



Pershing County Mustangs

Athletic Handbook



PHILOSOPHY

The athletic philosophy of Pershing County High School falls in accordance with the vision and mission statements set forth. Pershing County High School coaches, staff, and administration believe in building character and integrity through extra-curricular activities.

A CHECKLIST OF REQUIREMENTS TO PARTICIPATE

- Student is in a good standing at Pershing County High School (grades, behavior, and others)
- Student has been registered and approved on RegisterMyAthlete.com (RMA)
- Student and Parent have signed and returned the Drug and Alcohol Policy Form (Blue Form)
- Student has been cleared medically (either through physical or physical update form)
- Student has provided proof of incident insurance.
- All school fees and fines have been taken care of.
- Student and parent/guardian have read, reviewed, signed, and submitted the bottom of this form.

SPORT SAFETY

Participation in any extra-curricular activity may result in severe injury including paralysis or death. Rules and improved conditioning programs have reduced the risk of injury. Additionally, medical care and equipment has been improved to reduce risk. However, it is impossible to completely eliminate such occurrences from athletics. Student safety is the number one priority of coaches and staff at Pershing County High School.

PREVENTION OF INJURIES

Unfortunately, injury is not an uncommon occurrence in athletics. You can reduce the risk of injury in the following ways:

- Working hard at conditioning programs established by the coaches.
- Reporting to the first practice in good physical condition.
- Remaining mentally involved during games and practices.
- Going as hard during practices as you do in games.
- Listening to what your body says. Pain usually tells that something is wrong. Stop before the injury gets worse.

IF YOU ARE INJURED

- Tell your coach immediately.
- Your coach may advise you to go to a doctor for diagnosis and treatment. Follow his/her advice.
- Do what your body tells you to do. No one has the right to tell you that you are not injured or that you have to play with pain! You can suffer from injury years after everyone forgets the big game!

SPECIAL WARNING TO FOOTBALL PLAYERS

All football players are warned. Do not strike an opponent with any part of the helmet or face mask. This action violates football rules and may cause a severe brain or neck injury, including paralysis or death. Severe brain or neck injury may occur accidentally while playing football. No helmet can completely eliminate the risk of injury. Players are taught proper hitting techniques at the beginning of the season and the techniques are continuously taught through repetition throughout the season.

PLAYING TIME

JV TEAMS

Every player in good standing will have the opportunity to participate. At these levels, participation and development of skills are more important than winning contests. Coaches are encouraged to provide playing time for each athlete. However, we do not specify a minimum or maximum amount of time allotted to each player. IT IS THE SOLE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE COACH TO DETERMINE PLAYING TIME, POSITION ASSIGNMENTS, AND PLAYER ROLES. That is why they are the coach. Players may not get into a contest, or may see limited action because of player preference, safety precautions, or disciplinary action taken because of, but not limited to, attendance, tardiness, negative attitudes, sportsmanlike conduct, etc.

VARSITY TEAMS

Varsity athletes are expected to possess the skills and attitudes necessary to contribute to the team at a higher level than JV. The skills possessed should be skills that allow teams the best opportunity to qualify for the NIAA State Championships. IT IS THE SOLE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE COACH TO DETERMINE PLAYING TIME, POSITION ASSIGNMENTS, AND PLAYER ROLES. That is why they are the coach. No varsity player is guaranteed playing time.

Once a team has a limited chance of winning a game, or once the team is eliminated from playoff contention, coaches may alter their philosophy. They may increase playing opportunities for players requiring additional skill development and whose playing opportunities have been limited.

TEAM SIZE – TRYOUTS AND CUTS

While we strive to give every student the opportunity to participate in athletics, it sometimes becomes necessary to limit numbers by “cutting” athletes after trying out for a team. Numbers carried on teams will be set at maximums that provide appropriate development opportunities. Teams will accommodate as many athletes as possible without significantly distracting from the coach’s responsibility to teach and manage the team.

We utilize junior varsity teams to develop young athletic skills and attitudes. These teams strive to help athletes reach levels that will contribute to successful and highly competitive varsity programs. It is possible that senior athletes may be “cut” before younger players. We expect coaches to consider academic performance and attitudes displayed in other sports when determining who will be “cut”.

