sport, and be familiar with MHSAA eligibility and contest regulations.
12. Present a clean and professional image in terms of personal appearance and provide a positive role model in terms of personal habits, language, and conduct. The use of profanity, the use of tobacco within sight of players and spectators, and the use of alcohol any time before a contest, or on the day of the contest is not acceptable, attending gatherings where alcohol is served to minors, and the use or abuse of illegal drugs at any time is grounds for immediate dismissal.
13. Uphold the law and basic citizenship expectations as a community member and employee of the school.
14. Support administrative decisions in all policies, rules, and regulations regarding athletics.
15. All coaches must make sure athletes have been picked up after practice and competitions. Coaches must be the last to leave.
16. At no time should a coach be alone with an athlete. Always have another adult with you at all times.
17. Supervision is a must: Never leave students unattended.

## PUBLICITY AND PROMOTION

The goal of publicity in an interscholastic program is to have the material constructive, factual, and educational. Good public relations are an important objective of any school news release.

Everybody involved in athletics is involved in public relations. This includes the athletes both on and off the field, the coaches and other field personnel including trainers, cheerleaders, and administrators. Their actions reflect the overall image of Hesperia Community Schools.

Therefore, coaches must set rules of conduct *for* their players, and school administrators must set rules of conduct for their coaches and administrators. Public relations blunders can cost coaches their jobs, and players may lose chances to play because of inappropriate conduct. Also, when players are allowed to continue to play after committing an infraction, the institution's reputation is adversely affected.

## PUBLIC RELATIONS MUSTS

When a newspaper or other media requests a call for information about an athletic event, return the call, whether the outcome was a win or lose. Some times coaches call only when they win. This usually makes reporters cynical, and they will be reluctant to help with publicity.

When an interview is requested, give them what they request. Try to develop a friendship and trust with the media. Be genuine and honest. If they ask hard questions, stay calm, be polite, and answer honestly. If they ask questions that you are unable to discuss, don't say "no comment", but explain that the answer cannot be given at this time but the reporter will be informed when an answer can be provided.

Keep answers short--the longer you talk, the more likely you are to say something you shouldn't.

Never criticize or blame the officials or their calls to the press.

Never criticize the staff, administrators, or student athletes in the press.

Make a genuine effort to support other sports and school programs. Seek out other teachers and coaches to compliment them in their efforts.

## MEDIA

Head coaches are responsible to report game results to local media:

Muskegon Chronicle (877-270-9533)

Oceana Herald-Journal (231-583-1363)

Fremont Times Indicator (231- 924-4400)

TV 9 and 10 (1-800-782-7910)

# PRACTICE SESSIONS

## Coaches Responsibilities

### A. Participant requirements prior to first practice:

- All eligibility requirements have been satisfied
- Completed physical examination form
- Completed emergency medical cards
- Completed parent-athlete responsibility acknowledgment forms
- Fees paid (if any)

### B. Practice Policies

1. The morning following the first official practice, each coach shall submit a "squad roster" to the athletic director of all candidates trying out.
2. Practice sessions shall be scheduled so as to create the minimum amount of daily conflict with normal family activities of the participants.
3. Practice sessions should be well planned, well structured, and should normally not exceed two hours, (immediately following the end of the school day) excluding time required for dressing and showering.
4. In sports where it is necessary to schedule separate, back to back practices due to lack of facilities, the last practice session must be concluded by 9:30 p.m.
5. Coaches and managers should be the first to arrive and the last to leave the practice sessions. At no time are athletes to practice by themselves.
6. All equipment used in practice sessions shall be returned to its proper storage location at the end of each practice. The practice area must be policed and secured,
7. Student athletes are expected to attend *all* scheduled classes in order to participate in practices or games that day. Excused absences for up to 50% of the school day are permitted for unusual circumstances. Exceptions may be granted by the principal in cases of school related activities, college visits, etc., if arranged in advance.

### C. Restricted Practice Days

#### A Weekend and Holiday Practices

All practices are to be held on school days if at all possible.

Sunday/holiday practices will be permitted only:

- By varsity level teams upon permission of the Athletic Director.
- When a varsity contest has been scheduled the following day.
- When a tournament or play-off contest falls on the following day.

