

# Pentucket Regional High



School

Department of Athletics  
Student-Athlete/Parent Handbook  
2022-2023

Director of Athletics: Dan Thornton  
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## **I. Philosophy of Pentucket Athletics**

The Pentucket Regional School District supports interscholastic athletics as an integral portion of our curriculum that focuses and stresses upon the true spirit of being a student-athlete. Tradition, loyalty, pride, community service, and teamwork combine to play an essential role in terms of what it means to be a Pentucket Panther. Athletics influences and advances the entire

educational environment and fulfills a necessary and important function of creating and maintaining a culture that promotes and advances the growth of positive self-esteem and mutual respect. We take pride in our athletic program at Pentucket and encourage students, faculty, staff, alumni, and friends throughout our district to be involved with all of our teams.

To participate in the Pentucket athletic program is a privilege and student athletes are expected to maintain, at minimum, a specific standard in order to participate. While tryouts are open to any student who wishes to participate; students must be in good standing academically, and be good citizens. It should be understood that some of our athletic teams have a limited number of roster spots per team, while others are unlimited rosters. The Pentucket athletic program does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, gender, sexual orientation, religion or national origin. We enforce all school, league, and state rules, and we hold our student athletes, coaches, and fans accountable to them.

## **II. Interscholastic Sports Offered**

**Fall:** Cheering, Cross Country, Field Hockey, Football, Golf, Soccer, Volleyball

**Winter:** Alpine Skiing, Basketball, Ice Hockey, Indoor Track, Swimming, Wrestling

**Spring:** Baseball, Lacrosse, Softball, Tennis, Track

## **III. Governing Bodies**

### *Role of the MIAA*

Pentucket is a member in good standing with the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association. The mission of the MIAA is to “serve member schools and the maximum number of their students by providing leadership and support for the conduct of interscholastic athletics which will enrich the educational experiences of all participants.” With membership, the Principal and Athletic Department agree to abide by all rules and regulations set forth by the MIAA. One of the primary functions of the MIAA is to conduct post-season tournaments (playoffs) on the varsity level and we are subject to specific rules and regulations that govern each tournament.

### *Role of the Cape Ann League (CAL)*

Pentucket enjoys a strong and mutually respectful relationship with the member schools of the Cape Ann League. The principals and athletic directors of each school work closely together and meet regularly (at least once per month). We all share a philosophy which encourages healthy competition and sportsmanship. The Cape Ann League has its own handbook which was created by the principals and athletic directors and is revised on a yearly basis to meet the needs of its student athletes and member schools. The Cape Ann League comprises 11 schools in 2 divisions.

Pentucket competes in the Kinney Division along with Newburyport, North Reading, Triton, and Lynnfield. The Baker Division includes: Amesbury, Ipswich, Georgetown, Manchester Essex, Hamilton Wenham, and Rockport. In most sports seasons, Pentucket will play Home & Away games against teams in the Kinney Division and a single "crossover" game against teams in the Baker Division. All of these games count to determine the winner of each division. The winner(s) of the Kinney & Baker divisions are CAL Champions. In instances of a tie, co-champions are declared. The CAL does not have a tie-breaker system in place.

- Full-time Student
- Academically Eligible (Pass 5 courses per quarter)

## IV. Coaching Philosophy

### *Role of the Coach*

Pentucket coaches are an extension of the faculty and have a tremendous opportunity to influence our student athletes. Just as teachers oversee their classrooms, coaches have similar responsibilities in that they are required to prepare, supervise, regulate, and guide student athletes on the playing fields. Coaches must demonstrate leadership, discipline, cooperation and be able to build and foster positive relationships with their student athletes. Coaches have numerous responsibilities; to the players on the team, their families, fellow coaches, the media, alumni, and the community. They are required to be at all practices and competitions and be positive role models on and off the playing fields. The main goal for coaches is to provide opportunities for student athletes to develop their capabilities to the fullest extent and always with their safety and well-being in mind. All coaches in the athletic department are evaluated at the conclusion of each season by the Athletic Director. At the end of the day, Pentucket coaches are expected to create opportunities for student athletes to become better athletes, better human beings, and have fun.

Team expectations are continuously developed in conjunction with the athletic department and explained by coaches during each team's respective preseason informational meeting with student athletes and parents.