No one can dispute the extreme difficulties encountered when coaches are forced to eliminate athletes from a program. While most coaches agree “cutting” is the worst part of their job, IT IS THE SOLE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE COACH TO MAKE THESE DECISIONS.

MAKE-UP WORK

ABSENCE FROM THE CLASSROOM

Inevitably, participation in extracurricular activities will result in students missing class periods. Athletic participation demands outstanding dedication and organizational skills. Classroom work missed must be made up on time and with high standards quality. If an athlete demonstrates an inability to remain academically eligible on a regular basis, that athlete may need to leave a team in order to succeed in the classroom. Remember, they are “student-athletes”, putting the student first.

Make-up work guidelines follow:

Students are encouraged to make arrangements with the teacher prior to the absence. It is the responsibility of the student to contact the teacher to obtain missed work.

Students will have a schedule of athletic days he/she will miss school. When absences are for school-related activities, the student must find out ahead of time what will be missed. Students must be prepared to participate fully in the class the first day upon his/her return.

Teachers may choose to make arrangements that are more liberal than these guidelines. The guidelines may not be more restrictive.

Example Situation A

A student must miss English on Tuesday for a game. The missed day was used to review for a test to be given on Wednesday. The proper procedure would be, since the student knew ahead of time what day would be missed, it is the student's responsibility to prepare for the test prior to, and during, the absence. The student will take the test with the rest of the class on Wednesday.

Example Situation B

A student must miss Thursday for a game. The missed day was the day English term papers were due (a major project requiring several days to complete). The teacher will take off points for late papers starting on Monday. The proper procedure would be that the student knew ahead of time when the major project was due. It is the student's responsibility to have someone turn in the term paper on Thursday, the day it was due. The student could turn it in prior to Thursday, or make arrangements for someone else to turn it in. Points will be deducted if not turned in until Monday.

CONFLICTS WITH OTHER PERFORMANCE-BASED ACTIVITIES

Students participating in more than one performance-based activity at the same time (athletic teams, choir, band, drama, FFA, etc.), may find it impossible to make full, successful commitments. Choosing to participate in two performance-based activities may create conflicts unfair to the student, the coach/advisor, or other members of the organization who fully commit to the activity. It is certainly not fair to students who were "cut" from the group or team to make room for a person not able to fully commit to either activity. Students may not participate in more than one athletic/cheerleader/drill team during the same season.

Before participating in more than one performance-based activity, the student should seek the advisor's/coach's advice prior to enrolling to examine the magnitude of the conflicts. If a review of schedules shows conflicts will be a problem, the student must choose the activity in which he/she wants to become involved. When practices are missed because of other school activities, playing time is left to the discretion of the head coach as discussed in the meeting suggested above. At Pershing County High School we attempt to do our best to make this work. However, we cannot always make it work.

ATHLETIC AWARDS

Student-athletes spend countless hours and expend tremendous effort in the attempt to achieve excellence in competitive athletics. We expect them to maintain high standards of academic performance and to successfully represent Pershing County High School in athletic competitions throughout the state of Nevada.

Pershing County High School athletes who are on a team roster, who adhere to the expectations outlined in this handbook, and who finish the season in good standing will earn the appropriate athletic "letter" award. Athletes unable to complete the season because of injury will receive the "letter" as if they completed the entire season. We expect injured athletes to attend and observe practices, and games, if physically able.

Each athlete can receive a chenille letter after earning their first letter in their first sport. In addition he/she will receive a pin defining the sport to attach to the letter. These can be picked up in the office after the awards night for that particular season has been completed.

The Pershing County High School athletic department offers special awards to recognize the accomplishments of athletes throughout their career. The following awards are given.

1. Larry Donaldson Memorial Awards

Awarded to the outstanding underclassmen basketball players. This award is designated for freshman or sophomores.

2. Susie Smith Sportsmanship Award

Awarded to the senior athlete who, in the judgment of the coaching staff and principal, has demonstrated the finest qualities of sportsmanship during her athletic career.

3. Sean Michael Ward Sportsmanship Award

Awarded to the senior athlete who, in the judgment of the coaching staff and principal, has demonstrated the finest qualities of sportsmanship during his athletic career.

4. Lisa Christofferson Most Improved Female Athlete Award

This award is given to the senior athlete who, in the opinion of the coaching staff and principal, has shown the most improvement during their athletic career.

