

STUDENT-ATHLETE ATHLETIC HANDBOOK
Poland Regional High School
Bruce M. Whittier Middle School

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Welcome to the PRHS and BMWMS athletic experience. We are proud that you are willing to become part of the athletic community at our school. It is important to note that Poland Regional High School is proud to be a Sports Done Right advocate. This means that we recognize the value of good sportsmanship, respect and commitment to our students' education.

We at Poland Regional High School and Bruce M. Whittier Middle School believe that a dynamic program of student activities is vital to the educational development of the student as a whole. The philosophy of the athletic department is to provide a comprehensive, safe, and diverse athletic environment for student-athletes within the school community. The athletic program offers students another valuable opportunity to gain skills and learn to work within teams. The activities program should provide opportunities for youth to further develop interests and talents in sports, theatre, music, dance, student government and academic-related areas. Participation in these activities provides the opportunity for long-lasting development of personal values, work ethic and skill in leisure activities.

Poland Regional High School is a member in good standing of the Maine Principals Association (MPA) which serves as the governing body for interscholastic activities of schools within the state of Maine as well as the Western Maine Conference (WMC). The purpose of the MPA is to promote, develop, direct, protect and regulate amateur athletic relationships among member schools. In addition, the intent of the MPA, is to ensure fair play, equal opportunity to compete, provide adequate protection of student-athletes and promote good sportsmanship among contestants, schools, and communities throughout the State. Membership requires abiding by conference schedule, by-laws, rules and regulations.

Bruce M. Whittier Middle School is a member of the Cumberland County Athletic Conference (Triple C). The "Triple C" is made up of middle schools in Cumberland County and other local area schools. The goal of the "Triple C" conference is to unite schools in our conference and promote the essential values needed to develop strong citizens both on and off the playing field, all the while supporting the Middle School Philosophy.

Poland Regional High School and Bruce M. Whittier Middle School Athletic Program's strive to be competitive and successful. A "win at all costs" attitude will not be tolerated. The purpose of the athletic program is to ensure a positive atmosphere that is conducive to learning. The role of the Coach is to provide student-athletes with the opportunity to learn from their experiences in athletics regardless of the win/loss record. All athletic activities will be conducted with sound educational experiences having top priority. Coaches will strive to develop a winning spirit but, first and foremost, must always keep in mind the welfare of the student-athletes. A continued effort will be made to expand the athletic program and opportunities to as many participants as possible.

PROGRAMS

Student-athletes will be selected for the athletic programs based on a combination of skill level and attitude. Each program is designed to accommodate as many student-athletes as possible, while maintaining a safe learning environment. Unfortunately, “cutting” student-athletes from certain programs may become necessary due to various constraints. The levels of competition are described below.

Varsity teams are fielded with the intent on building a winning tradition. Unfortunately, as mentioned above these teams should be the most competitive in nature and at times require ‘cuts’. By the nature of being more competitive, there is no guaranteed playing time.

Junior Varsity student-athletes are those participants that are working to possess the necessary skill to compete at the Varsity level. J.V. student-athletes will compete against schools with similar athletic ability, for their respective sports. The main objective of the J.V. program is to provide student-athletes with a positive experience and prepare student-athletes with the necessary skills and experiences to move onto the next level. Seniors are not allowed to compete at this level. All students are expected to receive opportunity for playing time although equal playing time is not necessarily the goal.

Freshman level teams are designed to give more playing opportunities at the freshman level in order to develop the overall sports programs. Only freshman are allowed to compete at this level. Freshman may also participate on the JV or Varsity level teams if the Coach believes he/she is skilled enough to do so, and can compete safely.

Middle School athletics is restricted to those student-athletes who are in grades 7-8. In some cases 6th graders from Poland Community School will be allowed to participate on Whittier athletic teams. However, a 6th grader will not be allowed to take a playing opportunity away from participants in grades 7-8. Middle School participants will have the opportunity to compete against other schools in the area. The purpose of the middle school athletic program is to teach the basic skills and fundamentals for those student-athletes. The middle school programs will provide student-athletes with the opportunity to prepare for high school competition.