## V. Eligibility & Varsity Letter

### *Eligibility to Participate in PRHS Athletics*

Students wishing to participate in PRHS Athletics must be eligible to participate. This criteria includes:

- Physical Exam within the past 13 months
- Paid User Fee

**Commented [1]:** Possibly a section here about each Coach being able to set their own Teams expectations as long as they do not supersede CAL or MIAA policies understanding that some may be the same and we would want them as similar as possible across the board.

### *General Letter Criteria*

With the exception of Indoor & Outdoor Track, all players who are listed on a Varsity roster will receive a Varsity letter. The criteria for earning a Varsity letter in Indoor & Outdoor Track is to earn 7 points or more for the season (1<sup>st</sup> place = 5 points, 2<sup>nd</sup> place = 3 points, 3<sup>rd</sup> place = 1 point). Any

track athlete who qualifies for the Varsity CAL meet will earn a Varsity letter regardless of points scored.

**Note: Coaches have discretion on Varsity letters with approval of the Athletic Director.**

## VI. Captains

Team captains are decided by the Head Coach and can be named at any point during the season. All players are eligible to be a captain regardless of class. Team voting is often used as a method for coaches to gain a team consensus and perspective. Coaches must explain in detail the process for selection and that, at the end of the day it will be their decision. Any player who is suspended for a MIAA Chemical Health Violation will be ineligible for one calendar year from the date of the infraction. Captains are elected for one season only and the coach, athletic director, or principal may remove a captain at any time for conduct which displays a lack of leadership or is detrimental to the team.

## VII. Banquets

All Pentucket athletic banquets will be held on the MSHS campus.

- This on-campus banquet is the official banquet of that sports' celebration, and any other celebration is not school sponsored, and, therefore, will not be a location where coaching staff will be present or official PRHS awards will be distributed.
- Costs associated for each banquet (e.g. food, awards, gifts) should be kept to a minimum and approved by the Head Coach and Athletic Director.
- Varsity & Sub-varsity certificates, letters, pins, and CAL All-Star certificates will be provided by the school and distributed by the coaching staff.
- Trophies and other awards may be purchased and distributed by the individual teams at the banquet.

## VIII. Parent/Fan Involvement & Behavior

### **Behavior**

Good sportsmanship is expected and demanded from our players & coaches and the same applies for fans at our games. Overzealous fans who display poor behavior at games is a detriment to our student athletes and teams. Pentucket Regional High School expects all in attendance to display the highest level of sportsmanship.

- Spectators and fans are to treat opponents, game officials, and visiting fans with the utmost respect and class. Failure to do so will result in removal from the game and potential ban from future games/season.

- Should an opportunity arise that takes a banquet (or all banquets for one season) off campus, all school rules still apply, and such an opportunity would require the approval of both the Head Coach, Athletic Director, and Building Principal.

- Approved speakers at the banquet include student-athletes, coaches, the Athletic Director, a building administrator, and any other speaker approved by the Head Coach and Athletic Director.

- The focus of the Banquet is to be on the students and their accomplishments and, as such, the main speakers shall be the coaches and student-athletes.

- Presentations done by student-athletes shall be reviewed by the Head Coach prior to the banquet.

**Commented [2]:** Include a section here about the Coaching Evaluation Process for Head Coaches and Assistant coaches. A few sentences will do the job. Awareness that it will happen is the critical part.

- Fans are expected to cheer for Pentucket rather than against our opponent. Comments that are clearly directed toward opposing teams by using names, uniform numbers, or some other identifying remark, will result in immediate ejection from the game and possible exclusion from future contests.
- Fans must stay off the playing area at all times including before and after the event unless they have permission from the Head Coach and Athletic Director. Failure to do so will result in ejection and likely trespassing of the individual from all future events.
- Negative remarks towards game officials will not be tolerated. At no time should any fan be communicating with game officials. Failure to comply will result in ejection from the game and possible exclusion from future events.
- Noisemakers of any kind are also not permitted at any indoor games.
- Fans/Parents are also not permitted to be on the sidelines or behind team benches unless authorized by the Athletic Director.
- Fans/Parents are not permitted to interact with coaches prior to or immediately following a competition. If an individual would like to speak with the coach, that individual may do so by contacting the coach setting up a meeting.