5. Block "P" Most Improved Male Athlete Award

This award is given to the senior athlete who, in the opinion of the coaching staff and principal, has shown the most improvement during their athletic career.

6. Personal Achievement Award

The Personal Achievement Award is to be given to the senior or seniors who, in the determination of the administration and/or the activities director, have overcome personal obstacles and earned recognition in their sport.

7. Peter Thomsen Memorial Award for the Outstanding Female Athlete

Shall be presented to the senior athlete who, in the judgement of the coaching staff and principal, has contributed the most to the athletic teams throughout her athletic career.

8. Corky Mendenhall Memorial Award for the Outstanding Male Athlete

Shall be presented to the senior athlete who, in the judgement of the coaching staff and principal, has contributed the most to the athletic teams throughout his athletic career.

ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY

Pershing County High School adheres to the academic eligibility rules set forth by the Nevada Interscholastic Activities Association (NIAA), the governing body for high school sports in our state. Below is a brief highlight of important rules:

- Students must earn at least two credits per semester which is the equivalent of passing four subjects.
- Students must earn a semester 2.0 GPA. Students will be declared ineligible during the first nine weeks of the following semester if they do not meet the minimum.
- Students who receive an F at the end of the 1st and 3rd nine week reporting periods will be ineligible for the first competitive week following that reporting period.
- Students must pass all classes during the activity to remain eligible. Administration checks grades after the third, sixth, and ninth weeks of each grading period looking for students failing a class. This check serves as a warning to athletes. If they remain on the list at the completion of the warning week, they become ineligible to participate on the Monday following the grade check for one week. The ineligible status remains in effect until the student gets a clearance slipped signed by the teacher and turns it into the office.. Any student falsifying the documents will be removed from the team. Academically ineligible students will be allowed to participate in practice during the time of ineligibility but will not be allowed to travel or compete in interscholastic games and/or scrimmages.
- A student enrolled in the alternative program, and/or special education, may not have to meet eligibility standards in order to participate. An I.E.P. or advisory committee may choose to alter the requirements.

ATTENDANCE - PRE-EXCUSED ABSENCE

Any student absent from any class on the day of a practice or activity will forfeit participation in the event unless they are able to meet one of the following conditions:

- A note provided by a dentist, orthodontist, physical therapist, or doctor confirms the student had an appointment. If a student sees a doctor due to illness, the student should stay at home to recover and will not be allowed to participate.
- Parental contact to administration with an acceptable excuse prior to the absence and permission is granted to miss school but still be permitted to practice after school.

RESIDENCE REQUIREMENTS

A student establishes residence when the following are met:

- The student AND the parent(s) who hold legal custody of the student, OR the student AND the student's legal guardian (appointed by a court of competent jurisdiction), reside within the attendance boundaries of the school.

SUBSTANCE ABUSE - NIAA Policy

Any student involved in the athletic program shall not knowingly possess, use, transmit, or be under the influence of alcohol, drugs, or tobacco e-cigarettes or other products that deliver nicotine or mimic the reaction of nicotine of any kind. Additionally, no student should have paraphernalia associated with the above in his/her possession. Athletes may be found in violation of this policy if they are not personally using but choose to remain in the presence of individuals who are violating the policy.

Additionally, students are subject to random drug testing throughout the school year if they elect to participate in athletic activities at Pershing County High School.

FIRST VIOLATION – a six (6) competitive week suspension from participation in interscholastic competition from a sport in which the student's name has appeared on any NIAA roster, beginning with the first scheduled competition after the suspension occurs. Four (4) competitive weeks of the suspension of eligibility may be waived if the student successfully completes all components of the appropriate substance abuse intervention program. The student may practice with the team during the period of suspension if approved by the coach and principal.

SECOND VIOLATION – The student shall be suspended from interscholastic competition from a sport in which the student's name has appeared on any NIAA roster for a minimum of ninety (90) school days which shall include a minimum of six (6) weeks of competition. The student shall not be allowed to practice with the team, or participate in any out of season activities and must complete the requirements set forth in subparagraphs A and B below, in order to be considered for reinstatement of future athletic eligibility, which shall be determined following the ninety (90) day suspension of athletic eligibility by a group composed of one of the student's parents/legal guardians, the school principal, athletic director, coach and a substance abuse program coordinator.

