

Pewamo-Westphalia Middle-High School

Athletic Dept Handbook



2025-2026

“trUSt the PROCESS!”

PWMHS ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT'S MISSION STATEMENT

The role of extracurricular interscholastic athletics in the Pewamo-Westphalia Community Schools is to provide educational experiences in the framework of competitive athletics.

PWMHS ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT'S PHILOSOPHY

Athletics are a part of the extra curricular educational process of the school district serving as an arena for learning. We strive to have each student-athlete enjoy a positive experience while developing competitive teams. Within this framework, the participation of all student-athletes is encouraged, without compromising that competitive nature.

PWMHS ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT'S GOVERNANCE

The Board of Education, responsible to the people, the ruling agency for Pewamo-Westphalia Community Schools, is responsible for the following areas:

- ✓ Interpreting the needs of the community.
- ✓ Developing policies in accordance with state statutes and mandates and in accordance with the educational needs and wishes of the people of Pewamo-Westphalia Community Schools.
- ✓ Approving means by which professional staff may make these policies effective.
- ✓ Evaluating the interscholastic athletic program in terms of its value to the community.

The **Michigan High School Athletic Association**, of which Pewamo-Westphalia Middle-High School is a member in good standing with, is a private, voluntary association of public, private, and parochial secondary schools. The primary function of the Association is to establish rules and regulations that promote equity within educational athletics and gamesmanship within the events and tournaments it oversees.

The **Central Michigan Athletic Conference**, of which Pewamo-Westphalia Middle-High School is a voluntary member in good standing with, is a league established for organizing and promoting selected interscholastic activities among member schools. The object of this league is to promote sportsmanship, to foster a spirit of wholesome rivalry, and to determine championships in middle and high school sports or other activities in which member schools shall participate.

THE PEWAMO-WESTPHALIA FIGHT SONG

Onward Pirates! Here's to our colors of blue and gold

Onward Pirates! A flag of vict'ry we'll soon unfold

Rah, Rah, Rah

*We sing for our school a song of
Go Pirates! Go, Go Blue!*

*And win for our school honor
and fame for our spirit's true!*

PWMHS ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT'S PROGRAMMING

Fall Sports: Girls Volleyball (HS & MS), Boys Cross-Country (HS & MS), Girls Cross-Country (HS & MS), Football (HS), Sideline Cheer (HS), and Girls Golf (HS)

Winter Sports: Girls Basketball (HS & MS), Boys Basketball (HS & MS), Competitive Cheer (HS & MS), Girls Bowling (HS), Boys Bowling (HS), and Wrestling (HS & MS)

Spring Sports: Boys Track & Field (HS & MS), Girls Track & Field (HS & MS), Boys Golf (HS), Softball (HS), and Baseball (HS)

PWMHS ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT'S AWARDS

For all varsity sports, an athlete must successfully complete the season in good standing. Each coach will establish minimum requirements for earning an award and make these requirements known to the athletes at the beginning of the season. Each junior varsity sport will issue a certificate and graduation numbers, while each varsity sport will issue a certificate, a letter, and pins awards for each varsity season - provided for by the school.

PWMHS STUDENT-ATHLETE ELIGIBILITY

The following are school requirements that shall be adhered to or completed prior to participation on any PWMHS athletic team:



In order to participate on a PWMHS athletic team, each athlete must have satisfied all of the **scholastic eligibility** requirements of the MHSAA prior to participation. Grades are checked every Monday of each season and at the end of each semester. When grades are checked, a student must be passing at least six classes. If a student is not passing a minimum of six classes at the conclusion of a semester, they are academically ineligible for the following semester. If a weekly check shows a student is not passing at least six classes, they become ineligible to compete the following Monday-Sunday.



Regarding **financial obligations** and equipment...



All athletes are responsible for the proper care and security of equipment, uniforms, and warm-ups issued to them. School-furnished equipment is to be worn only for contests and practice. Equipment not returned in good condition at the end of the season may be subject to financial penalty.



Athletes may be required to purchase various pieces of sport specific equipment. Examples include, but are not limited to, shoes, cleats, various gloves, practice jerseys, etc. All equipment supplied by a student-athlete will remain the property of the student-athlete.



If an athlete wishes to purchase any part of the high school issued uniform at the end of the season, approval must be granted by the head coach of that sport and athletic director.



Athletes are required to pay a 'participation fee' of \$ \$100 per student per year for high school athletics. This fee is to help defray costs incurred by the Athletic Department. This fee must be paid to the Athletic Department before participation in an athletic event and is non-refundable after the first contest. The fee is capped at \$200 per family. Families who are registered to receive free / reduced lunch have fees waived. There is no fee for middle school sports.