COACHING STAFF DESCRIPTION

Coaches serve as important role models for our youth. Coaches must work as an extension of the parents and faculty at Poland Regional High School and Bruce M. Whittier Middle School and should be cognizant of their demeanor and actions. The work of the Coach is an integral part of the educational program of the school. The Coach should show a mastery of the principles of education and consequent improvement in teaching and coaching. Each staff is organized by the head coach or varsity level coach for that program.

CO-CURRICULAR REQUIREMENT

All students at Poland Regional High School are required to participate in a total of 4 co-curricular activities before graduation. It is recommended that students complete a minimum of one co-curricular credit per year. The requirement may be met through participation in a season long activity (i.e., athletics), on-going organizations (i.e., clubs), or co-curricular performance groups (i.e., the cast and crew of a school play). Students will receive credit for participation in the co-curricular activities listed in the course of studies handbook. **Students participating in athletics are required to complete the sport season in good standing in order to receive credit.** Credit will not be granted to students participating in activities or groups outside of Poland Regional High School. All students must be academically eligible to participate in co-curricular activities.

ELIGIBILITY POLICY

(Revised-August 2004)

The student must be in good standing academically in order to participate in a leadership position, public performance, or in a competition event with other schools while fulfilling that requirement. That is, the student must:

- A. Be enrolled and actively engaged in the required number of courses (passing 6 classes (3 credits) and roundtable). NOTE: Double-block classes count as two (2) classes ex. Humanities.
- B. Not be achieving below a competent minus or incomplete grade in more than one (1) class. This includes roundtable. NOTE: Incompletes in double-block classes count two (2) times.
- C. Continue to pursue maintaining competent or better grades in all classes throughout the duration of the activity.

TIMELINE:

To be consistent with the grading and reporting schedule, students would either be deemed eligible or ineligible based on the grades reported at each semester and status report. The student would remain ineligible/eligible until the next grade reporting date. There will be a “one (1) week make-up period” that follows each quarter. An ineligible player may only remain on a roster at the coach’s discretion and is an additional roster spot. Any ineligible player added to an expanded roster for this purpose must become eligible by the next quarter or she/he is automatically dropped from the roster, but may earn co-curricular credit at the coach’s discretion.

***FALL SEASON ELIGIBILITY**

Students who are deemed ineligible at the last reporting date in June may utilize summer school at Poland Regional High School to make-up standards.

PROCESS:

1. Any grade of “no credit” or “incomplete” at the grade reporting date may make that student ineligible to participate in a leadership position, public performance, or in an inter-school competition until the next quarter.

2. No later than one (1) week after the closing of grades for each reporting date, the co-curricular director will provide each coach/activity head with a list of students that are ineligible. The coach will be responsible for notifying students so that they may begin their make-up. Students will be eligible once they have completed the work and obtained the necessary signatures on the ‘yellow make-up form’ obtained from the Co-curricular Director’s office.
3. The Co-curricular Director will notify the coach/advisor once the student is eligible.

There are no exceptions to this policy

Bruce M. Whittier Middle School Co-Curricular Activities Policy

All students and teachers at Whittier are encouraged to participate in at least one co-curricular school activity per year. Studies show that students who participate in co-curricular activities are more likely to succeed in school and feel more positive about their schools and themselves. Co-Curricular activities include athletics, clubs and organizations, and performance groups.

BMWMS Eligibility

To participate in co-curricular practices, performances, and games, students must be passing all classes.

Any student who fails a class during a grading period will be on “Academic Probation” for a period of up to two weeks and/or until passing.

Students on probation may practice and/or participate but may not participate in games or performances.

If at the end of the two week period, the student is passing, the student becomes fully eligible.

If at the end of the two week period, the student is not passing, the student will be removed from the activity until the next grading period.

It is the student’s responsibility to complete the “Reinstatement of Eligibility” form and pass it into the Co-curricular Director.

SUBSTANCE USE POLICY (Revised-August 2004)

PHILOSOPHY:

It is the philosophy of the Poland Regional High School Committee that concern for the health and safety of the students dictates that a policy be instituted to provide procedures and guidelines for dealing with drug and alcohol use by students.