### **Consequences for Poor Behavior**

Any fan at a school function, including athletics, may receive the following consequences for their poor behavior which includes negative cheering, arguing with student-athletes, arguing with officials, cursing, etc.

- Removal from the event
- Ban from future events
- No Trespass Order (for a period of time... season or year(s))
- Charged and criminally prosecuted

### **Expectations for Communicating with Coaches**

Parent/Coach relationships start with clear communication channels. Parents will receive a team philosophy from the coach before the season begins. Team rules and requirements will be included along with the times and locations of all practices and games. This will no doubt change during the season and coaches are expected to communicate all changes.

Parents are encouraged to reach out to coaches with any concerns regarding their child's safety or behavior. Looking to strategize about ways to help their child improve is also an appropriate concern that can be addressed with the coaching staff. *Issues such as playing time, positions, team strategy, and other student athletes on the team are examples of issues that are not appropriate to discuss with a coach.* Playing time is generally the biggest issue and it needs to be understood that coaches are making decisions based on what they believe is best for the team. Keep in mind that coaching decisions, especially regarding playing time/positions, are taken seriously and made after observing student-athletes in practices, scrimmages, team

meetings, and games.

**Procedure to follow with coaching concerns:**

There are times when a student-athlete communicates a concern to their parent/guardian about their coach. If that happens, the following process shall be followed:

*Step 1* - The student-athlete and coach meet to discuss any concerns.

*Step 2* - If Step 1 does not resolve the issue, the parent/guardian and student-athlete meet with coaches to discuss any concerns.

*Step 3* - If Step 2 does not resolve the issue, the parent/guardian may schedule a meeting with the Athletic Director and Coach to discuss concerns.

*Step 4* - If Step 3 does not resolve the issue, the parent/guardian may contact the Principal to discuss concerns. At that point, if the meeting does not resolve the issue, the Principal (or his/her designee) will conduct an investigation of which s/he will share the outcomes following all FERPA and legal guidelines and statutes .

## **IX. Tryouts, Cuts, and Waivers**

All Pentucket student-athletes are encouraged to try out for any sport that is offered. Coaches will clearly communicate tryout times and dates, who is evaluating the tryout, and roughly how many student-athletes will be selected for each team. In some of our sports, cuts may be made depending on, but not limited to, the following reasons:

- Roster slots
- Facility restrictions
- Safety concerns
- Ability level
- Coach to student-athlete ratio

Coaches reserve the right to select the players for their teams. Cuts can be made in any sport, at any level (not just at the varsity level). Teams which have historically have made cuts are: boys & girls soccer, baseball, boys & girls basketball, girls tennis, field hockey, and golf. Selection on teams may also change so a student-athlete selected to a varsity team may at some point be moved to JV and vice versa. This can also change on a year to year basis.

In the event that a sport cannot fill its JV level, the Athletic Director may appeal to the CAL and MIAA for a waiver to allow middle school students to participate (sometimes just 8<sup>th</sup> graders). If a middle school student is participating, they may only compete at the lowest level offered.

## **X. Chemical Health Policy**

*MIAA Chemical Health Policy:*

From the first day of fall practice to the last day of school or athletic competition, students shall not, regardless of the quantity use or consumption, possess, buy/sell or give away any beverage containing alcohol; any tobacco product (including E-cigarettes, vape pens or other similar products); marijuana; steroids; or any controlled substance. This policy includes products such

as “NA or near beer”. It is not a violation for a student to be in possession of a legally defined drug specifically prescribed for the student’s own use by his/her doctor. This rule represents a minimum standard upon which schools may develop more stringent requirements, and Pentucket has done so and enforces this rule year round.

*Minimum Penalty:*

First Violation: When the principal confirms, following an opportunity for the student to be heard, that a violation occurred, the student shall lose eligibility for the next consecutive interscholastic contests totaling 25% of all interscholastic contests in that sport. For students, these penalties will be determined by the season the violation occurs. No exception is permitted for a student who becomes a participant in a treatment program. It is recommended that the student be allowed to remain at practice for the purpose of rehabilitation. All decimal parts of an event will be truncated, i.e. all fractional parts of an event will be dropped when calculating the 25% of the season.