#### D. Vacation Practices

Practices held on vacation days such as over Thanksgiving, Christmas, and Spring Break, shall be scheduled earlier in the day, taking into consideration the family commitments of the majority of the team members.

#### Early dismissal of school or emergency closing

*In* the event there is a scheduled early dismissal of school, practices may be held at that time, providing the coaches are available. Normally, the dismissal results in the coach attending a meeting, seminar or workshop during this period.

Emergency weather conditions may result in an early dismissal or extended period of school closing. Varsity level teams only may practice during this period upon permission of the Athletic Director.

#### **INTERSCHOLASTIC SCRIMMAGES**

Scrimmages shall be set up by the head coach of each sport with the approval of the athletic director. (Minimum one week advance notice for bus transportation)

The head coach must contact and make arrangements with the maintenance department/transportation department.

\*Scrimmages are to be scheduled with no loss of school time.

\*Expenses are to be approved as per the yearly athletic budget.

\*Reserve and sub varsity scrimmages may be arranged if they involve no expense on the part of the athletic department.

\*If Coaches wish to use registered paid officials for a scrimmage, he/she must secure their services. If payment is required, the athletic department, with **PRIOR** approval, will pay for one preseason scrimmage for Varsity level contests.

**\*COACHES ARE TO BE AWARE OF AND FOLLOW CAREFULLY THE MHSAA DEFINITIONS AND REGULATIONS FOR SCRIMMAGES.**

## **SQUAD SELECTION**

#### **Philosophy**

In accordance with our philosophy of athletics and our desire to see as many students as possible participate in the athletic program while at Hesperia High School, we encourage coaches to keep as many students as they can without unbalancing the integrity of their sport. Obviously, time, space, facilities,

equipment, personal preference, and other factors will place limitations on the most effective squad size for any particular sport. However, when developing policy in this regard, please strive to maximize the opportunities for our students without diluting the quality of the program.

### **Cutting Policies**

#### **A. Responsibility**

Choosing the members of athletic squads is the sole responsibility of the coaches of those squads.

Lower level coaches shall take into consideration the policies as established by the Head Coach in that particular program when selecting final team rosters.

Prior to trying out, the coach shall provide the following information to all candidates for the team:

- Extent of try-out period
- Criteria used to select the team
- Number to be selected
- Practice commitment if they make the team
- Game commitments and playing time

#### **B. Procedure**

When a squad cut becomes a necessity, the process will include two important elements. Each candidate shall:

- Have the opportunity to compete in a minimum of four (4) practice days sub varsity, three (3) days Varsity.
- Be personally informed of the cut by the coach and the reason for the action. NOTE: It is recommended that teams who cut document the progress, skill test data, etc. of each athlete, in order to add objectivity to the process. It would be appropriate to privately discuss with each student the results of the try-out period.
- Cut lists are not to be posted.**
- Coaches will discuss alternative possibilities for participation in the sport, or other areas in the activities program.
- If a coach foresees difficulties arising as a result of squad cuts, he/she should discuss the situation with the athletic director.

### **PLAYING TIME**

Coaches must realize that the athletic program exists for the benefit of the student, not the benefit of the coach. Balancing the definition of success based on a win-loss record with the development of the entire group of individuals may turn out to be the most difficult duty of a coach. Due to the myriad of

differences *in* sports, there is no intent to legislate playing time of all team members. All players cannot be "first chair". All players cannot have identical roles on the team. Neither are coaches asked to accommodate the wishes of all parents of players.

However, coaches must realize that negligible or zero playing time on a regular basis often connotes negative messages such as "we can win without you", "your needs are not important", "you are a weak player that cannot be counted on", and your hard work and preparation are not important". Even the weakest player can be placed in a position that matches his/her skills and benefits the team at a time *in* the game that is not crucial. This takes careful planning and preparation by the coach.

As a general rule, it should be the goal of every sub-varsity coach that all players receive some game exposure each week, if not each game. The purpose of the JV level of play is to 1) increase participation at the appropriate skill levels, and 2) strengthen the Varsity program. When choosing the team in the preseason, consideration should be made as to how much playing time will the "bottom five" really receive. Communication is essential at any level when a coach really feels it would benefit a team to hold on to rather than cut an individual, even though he/she will obviously receive minimal game exposure. A logical and consistent playing philosophy must also be presented in parent preseason meetings.