POLICY:

The Poland Regional High School Committee and the staff of Poland Regional High School support a safe and healthy learning environment, which is free of the detrimental effects of drugs and alcohol. Accomplishing this goal requires a cooperative effort among school staff, students, parents, law enforcement and organizations concerned with the use of drugs and alcohol by school-aged youth.

In order to promote the safety, health, and well being of students, the Poland Regional High School Committee endorses a three-pronged approach to address the issue of drug and alcohol use; prevention/education, intervention, and discipline. The Superintendent is responsible for developing appropriate administrative procedures, curricula, and programs to implement this policy.

Note: Specific internal school drug and alcohol protocols may be more restrictive than this policy statement for school sponsored trips and activities.

INTERVENTION:

The school unit will establish a team approach to intervene with students with drug/alcohol problems. All students who violate the substance abuse policy will be referred to our substance abuse counselor. All students will be assisted in addressing their drug/alcohol problems and in continuing their educational program. Students will be provided with information and referral, if necessary, to aid them in obtaining assistance from appropriate community organizations. Student records concerning such interventions shall be kept confidential as required by state and federal laws.

PROHIBITED CONDUCT:

No student shall distribute, dispense, possess, use, or be under the influence of any alcoholic beverage, malt beverage, fortified wine, other intoxicating liquor, or any prescription drug for which the student does not have a valid prescription. Nor shall a student manufacture, distribute, dispense, possess, use, or be under the influence of any narcotic drug, hallucinogenic drug, amphetamine, barbiturate, marijuana, anabolic steroid, any other controlled substance defined in federal and state laws/regulations, any look-alike substance, or any substance that is represented to be a controlled substance.

These prohibitions apply to any student who is on school property, who is in attendance at school or any school-sponsored activity, or whose conduct at any time or place directly interferes with the operations, discipline, or general welfare of the school.

DISCIPLINARY ACTION WITH REGARD TO SUBSTANCE USE:

The administration of the Poland Regional High School may suspend and/or recommend expulsion of students who violate this policy, based upon the facts of each case and in accordance with established disciplinary procedures. Students may also be referred to law enforcement authorities for investigation and/or prosecution.

If a participant is observed and reported by a Poland Regional High School employee (or there is verification by another authoritative source) as having been in the presence of or used a substance, an immediate fact-finding conference between the participant and the coach/advisor, co-curricular activities director and dean of students will be held.

SPECIFIC CONSEQUENCES FOR VIOLATION BY STUDENTS IN CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITY:

If a student self-reports this type of behavior to a coach, teacher, co-curricular director or dean of students the consequence will be less for following the school's honor code.

In the presence of "substances": Any student participating in co-curricular activity(s) who knowingly remains in the presence of people under age 21 who are engaged in prohibited conduct (i.e. at a party) will serve a one-week suspension or a minimum two (2) game suspension. If the student self-reports, the consequence will be a one game suspension.

First Offense for verified substance use: Any student participating in co-curricular activity(s) found to have engaged in any prohibited conduct, may not participate in practice, game or the activity for a period of two weeks (10 school days) or a minimum of three (3) games. A conference will be held to develop an intervention plan. The school will help in discussing options of resources for the student. If the participant opts not to accept the assistance from the school or outside resources, the student will be ineligible for the remainder of the season.

Second Offense for verified substance use: If a second verified observation/report occurs (during the same season), the participant will be immediately dismissed from the team/activity for the remainder of the season and will forfeit any co-curricular credit. If the second verified observation occurs during a different season, they will be immediately removed from that team/activity as well.

Third Offense for verified substance use: If a third verified observation/report occurs, the participant will be ineligible for competition on any team/activity for a period of one calendar year.

PREVENTION/EDUCATION:

Poland Regional High School will provide students with appropriate information and activities focused on educating students with drugs and alcohol and preventing their use. Programs shall teach students that the use of drugs and alcohol is wrong and harmful; how to resist peer pressure; and address the legal, social, and health consequences of drug and alcohol abuse.

MEDICAL PROCEDURE

Each sport season, student athletes are required to complete the assumption of risk, medical history and permission for emergency medical treatment. This can be found on the school's home page as the 'Emergency Medical Release'. These forms will be copied and given to the Coaches to be kept with them at all times. Students are also required to have on file a physical from their doctor. The physical is good for two years. It is recommended that the student also complete the PPE form at the time of the

physical. All physicals will be forwarded to the school nurse to be kept on record. For minor injuries (bruises, cuts, blisters) each team will be assigned a medical kit.