*Second and subsequent Violations:*

When the principal confirms, following an opportunity for the student to be heard, that a violation occurred, the student shall lose eligibility for the next consecutive interscholastic contests (regular season and tournament) totaling 60% of all interscholastic contests in that sport. All decimal part of an event will be truncated, i.e. All fractional parts of an event will be dropped when calculating the 60% of the season.

## **XI. Taunting Policy**

*MIAA Taunting Policy*

Taunting includes any actions or comments by coaches, players, or spectators which are intended to bait, anger, embarrass, ridicule, or demean others, whether or not the deeds or words are vulgar or racist. Included is conduct that berates, needles, intimidates, or threatens, based on race, gender identity, ethnic origin or background, and conduct that attacks religious beliefs, size, economic status, speech, family, special needs, or personal characteristics.

Examples of taunting include but are not limited to: “trash talk”, defined as verbal communication of a personal nature directed by a competitor to an opponent by ridiculing skills, efforts, sexual orientation, or lack of success, which is likely to provoke an altercation or physical response; and physical intimidation outside the spirit of the game, including “in the face” confrontation by one player to another, standing over/straddling a tackled or fallen player, etc.

At all MIAA contest sites and tournament venues, contest management may give spectators one warning for taunting. Thereafter, spectators who taunt players, coaches, game officials, or other spectators should be ejected.

## **XII. Hazing Policy**

*Commonwealth of Massachusetts: Anti-Hazing Law*

*Chapter 269: Section 17. Hazing; organizing or participating; hazing defined*

Whoever is a principal organizer or participant in the crime of hazing, as defined herein, shall be punished by a fine of not more than three thousand dollars or by imprisonment in a house of correction for not more than one year; or both such fine and imprisonment. The term “hazing” as used in this section and in sections eighteen and nineteen, shall mean any conduct or method



of initiation into any student organization, whether on public or private property, which willfully or recklessly endangers the physical or mental health of any student or other person. Such conduct shall include whipping, beating, branding, forced calisthenics, exposure to the weather, forced consumption of any food, liquor, beverage, drug or other substance, or any other brutal treatment or forced physical activity which is likely to adversely affect the physical health or safety of any such student or other person, or which subjects such student or other person to extreme mental stress, including extended deprivation of sleep or rest or extended isolation. Notwithstanding any other provisions of this section to the contrary, consent shall not be available as a defense to any prosecution under this action.

*Chapter 269: Section 18. Failure to report hazing*

Whoever knows that another person is the victim of hazing as defined in section seventeen and is at the scene of such crime shall, to the extent that such person can do so without danger or peril to himself or others, report such crime to an appropriate law enforcement official as soon as reasonably practicable. Whoever fails to report such crime shall be punished by a fine of not more than one thousand dollars.

*Chapter 269: Section 19. Copy of Secs. 17 to 19; issuance to students and student groups, teams and organizations; report*

Each institution of secondary education and each public and private institution of post secondary education shall issue to every student group, student team or student organization which is part of such institution or is recognized by the institution or permitted by the institution to use its name or facilities or is known by the institution to exist as an unaffiliated student group, student team or student organization, a copy of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen to unaffiliated student groups, teams or organizations shall not constitute evidence of the institution's recognition or endorsement of said unaffiliated student groups, teams or organizations. Each such group, team or organization shall distribute a copy of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen to each of its members, plebes, pledges or applicants for membership. It shall be the duty of each such group, team or organization, acting through its designated officer, to deliver annually, to the institution an attested acknowledgment stating that such group, team or organization has received a copy of this section and said sections seventeen and eighteen, that each of its members, plebes, pledges, or applicants has received a copy of sections seventeen and eighteen, and that such group, team or organization understands and agrees to comply with the provisions of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen. Each institution of secondary education and each public or private institution of post secondary education shall, at least annually, before or at the start of enrollment, deliver to each person who enrolls as a full time student in such institution a copy of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen. Each institution of secondary education and each public or private institution of post secondary education shall file, at least annually, a report with the board of higher education, certifying that such institution has complied with its responsibility to inform student groups, teams or organizations and to notify each full time student enrolled by it of the provisions of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen and also certifying that said institution has adopted a disciplinary policy with regard to the organizers and participants of hazing, and that such policy has been set forth with the appropriate emphasis in the student handbook or similar means of communication the institution's policies to its students. The board of higher education and, in the case of secondary institutions, the board of education shall promulgate regulations governing the content and frequency of such reports, and shall forthwith report to the attorney general any such institution which fails to make such report.