It is generally recognized that Varsity level coaches have more leeway in determining playing time for all athletes. It is at this level that the school's best athletes hopefully participate. Unlike other levels, Varsity coaches attempt to put together a team at the highest level of competition possible in order to develop a winning team. This does not, however, negate the role of this coach in the personal development of *each* of his/her players, nor the importance of communicating a playing time philosophy to players and parents.

# LOCKER ROOM AND RELATED FACILITIES

## Locker Room Responsibilities

### A. Security

-Each coach is responsible for the action of members of his/her squad from the time they report to the locker room for practice until they leave the building after practice.

-It is the coach's responsibility to be present at the time that the athletes are to report for practice, games, meets, home or away, and stay until the last athlete has left.

-The coach shall see that lights and showers are turned off, the doors are locked, equipment is locked up and the room left as neat as possible.

-Since many coaches will be using the locker room office area (coaches' office), each coach must make an effort to keep this area neat and clean as reasonably possible. You must make sure that you lock the office door!

-Each coach shall keep a numerical and alphabetical record of the locks and lockers used by his/her squad. This record should include lock combinations. A copy of this record shall *be* made available to the athletic director.

### B. Control of Keys

-All keys to the building, locker rooms, equipment rooms, etc., will be issued to coaches by the athletic director. All coaches will return their keys to the athletic director as part of their normal post season duties, unless permission has been granted for summer use of athletic areas.

-Coaches are not to give athletes their keys at any time. Managers may use coaches' keys during practice sessions, but managers are not to have their own keys.

### C. Gym Responsibilities - All staff

-Cleated shoes are not permitted anywhere in the building.

-Beverages in the gyms are **NOT** permitted. Coaches are expected to enforce this.

-For certain off hour practices, coaches are responsible to secure the building. Doors at no time should be propped open before, during, or after practices. Coaches are to sign in and out when using gym during off hours.

# EQUIPMENT, TRAINING AND WEIGHT ROOMS

## Controls

- Each coach is responsible for making sure that the equipment room is locked at all times except when equipment is being issued or received.
- Athletes are not to be in the training room unless they are being examined or receiving treatment by the trainer or a coach. All use of the medical or rehabilitation equipment in the training room must be authorized by qualified personnel or the school district.
- The weight room will be controlled by the head coach of the specific coach using the weight room. At no time are athletes to use the weight room without authorized supervision.

## Weight Room Objectives

- To properly utilize a weight training facility in the best interest of all students.
- To provide adequate coaching technique in weight training.
- To provide program alternatives for achieving specific results.
- To insure that the proper safety measures are being employed during all training sessions.
- To provide responsibility in the proper care of equipment.
- To allow for weight training consultation for all athletic squads and physical education instructors.
- To make available opportunities for students to enjoy benefits derived from a sound weight training program on a year round basis.
- To attempt to reduce sport connected injuries through well developed conditioning.
- To present a program for self improvement that is open to all students, regardless of athletic affiliation.

## Weight Room Rules

- Shoes are required at all times.
- Nobody in the weight room alone.
- All students must be under the supervision of the instructor assigned to the weight room.
- Lifters must work with a partner.
- Replace all weights on racks immediately following use.
- Know your limits! Work with the instructor in determining your limits.

-Do the lifts correctly. It is better to use lighter weights than heavier weights and run the risk of injury.

-Warm-up with proper stretching exercises.

-Remember, strength training is not only a supplement to other athletic programs, but also a highly skilled activity itself.

## **PURCHASING**

-Purchasing of equipment - General: All purchasing of athletic equipment shall be made through the athletic director. **No expenditures are authorized by any individuals or coaches.**

-The athletic director shall obtain quotations where it is feasible, on all items of equipment to be purchased.

-Care should be taken by the coaches, when making requests for equipment to specify; (where possible) - catalog numbers, quantity, size, color, trim, material, etc., so that suppliers are quoting on equal products.