A certified athletic trainer from Health South, or an athletic director will be on site for all home events/activities, to take care of injury situations. In the event that an athletic department representative is not there, coaches will be responsible for injury management. For away contests, medical kits and ice will be transported with the team. Most schools in the area have certified athletic trainers on staff for injury situations.

In case of a minor emergency (sprains, strains, or dislocations) the Athletic Trainer, Athletic Director and Parents will be contacted. Each team will be provided with ice, ice cooler, and ice bags and this should be used at the Coaches discretion.

In case of a major emergency 911 (998-2361) will be called immediately and Poland Rescue will be on the scene within minutes. After the situation is stabilized, all parties involved will be called.

SPORTSMANSHIP/GAME CONDUCT

All student-athletes are reminded that they are students representing **not only** the Poland community, their Coaches, but also themselves. Taunting of officials, coaches, other student-athletes or fans will not be tolerated. Poland Regional High School and Bruce M. Whittier Middle School's pride themselves for their excellent sportsmanship and ethics on an off the courts and playing fields. Please uphold this honor code as your conduct reflects directly on the school, athletic department and community. **Athletic procedures and contests are an extension of the school day and are subject to school policies and procedures.**

1. Show respect for the opponent at all times. The opponent should be treated as a guest. Good Sportsmanship is the Golden Rule in action.
2. Show respect for the officials. The officials should be recognized as impartial arbitrators who are trained to do their job and who can be expected to do it to the best of their ability. Good Sportsmanship implies the willingness to accept and abide by the decisions of the officials.
3. Know, understand and appreciate the rules. Good sportsmanship suggests the importance of conforming to the spirit as well as the letter of the rules.
4. Maintain self-control at all times, **fighting will not be tolerated.** A prerequisite of good sportsmanship requires one to understand his/her own bias or prejudice and have the ability to recognize that rational behavior is more important than the desire to win. Good sportsmanship is concerned with the behavior of all involved in the game.
5. Recognize and appreciate the skill in performance regardless of affiliation. The ability to recognize quality in performance and the willingness to acknowledge it without regard to team membership is one of the most highly commendable gestures of good sportsmanship.
6. **Students-athletes are subject to team rules. Major infractions may be subject to administrative action such as suspension or even dismissal.**

TRANSPORTATION

All team members are expected to travel to and from school-sponsored activities in the bus or in vehicles authorized by School Union #29. Drivers must be adults authorized by the Superintendent or Principal.

In the event that it is necessary for a parent to provide transportation, written permission must be given to the Coach/Athletic Director, in advance or at the site. If after an away game a parent who is in attendance would like to take their child home they may do so with written permission and release by the Coach in advance (see attached form). Players may travel with their parent.

Proper Bus Etiquette:

The Coach is completely responsible for the actions of the student-athletes on the bus. The rules governing expected behavior of team members whenever they are transported by bus are as follows:

1. Coaches must be on the bus with student-athletes at all times!
2. No student-athlete may reenter the bus upon arrival to another school. Please bring all belongings to the field/gym.
3. In the event that boys and girls teams are traveling together, the boys will sit on one half of the bus while the girls are seated on the other.
4. No excessive loud singing or noise making.
5. Only radios with headphones are accepted.
6. Remain seated at all times.
7. No eating on the bus.
8. No cleats are to be worn on the bus.
9. The bus is to be left clean and litter free.
10. Cell phones may only be used within the last 20 minutes of the trip to call for rides.

*All other bus rules apply.

**Please note that Coaches and team members are continually representing Poland Regional High School and Bruce M. Whittier Middle School's. Behavior in public places should be conducive to the school's honor code pledge.

EQUIPMENT

All equipment is inventoried and stored in the equipment room for each sports season. All student-athletes are responsible for the equipment, which is given to them. The equipment will be locked in the equipment room, in the designated area. Students may help with the day to day distribution of equipment; ultimately it is the coach's responsibility to see that all the equipment utilized is accounted for. ***NOTE***no students are allowed in the equipment room with out the coach! Any lost equipment must be reported to the Athletic Director. The cost for replacement of an item may be charged to the student who lost or had a hand in destroying school equipment.