### **XIII. Student Attendance Expectations & Consequences**

Pentucket student athletes are expected to be in school every day, to be in every scheduled class on time, and ready to work to the best of their ability. Students may not participate in any extracurricular activities if they are tardy or absent from school. The school day begins at 7:35 am. Any student arriving after 7:35 am is considered tardy or absent from school and cannot participate unless excused by the athletic director or an administrator. Valid reasons for a student to be excused include doctor's appointments, funerals, college visits, etc. In order to be considered, valid documentation shall be presented by the student-athlete or parent for approval to the main office at the time of return.

Additionally, common sense should prevail. For example, if you have a dentist appointment at 11 am you should be in school before your appointment and return immediately afterwards. Similarly, if a student has an appointment at 9AM and it is a 1 hour long appointment, they are expected to return for the remainder of the day in order to be eligible.

Students who are dismissed from school for illness will not be allowed to participate in practices or games.

#### *MIAA Good Citizen Rule (#63.1)*

Student-athletes may not represent their school if they are on in-house or out-of-house disciplinary suspension. A suspended student is ineligible for practice or competition for at least the number of days (or partial days) equal to the number of days of the suspension.

### **XIV. Pentucket Athletic Association (PAA)**

#### **Pentucket Athletic Association (PAA)**

The Pentucket Athletic Association (PAA) was founded in 1991 as a nonprofit volunteer parent organization that supports the athletic mission of the Pentucket Regional High School. All parents of current student athletes are members of the PAA; there is no membership form or fee. The PAA promotes scholastic and athletic achievement to provide our student-athletes with positive, lifelong experiences. It supports the values that athletics provides, such as sportsmanship, team work, and sound work ethics. These are attributes that transcend athletics and will be invaluable to our students as they progress through life.

Each year, the PAA awards four (4) \$500 scholarships to graduating senior student athletes. The PAA also allocates expenditures to individual teams to provide additional support outside of the Pentucket athletic department budget. Individual teams hold fundraising activities and all monies are kept in team booster accounts. In addition, the PAA assists booster groups with financial management of their funds. Together with the PAA, the parent representatives, booster group members, and coaches determine student and team needs and decide on how funds are spent.

PAA meetings are held seasonally at the high school the first Wednesday of the month at 7 pm in August, November, March, and May.

Any team purchase made by the PAA shall have the approval of the Head Coach of that

respective sport and/or the Athletic Director.

## **XV. Fundraising**

The Pentucket Athletic Department is fortunate and grateful to have so many parent volunteers who donate their time and efforts through the PAA. It is important to note that the purpose of any fundraising effort is used to support the teams, not fund them. Raising funds to help cut costs for an end of season banquet or team “swag” should be kept within limits.

Fundraisers are limited to 2 per team (one in season and one out of season).

The protocol for team fundraisers is as follows:

1. Coach approval
2. AD approval
3. Principal notified (principal can override if there is an issue)
4. Fundraiser must be supervised by a PRSD employee (e.g. Coach)

## **XVI. Budgets and User Fees**

It is the responsibility of the Pentucket Regional School District to adequately oversee and fund the high school’s athletic programs. The district athletic budget covers costs such as transportation, coaches salaries, referee salaries, uniforms, equipment, league fees, etc.

The Pentucket Athletic Association’s (PAA) responsibilities primarily revolve around fundraising for items that are not generally included in the district’s athletic budget (year-end banquets, scholarships, senior gifts, etc.).