***Note:** PWMHS Athletics are for everyone. If financial conditions exist that make it difficult for a team member to purchase mandatory equipment or uniforms, please contact the Athletic Department so that confidential arrangements can be made to supply such equipment or uniforms.*



Regarding **school attendance**, while the MHSAA makes no reference to a student-athlete's attendance on the day of a contest, it is the policy of Pewamo-Westphalia Community Schools that student-athletes are to be in school for the entire day in order to participate in any activities taking place after school.



If a student-athlete arrives at school tardy to their 1st Hour class (8:03-8:13a), they are still eligible for practice / competition. However, if they arrive to school after 8:13a, they will not be eligible to practice / compete that day.



Each student-athlete receives one exception to this rule each season (1-Fall, 1-Winter, and 1-Spring). This will be documented by the athletic director and/or his secretary. This allowance is for cases where a student arrives at school after 8:13a.



If a student is absent or misses class time due to a scheduled doctor, court, dentist, etc appointment and returns to school with a doctor's note, there is no penalty.



If a student-athlete has an excused absence on Friday before a Saturday

contest, they can still participate in the Saturday contest.



Under unusual circumstances, an administrator may grant approval for participation if arranged in advance. Appointments that can be scheduled during non-school hours should take place at those times.



In all cases, student-athletes are expected to be in school all day on the day following an athletic event. Violation of this rule places the student's eligibility for future practice(s) / competition(s) in jeopardy. The athletic director must approve any exception.

MHSAA STUDENT-ATHLETE ELIGIBILITY

The following are state requirements that shall be adhered to or completed prior to participation on any PWMHS athletic team:



High school student-athletes become ineligible if they reach their 19th birthday before September 1 of the current school year.



Students must be enrolled in school prior to the fourth Friday after Labor Day (1st Semester) or the fourth Friday of February (2nd Semester). A student must be enrolled at PWMHS for a minimum of 66% of a traditional full caseload of classes.



Students cannot be eligible in high school for more than eight semesters - with the seventh and eighth semesters being consecutive. Students are allowed four 1st Semesters and four 2nd Semesters of competition and cannot compete if they have graduated from high school.



An Athletic Physical Form must be completed and on file in the athletic office before a student will be able to tryout / participate in athletics. The physical must be completed each year on or after April 15 of the previous school year.



After practicing with or participating with a high school team, a student-athlete cannot participate in any athletic competition not sponsored by his or her school in the same sport during the same season. Individual sports apply the rule from the point of a student-athlete's first participation in a contest or scrimmage, rather than practice, and have limited allowances to participate in non-school-sponsored athletic competitions. See the "Limited Team Membership" rule within the MHSAA Handbook for further information and clarification.






Regarding additional subjects such as amateurism, awards, all-star event participation, etc, please see the MHSAA Handbook.

PWCS STUDENT-ATHLETE CODE OF CONDUCT

Representing Pewamo-Westphalia Community Schools in interscholastic athletic competition is regarded as a privilege and not a right. Students who participate in interscholastic athletics while


attending Pewamo-Westphalia Middle-High School are expected to represent the highest ideals of character by exemplifying good conduct, good sportsmanship, good citizenship and good training - which includes abstaining from the use of tobacco, alcohol and drugs. Separate and apart from a student's performance as a student-athlete, their conduct, sportsmanship, citizenship and training reflect - at all times - their individualism and character, their family, their team, our school, and our community. Accordingly, our Athletic Department's Code of Conduct has been established for all students who aspire to participate in interscholastic athletics while attending Pewamo-Westphalia Middle-High School.

Application of our Code of Conduct


-  When a student voluntarily participates in interscholastic athletics, they agree to abide by the Athletic Department's Code of Conduct throughout their school athletic career. A student may neither attend tryouts nor practice with a team until they have submitted a signed acknowledgment form agreeing to abide by the Code - which applies to candidates, members, and managers of all athletic teams.
-  Students shall be regarded to be under the rules of the Code beginning with their first day of participation in interscholastic athletics and continuing through to their date of graduation or the last date of participation - whichever is later.
-  The Code includes off-campus and off-season events, times, and activities (vacation breaks, summer recess, online conduct, work, etc). The participant is always under the Code from the beginning to the end of their athletic career.