UNIFORM DISTRIBUTION

The Coach will distribute uniforms before the start of the season and collect them at the end. Uniforms may only be worn for game situations. Athletes may not wear uniforms to practice and or during the school day. Coaches are asked to ensure the safe handling and care of the uniforms and equipment that is distributed.

Uniforms must be returned by the end of the season in which it was distributed. If a uniform is not returned the student will be responsible for its replacement cost. Additionally, the student may be prohibited from trying out for a team the next season until it is returned and or paid for.

STUDENT-ATHLETE ATTENDANCE

Student athletes are expected to be in good standing with classes and administration. Being in school, on time, is important to the PRHS community. Student-athletes with excessive attendance issues may be disciplined. In addition, all student-athletes are expected to attend each practice and game. The only exception to this rule is excused absences. The *attendance list* can be found in the Main Office each day for the Coaches to check on the status of their athletes. All written excuses must be given to the Coach, with the exception of an absence from school.

Excused Absences: Definition

1. Medical excuse: note from a Doctor is required in this case.
2. Academic commitment: note from a teacher or Dean.
3. Extenuating circumstances: note from parent/guardian.
4. Student-athlete is excused absent from school.

Unexcused Absences: Definition

1. An **unexcused absence** as described by the Athletic Department is: an absence that occurs when there is no written permission to miss practice and the student-athlete has attended school that day. Students who do not have a valid excuse will be reported to the Athletic Director.
2. The Coach in collaboration with the Director of Athletics will deal with frequent unexcused absences. Game suspension and dismissal from the team are possible consequences of abuse of the attendance rule.
3. Student-Athletes must be in school for the entire school day in order to be eligible for competition that day. The only exception would be an excused absence for reasons listed above.
4. If a student-athlete is absent from school, they may not participate in practices or games for that day. If the student-athlete has an excused absence s/he may be allowed to participate in practice or games for that day if arrangements were made in advance with the Director of Athletics for seriously extenuating circumstances. If a student-athlete is absent from school on a Friday, they may participate in a Saturday game at the Coaches discretion.

STUDENT-ATHLETE PICK-UP

Pick-up for student-athletes will be out in front of the School. All student-athletes should have a ride waiting for them at the designated time for the end of practice or from the return of games. If there are any problems with parents being late for pick-up, the Athletic Director will be notified and action will be taken to alleviate the problem. Termination from the team is a possible consequence for abuse of this policy.

It is the responsibility of the Coach to stay with all athletes in their program until they have been picked up from practice or games. Parents are asked to be respectful of the Coach's time and pick their child up on time. Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

STUDENT-ATHLETE PRACTICE ATTIRE

All student-athletes are expected to come to practice with athletic/fitness type clothing on. Any student-athlete who is dressed inappropriately for practice will be asked to change or sit out until proper clothing is worn. Examples other than non-athletic type attire are clothes with negative connotations, alcohol or tobacco, and sexual references. **Shirts are expected to be worn at all times. Spaghetti strap tank-tops should not be worn and shorts should be of appropriate length.**

INCLEMENT WEATHER POLICY

In the case of inclement weather on game days please dial extension 600. The co-curricular hotline will be updated periodically to inform all involved on the status of the game. The Athletic Directors of both schools will make a decision on whether or not the game will be played around 1:00 on game day, and as early as possible for Saturday contests. The Coach and Athletic Director will make arrangements for either cancellation of practice or utilization of classroom or gym space and make an announcement by the end of school that day. Gym times will be rotated through out the season to ensure fairness to all teams.

QUESTIONS/CONCERNS

If you have any questions or concerns regarding a specific team please make an appointment to see the Coach. If you need further information about the question/concern contact the Athletic Director to set up a meeting.

-Line of authority: Coach-Athletic Director-Principal

COMMUNICATION!!!

Communication is key in creating a cohesive, successful Athletic Programs. The Athletic Office has an open door policy. Please feel free to come in and share your thoughts and ideas on how to improve our growing athletic programs.