### **2022-2023 User Fee Schedule**

Fall:

- Cross Country = \$200
- Cheerleading = \$200
- Field Hockey = \$350
- Volleyball = \$350
- Soccer = \$350
- Golf = \$350
- Football = \$400

Winter:

- Indoor Track = \$200
- Skiing = \$300
- Basketball = \$350
- Wrestling = \$350
- Swimming = \$450
- Ice Hockey = \$850

Spring:

- Track = \$200
- Baseball = \$350

- Softball = \$350
- Lacrosse = \$350
- Tennis = \$350

## **XVII. Uniforms**

The district's approved uniform rotates on a yearly basis and is as follows. Please note that given the nature of a sport, some parts of uniforms may need to be purchased more frequently/annually.:

- Year 1: Cheering, Wrestling, Baseball, Softball, Girls Lacrosse
- Year 2: Volleyball, Girls Basketball, XC/Track, Golf
- Year 3: Football, Boys Lacrosse, Girls Tennis, Boys Tennis
- Year 4: Ice Hockey, Boys Basketball, Field Hockey, Soccer (Boys/Girls)

## **XVIII. Equipment**

All Pentucket student athletes are responsible for equipment issued to them (school equipment will not be issued until the user fee has been paid). Pentucket equipment is to only be used as directed by the coach and only at school sponsored events/games. Student athletes will be assessed a fee for equipment damage or loss unless there are extenuating circumstances involved. Any lost equipment must be reported to the head coach and equipment manager immediately.

## **XIX. Transportation**

Pentucket provides transportation for students participating in co-curricular or extracurricular activities. However, when transportation is not available, private vehicles may be permitted to transport students to or from school activities that fall within the academic day or extend the school day provided all of the following conditions are met:

- The activity has the approval of the Superintendent of Schools
- The owner of the vehicle being used in transporting students must file evidence with the Superintendent of personal liability insurance coverage on the vehicle in the amounts of \$100,00 - \$300,000 or more.
- The parents of students to be transported in this manner will be fully informed as to this means of transportation and will sign a statement to this effect.

## **XX. Student Managers**

Pentucket teams value the help and support of a student manager. The team student manager is basically an extension of the coaching staff and team. Team managers are primarily used to help out with equipment issues, keep stats during games, running score clocks during practice drills, assists with pregame music, etc. Any student who would like to be considered as a team manager should contact either the head coach of the team or the athletic director.

## **XXI. Ticket Prices**

Ticket prices for home games at Pentucket (Football, Basketball, Ice Hockey) are sold at a General Admission price of \$5. During the MIAA tournament, the MIAA dictates the price of admission for students and adults.

## **XXII. Offseason Strength/Conditioning/Fitness Training**

The purpose of Pentucket's Wellness Center is to focus on our students' total health: Mental Health, Physical Health, and Strength & Conditioning. Our new multipurpose fitness room has a turf area for functional training, yoga, dance, and cardio. Strength & Fitness training in our state of the art weight room comes with 8-multifunctional racks, dumbbells, kettlebells, a Keiser machine, aerodyne bikes, treadmills, rowers, elliptical, and much more. Training may take place throughout the school year before school and after school starting at 2:30. Sessions are all dependent on staff supervision and availability. Check on the website for more details and accurate scheduling.

Similarly, offseason strength and conditioning may also be made available, and students wishing to participate should check the athletics website for more information.

## **XXIII. MIAA Student Ambassador Program**

### Criteria

- Entering Sophomore, Junior or Senior year
- Active participation in interscholastic athletics and/or school activities -
- Understanding of the importance of educational athletics and academics -
- Commitment to the areas of community service, student leadership, sportsmanship and wellness
- Email access and timely correspondence

### Opportunities

- Participate in three (3) MIAA Student Ambassador Huddles during the school year (typically in October, January, and May)
- Participate in Ambassador Service Challenges
- Work with fellow ambassadors in your school, district and across the state to develop action plans for future community service ideas
- Contribute to the MIAA "Building the Future" Educational Athletics Newsletter -
- Serve as a liaison in your school with the student body, Principal and Athletic Director
- Participate in additional student leadership opportunities

### Goals/Expectations

- Student Ambassadors will assume leadership roles in their schools and communities -
- The MIAA Educational Athletics staff will be of service to Student Ambassadors and their schools
- The MIAA Educational Athletics staff will communicate with Student Ambassadors on various topics, including community service initiatives, events, volunteer opportunities, and student leadership opportunities

- Student Ambassadors and the MIAA Educational Athletics staff will establish an ongoing communication that will help develop future leaders

#### **XXIV. Pentucket Athletics Hall of Fame**

(IN PROGRESS... hopefully coming by the end of 2023-2024)

- Selection Process
- Committee