-Each head coach is responsible for organizing the equipment portion of his/her budget for the sport he/she is in charge of. After the season is over for his/her particular sport and after the coach has taken care of his/her inventory and the cleaning and sorting of his/her equipment, he/she should fill out his/her budget request and inventory form and submit it to the athletic director.

-When the budget has been approved, purchases may be made only through the use of a properly approved purchase order.

-The actual ordering of equipment and supplies will be handled through the athletic director.

-Purchase orders must be complete as to the size, color, quantity, trim colors, type of material, cost, etc.

-Every effort must be made to requisition equipment well in advance of the season. In spite of careful planning there will be occasions for a coach to want equipment quickly. Contact the athletic office for such needs. Inventory and equipment requests forms will be provided.

-Reminder - every purchase, including those from internal activities account, must be through an approved purchase order. Coaches must turn in receipts when purchasing pre-approved items/reimbursable expenses.

-Coaches or parent groups *are* not to collect and hold monies for any reason. Immediate deposits and "paper trails" are a necessity. Deposits are to be turned in to the athletic department. It is not advisable to have checks from students or fundraisers made out to the coach, but rather to the school.

## **OVERNIGHT TRIPS**

-All overnight trips must be pre-approved by the athletic director, superintendent and Board of Education prior to going on the trip.

-All forms (Trip Packet) for the trip must be filled out and presented at a board meeting at least 1 month before the trip takes place.

-If fundraising needs to take place to fund the trip, a meeting with the Athletic Director and Head Varsity coach must take place. This needs to take place before any fundraising is done which also means the trip needs to be approved before hand.

-The head coach is the responsible party, all school rules still apply while on the trip.

-At no time should an athlete be left unattended and alone while on the trip.

### **POLICY ON PROPER USE OF INDOOR FACILITIES FOR BASEBALL/SOFTBALL**

-Use high school/middle school gym and multi-purpose room only

-Coach must be present when students are practicing/warming. **No exceptions!**

-There are no exceptions to the MHSAA out of season four-player rule

-Use indoor balls only

-Throwing/catching must take place away from doors, fixtures, etc. that can be damaged if hit

-Under no circumstances are players to have a catch in hallways or lobby

-Equipment must be properly stored in the storage room when done

-A high priority must be given to safety of our athletes, and to avoiding damage to the gym

-Teams are liable for the cost of damage due to negligence

-Practices on weekends or on off hours must be reported on gym use forms

-Coaches are responsible for building security

### **INDOOR BATTING CAGE USE**

-Adult supervision required at all times

-Cage is to be operated by adult supervisor only

-Approved batting helmets are required for batter AND student server

-On deck batters must wait outside of cage

-Home plate area AND floor in front of batter **MUST** be protected by carpet or cover to avoid floor damage. This is not an option.

# Public Acts Regarding Steroids, Supplements and Hazing

## **PUBLIC ACT 31 (1990) REQUIRES NOTICE THAT POSSESSION/USE OF STEROIDS IS A CRIME**

In 1990, the Michigan Legislature enacted Public Law 31 which requires athletic service providers — including both educational and recreational athletic facilities — to post notice that warns that any person who uses or knowingly possesses an androgenic anabolic steroid violates Michigan law and is punishable by imprisonment and fine.

## **PUBLIC ACT 187 (1999) PROHIBITS PROMOTION/DISTRIBUTION OF PERFORMANCE ENHANCING SUPPLEMENTS**

Michigan public school employees and volunteers are prohibited by Public Law 187 from promoting or supplying dietary supplements which carry claims of enhanced athletic performance. The Law covers androstenedione, creatine and any compound labeled as performance enhancing. See MCL 380.1317.

## **PUBLIC ACTS 111 AND 112 (2004) PROHIBIT AND PENALIZE HAZING**

In 2004, the Michigan Legislature enacted legislation that prohibits hazing activities at educational institutions and provides penalties.

Hazing is defined in the law as an intentional, knowing or reckless act by a person who acted alone or with others that was directed against an individual and that person knew or should have known would endanger the physical health or safety of the individual, and that was done for the purpose of affiliation with, participation in, or maintaining membership in any organization. The law does not apply to an activity that was normal and customary in an athletic program sanctioned by the educational institution.