Standards of Conduct





The following behaviors constitute a violation of our Athletic Department's Code of Conduct and subject the athlete to discipline as outlined in the "Penalties" section:

-  **A** / Use, possess, conceal, distribute, sell, or are under the influence of tobacco or marijuana products; electronic cigarettes / vapes; alcohol or alcoholic beverages in any form; illegal drugs, including but not limited to substances defined as 'controlled substances' pursuant to federal and / or state statute; steroids, human growth hormone, or other performance-enhancing drugs; substances purported to be illegal, abusive, or performance-enhancing (for example, "look-alike" drugs); misused prescription drugs; and / or misused non-prescription drugs or inhalants.

***Note:** It shall not be a violation of the Code for a student-athlete to use or possess a prescription or patent drug when taken pursuant to a legal prescription issued by a licensed practitioner for which permission to use in school has been granted pursuant to Board Policy. A student-athlete shall notify their coach if they are taking a prescription medication that could alter their behavior or affect their ability to participate in physical activity.*



-  **B** / Use, possess, conceal, distribute, manufacture, or sell devices designed for and / or are associated with the use of controlled substances. This includes, but is not limited

to, a marijuana pipe, a 'roach' clip, rolling papers, or devices used to smoke, inhale, inject, or otherwise consume controlled substances.


-  **C** / Violate federal, state, or local laws / ordinances, including felony or misdemeanor acts other than minor traffic offenses. Conviction of said act(s) is (are) not necessary to establish a violation of the Code, but will be determined through an independent school investigation and may result in a penalty as provided below.
-  **D** / Cumulative or gross misconduct, including behavior which school officials consider to be conduct unbecoming of a student-athlete and a representative of PWCS. For example, profanity, gross gestures, harassment, inappropriate social media behavior, etc, may result in a penalty as provided below.
-  **E** / Violation of the Student Conduct Code as set forth in the Pewamo-Westphalia Middle-High School Handbook which results in a school suspension.
-  **F** / Violation of a team conduct or training rule as established by the student-athlete's head coach - approved by the Athletic Director.

Penalties



Substance Abuse Offenses... Violation of Conduct Standards A and B above:

-  **First Violation** – Would be subject to suspension from 25% of a student-athlete's team's contests. If a student fulfills the following conditions their consequence will be reduced to 10% of their team's contests:
 - Take Responsibility - A student-athlete must self-report the incident or accept responsibility when first questioned by their coach or an administrator.
 - Cooperate - A student-athlete must work with the administrator completing the investigation into the incident, answering questions thoroughly and honestly.
 - Address Coaches and Teammates - The student-athlete shall own their mistake and apologize to their coach(es) and teammates for the negative impact of their actions.
 - Team Attendance - The student-athlete shall attend every practice, contest, and team activity throughout their suspension.
-  **Second Violation** - Would be subject to suspension from 50% of the student-athlete's team's contests. If a student fulfills the aforementioned four conditions listed above and attends at least one session of substance abuse counseling, the suspension will be reduced to 20% of their team's contests.

***Note:** Satisfaction of the assessment / treatment requirements must be verified in writing by the licensed agency. Any expenses incurred for the chemical assessment / treatment program will be the responsibility of the student-athlete and / or their family and not PWCS.*

-  **Third Violation** - Would be subject to suspension from athletic competition for 180 school days. Any subsequent offenses beyond the third offense will result in suspension from participating in athletic competition for an extra 180 school days.






Conduct Offenses... Violation of Conduct Standards C, D, E, and F above:

-  **First Violation** - Violations will be addressed as set forth in the Athletic Department Handbook and via team rules established by the coach - approved by the Athletic Director.
-  **Second and Subsequent Conduct Offenses** - Violations will result in disciplinary action as determined by the coach and the Athletic Director.

Note: In the event that the Athletic Code or other school policies or procedures do not cover situations that arise, the administration reserves the right to establish such rules, conditions, and penalties to respond effectively to unanticipated or unique circumstances.



Guidelines for Reporting and Investigating Violations

All students are guaranteed the right to due process. To ensure those rights when investigating a code violation, the following procedures will be followed:

-  All reporting of violations must be submitted in writing to the athletic director unless uncovered directly by school officials and personnel.
-  A student-athlete will be informed of any charges brought against them and have the right to present any relevant information that will support their defense.
-  If a possible violation has occurred, a conference may be held with the student-athlete, their parent(s), and the athletic director.
-  If a student-athlete is suspended, the parent(s) will be notified and will receive a letter stating the findings of the investigation and action being taken.
-  A written report of the investigation will be held on file in the athletic office, but will not become part of the student-athlete's confidential academic record.

Student-Athlete Appeals Procedure

All Code violations determined by the athletic director can result in an appeal to the Principal. They may accept or modify the recommendation. The procedure below is to be followed in sequence.