A. A substance abuse evaluation assessment conducted by a licensed alcohol and drug counselor at the expense of the parent/legal guardian of the student must be completed within ten (10) school days following the suspension and all assessment recommendations must be satisfactorily met before athletic eligibility may be reinstated.

B. The student must successfully participate in all sessions of the appropriate substance abuse intervention program and successfully complete a minimum of ten (10) tobacco or alcohol/drug related support sessions.

THIRD VIOLATION – The student shall be ineligible to participate in interscholastic athletics for the remainder of the student's high school career.

MEDICAL ELIGIBILITY

All student-athletes must gain medical clearance to participate in Pershing County High School athletic programs. Coaches may not permit any student to practice or compete without an approved physical examination. EXAMINATIONS MUST BE RENEWED EVERY TWO YEARS (typically freshman and junior years). Additionally, a physical update form must be completed each year in which an actual physical is not required.

Students who have visited the doctor or other medical professionals about an injury must have a note that clears them to return to participation prior to returning. Athletes will not be permitted to participate in practice or a game unless a note saying that they are specifically eligible to return is provided.

ACCIDENT INSURANCE

Before a student begins practice or competition, he/she must provide proof of either the school-sponsored accident insurance or a signed waiver documenting insurance coverage through another insurance program. Documentation must be submitted to the office to ensure coverage will be in effect for the entire sport season. School-sponsored insurance policies are available from the front office.

ELIGIBILITY DURING A SCHOOL SUSPENSION

Athletes will not be allowed to participate in any practice, contest, or performance while suspended from school. The suspended student is prohibited from attending any school activity during the time of suspension.

PARENTAL CODE OF CONDUCT

Your child's success or lack of success in sports is not indicative of what type of parent you are. Having an athlete that is coachable, respectful, a great teammate, mentally tough, resilient, and tries their best IS a direct reflection of your parenting. So, let the players play, let the coaches coach, and let the officials officiate.

TRAVEL

Student-athletes may schedule an appointment and meet the team at an event. In order to participate, they must receive permission from the coach and possess a form signed by a parent/guardian **and** an administrator from Pershing County High School. This must be done prior to the event. This needs to be completed before Thursday afternoon to be valid for weekend events and must be completed in the office at PCHS.

- A student-athlete riding home with another parent on a road trip to a NIAA sanctioned event must have a pre-arranged form signed by a parent/guardian **and** Pershing County High School administration in order to be released by the coach. This must also be preapproved through the office and be completed before Thursday afternoon for weekend events. This must be completed in the office at PCHS.
- A student-athlete riding home with a parent from an NIAA sanctioned event must be signed out through the coach by the parent/guardian in order to be released. This can **ONLY** be done by the parent/guardian unless you have received prior approval (such as the cases above).
- A student-athlete that misses the departure of team transportation will not be allowed to participate in the NIAA event.
- Overnights usually occur during a season. There are rules on curfew, proper behavior, and travel etiquette that must be followed. If a student-athlete violates any of these rules, he/she may result in loss of future travel privileges, suspension, or even dismissal from the team.
- If a student-athlete is dismissed from the team, it is up to the coach to decide if he/she will be allowed to be on the team the following year

PERSHING COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETIC RULES AND REGULATIONS CONTRACT

- All expectations should be followed.
- All practices are mandatory. Appointments or other emergencies need to be communicated to the head coach before the start of practice of the day that will be missed.
 - All unexcused practices will result ineligibility to attend or compete in the next scheduled NIAA sponsored event.
 - More than one unexcused practice may result in suspension or dismissal from the team. There will also be consequences for arriving late or being unprepared for practices.
 - Excused practices may require extra conditioning or practice to make up for the time missed. (See the above mentioned ATTENDANCE - PRE-EXCUSED ABSENCE and CONFLICTS WITH OTHER PERFORMING ACTIVITIES)
- Appropriate dress and proper equipment is mandatory in practice or at any event. Expectations of dress at NIAA events may also be required by individual athletic programs.
- Attitudes that are detrimental to the success of the team will result in suspension or dismissal from the team.

Student-Athlete/Parent/Pershing County High School Contract

We have read the Pershing County High School athletic handbook.

My signature below acknowledges my agreement to do my part to ensure the success of the TEAM.

Student Signature: _____ Date _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date _____