If the violation resulted in physical injury, the person would be guilty of a misdemeanor punishable by imprisonment for not more than 93 days, a fine of not more than \$1,000, or both. A violation resulting in impairment of a body function would be a felony resulting in imprisonment of up to five years and a fine up to \$2,500, or both. A violation resulting in death of the person hazed would be punishable by up to 15 years imprisonment and a maximum fine of \$10,000 or both.

## **PUBLIC ACT 215 (2006) BANNED DRUGS**

The law requires all public school districts and academies to include in their local codes of conduct that possession or use of any National Collegiate Athletic Association banned drug is not permitted and shall subject the student to the same penalties that the school district has established for possession/use of tobacco, alcoholic beverages and illegal drugs.

1. The board of a school district or board of directors of a public school academy shall ensure that its policies concerning a pupil's eligibility for participation in interscholastic athletics include use of a performance-enhancing substance by the pupil as a violation that will affect a pupil's eligibility, as determined by the board or board of directors. The governing body of a nonpublic school is encouraged to adopt an eligibility policy that meets the requirements of this section.

2. For the purposes of this section, the Department of Community Health shall develop, periodically update and make available to school districts, public school academies and nonpublic schools a list of performance-enhancing substances. The Department of Community Health shall base the list on the list of banned drugs contained in the Bylaws of the National Collegiate Athletic Association.

## Michigan Anti-Hazing Law

### **750.411t.added Hazing prohibited; violation; penalty; exceptions; certain defenses barred; definitions; section title.**

Sec. 41 1t.

(1) Except as provided in subsection (4), a person who attends, is employed by, or is a volunteer of an educational institution shall not engage in or participate in the hazing of an individual.

(2) A person who violates subsection (1) is guilty of a crime punishable as follows:

If the violation results in physical injury, the person is guilty of a misdemeanor punishable by imprisonment for not more than 93 days or a fine of not more than \$1,000.00, or both.

If the violation results in serious impairment of a body function, the person is guilty of a felony punishable by imprisonment for not more than 5 years or a fine of not more than \$2,500.00, or both.

If the violation results in death, the person is guilty of a felony punishable by imprisonment for not more than 15 years or a fine of not more than \$10,000.00, or both.

(3) A criminal penalty provided for under this section may be imposed in addition to any penalty that may be imposed for any other criminal offense arising from the same conduct.

(4) This section does not apply to an individual who is the subject of the hazing, regardless of whether the individual voluntarily allowed himself or herself to be hazed.

(5) This section does not apply to an activity that is normal and customary in an athletic, physical education, military training, or similar program sanctioned by the educational institution.

(6) It is not a defense to a prosecution for a crime under this section that the individual against whom the hazing was directed consented to or acquiesced in the hazing.

(7) As used in this section:

"Educational institution" means a public or private school that is a middle school, junior high school, high school, vocational school, college, or university located in this state.

"Hazing" means an intentional, knowing, or reckless act by a person acting alone or

---

acting with others that is directed against an individual and that the person knew or should have known endangers the physical health or safety of the individual, and that is done for the purpose of pledging, being initiated into, affiliating with, participating in, holding office in, or maintaining membership in any organization. Subject to subsection (5), hazing includes any of the following that is done for such a purpose:

Physical brutality, such as whipping, beating, striking, branding, electronic shocking, placing of a harmful substance on the body, or similar activity.

Physical activity, such as sleep deprivation, exposure to the elements, confinement in a small space, or calisthenics that subjects the other person to an unreasonable risk of harm or that adversely affects the physical health or safety of the individual.

Activity involving consumption of a food, liquid, alcoholic beverage, liquor, drug, or other substance that subjects the individual to an unreasonable risk of *harm* or that adversely affects the physical health or safety of the individual.

Activity that induces, causes, or requires an individual to perform a duty or task that involves the commission of a crime or an act of hazing.

"Organization" means a fraternity, sorority, association, corporation, order, society, corps, cooperative, club, service group, social group, athletic team, or similar group whose members are primarily students at an educational institution.

"Pledge" means an individual who has been accepted by, is considering an offer of membership from, or is in the process of qualifying for membership in any organization.

"Pledging" means any action or activity related to becoming a member of an organization.

"Serious impairment of a body function" means that term as defined in section 479a

---