-  Parents / Guardians may request a conference with the principal or their designee. The principal shall affirm or modify the terms of the recommendation within two school days from the date of the conference.
-  A second appeal may be made to the Superintendent of Schools within five days of the decision of the principal.



All final appeals may be made to the Pewamo-Westphalia Board of Education within ten days of the decision of the Superintendent of Schools.

Student-Athlete Grievance Procedure

In a situation where there has been no apparent infraction or disciplinary action applied, but a student wishes to lodge a grievance or present some other issue involving a respective sport, the procedure below is to be followed in sequence.



Direct communication with the coach.



Direct communication with the athletic director.



Direct communication with the principal.



Direct communication with the superintendent.

Pewamo-Westphalia Athletic Code of Conduct

Each parent or guardian shall read all of the above-mentioned material and certify that they and their child understand the athletic eligibility rules, the code of conduct, and policies of the school district.

ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT PROCEDURES AND GUIDELINES

Parent-Coach Communication

As parents / guardians, when your student becomes involved in our programming, you have the right to understand what expectations are placed on your child. This begins with clear communication from the coach of your student's program. If a situation arises that requires a conference between the coach and the parent, it is important that both parties involved have a clear understanding of the other's position.



Communication and conduct families should expect from your students' coach:

- The coach's individual and team philosophy
- The coach's expectation they have for your student and other team members
- Locations and times of all practices, contests, and team activities
- Team requirements such as fees, special equipment, off-season workouts, etc
- Procedure(s) should your student be injured during participation
- Discipline that results in the denial of your student's participation should occur before the next scheduled event
- Modeling school values... be of high character, give their personal best, and teach life lessons.



Communication coaches expect from parents:

- Concerns that arise are expressed directly to the coach
- Student or family scheduling conflicts are communicated well in advance
- Specific concerns regarding a coach's philosophy and / or expectation

- 🎯 Appropriate concerns to discuss with coaches:
 - The mental and physical treatment of your student
 - Ways to help your child improve
 - Concerns about your child's behavior
- 🎯 Issues not appropriate to discuss with coaches:
 - Playing time, strategy, and / or play calling
 - Other student-athletes as protected under FERPA
- 🎯 If you have a concern to discuss with a coach, please follow the process below:
 - Please follow the '24 Hour Rule' and do not attempt to confront a coach before or after a contest or practice. These can be emotional times for both the parent and the coach. Meetings of this nature do not promote resolution.
 - Contact the coach after 24 hours of a concerning incident. If the coach cannot be reached, call the athletic director and request a meeting be set up.
 - If the meeting with the coach did not provide a satisfactory resolution, contact the athletic director to discuss the situation and determine, if warranted, the appropriate next steps.

Limits of Participation

Athletes will be limited to participation in one school-sponsored sport per season. Any exception to this rule must be made with the approval of the athletic director and high school principal and must be mutually acceptable by the coaches involved in the shared participation.

Transportation

The school will provide transportation to events when possible. When the school is not able to provide transportation, it is the responsibility of the parent / guardian to see that players get to the event.

Dropping Out of a Sport

Dropping out of a sport without a valid reason is considered a serious matter. If the student-athlete wants to quit any sport, they should notify the coach and return all equipment. If an athlete does quit a sport, they will not be permitted to try out or use school facilities to work out for another sport until the conclusion of that sport season.

College Recruitment

College recruitment information is available in both the guidance and athletic office. Current NCAA qualifications and standards for recruitment are available online at ncaa.org under the "Guide for the College-Bound Student Athlete". Athletes should make the head coach aware of their situation in regards to being recruited.

Conflicts in Extracurricular Activities

Every attempt will be made to schedule events in a manner that minimizes conflicts. If conflict does occur between practices, contests, and / or performances, the following criteria will be used:

- ➡ If a conflict occurs between a performance or contest and practice, the athlete may go to the performance / contest without any reprisal. If this conflict occurs on the same day but at different times, all coaches and instructors involved will devise a plan to solve the conflict. If necessary, transportation will be provided and / or arranged by the school.
- ➡ If a conflict occurs between two events, the academic event has precedence.
- ➡ If a conflict occurs between two non-academic events, a meeting will be called as soon as possible to work out a solution.

Missing Practice

Perfect attendance for all practices is the expectation for all Pewamo-Westphalia athletes. If it is necessary for a student-athlete to miss practice, the coach of that team should be notified prior to the absence. Unexcused absences are unacceptable and can lead to consequences related to the athlete's status on the team.

Restricted Practice and Game Days

If school is canceled for the day or students are sent home early due to inclement weather, the decision to hold practices and / or contests will be made by school administration by 1p and communicated via email and social media. Note that MHSAA Tournament events are exempt from such protocol.

Summer Dead Periods

Pewamo-Westphalia Community Schools will be shut down for two, one-week periods during summer vacation to be determined by the administration. Our facilities will be closed and coaches / players are not to have contact on or off school property. No athletic activities shall occur during these time periods.

Squad Selection

In accordance with our philosophy of athletics and our desire to see as many students as possible participate in the athletic program within the framework of middle and high school interscholastic competition, time, space, facilities, equipment, personal preference, and other factors will place limitations on the most effective squad size for any particular sport. Prior to trying out, the following information will be made available to all candidates for a team:

- ✓ Extent of try-out period - a minimum number of practice sessions - and the criteria used to select a team.
- ✓ The number of student-athletes to be selected and the practice, game, and season commitment should a student-athlete make the team - including, but not limited to, possible holiday and school break conflicts.

Squad Reduction

Choosing the members of the athletic squads is the sole responsibility of the coaches of those teams. When a squad reduction becomes a necessity, the process will include three important elements. Each candidate shall have a predetermined minimum number of practice sessions, have performed in at least one game-like setting unless extenuating circumstances prevent such a setting, and be personally informed of the cut by the coach.

Coaches will discuss specific alternative possibilities for continued participation in the sport, or in other areas of participation within the athletic program with the athletes.

Sunday Shutdown Policy

Sunday activities will be limited to off-season sports in the middle school gymnasium and field house gymnasium, provided that such activities will not commence before 12p and ending by 8p. All other PWCS facilities are restricted without specific prior approval from the Superintendent. In-season athletic teams are prohibited from meeting on Sundays without prior approval from the Superintendent.

School Attendance During MHSAA Tournament Championships

School Attendance During MHSAA Tournament Championships

PWCS will only dismiss early from a regularly scheduled school day when there is a varsity team (not individual) in an MHSAA semifinal or state championship when scheduled to be in the afternoon, or at a time later that day, to allow for travel.

School Van Usage

Academics come first when scheduling for the use of our school vehicles; in-season athletics then take precedence. Everyone else may reserve on a first-come, first-serve basis. Ten total people are allowed in the van(s). Users need to clean the inside of the vehicles after each use. Failure to do so may result in forfeiture of vehicle usage.

Middle School Athletic Philosophy

At the middle school level of athletic participation, it shall be understood that...

- ➡ all athletes should be given the opportunity to learn the fundamentals and rules of a

sport and that participation, sportsmanship, and cooperation will be valued more than winning or losing.

- all players will meet the academic standards and follow the rules of the team.
- participation will be enhanced by all schools - fielding two teams whenever possible.
- coaches and spectators should display proper game behavior and be held accountable.
- every effort should be made to reschedule events.
- players who are not eligible to compete should not be listed in the scorebook and should not be in uniform.
- all eligible athletes - those meeting academic, attendance, and behavior expectations of the state, school, and coach - will play at some time in the game.

Pewamo Westphalia's Athletic Snow Day Policy

The following guidelines will be adhered to in the event school is canceled due to inclement weather:

- ✓ No practice will be held before 1:00 pm. This will allow for snow removal to occur and for road conditions to potentially improve.
- ✓ All practices are optional and no consequences will be assessed for an absence.
- ✓ Middle School sports will not practice or play on a snow day.

If school is canceled on a day when there are scheduled athletic contests in the evening, the status of those events will be handled on an individual basis after consulting with the administration of the schools involved. Decisions will be made by 1:00 pm at the latest.

Snow Day Practice Schedule

In order to allow the athletes and their families to plan, we will adhere to the following practice schedule for all snow days:

- ✓ **Cheerleading** 5:00 pm – 9:00 pm (Dependent on what type of practice) PW Elementary
- ✓ **Strength & Agility** Normal Scheduled Time
- ✓ **Girls Basketball** 3:15 pm – 5:15 pm PW Fieldhouse / PW Middle School
- ✓ **Boys Basketball** 5:15 pm – 7:15 pm PW Fieldhouse / PW Middle School
- ✓ **Off-Season Sports** 1:00 pm - 3:00 pm OR 7:30 pm - 9:00 pm

The Superintendent and/or Athletic Director can cancel all events depending on the severity of the weather.

Bowling and wrestling co-op have off-site practices... coaches will contact student-athletes regarding practice sessions and times, but the teams will abide by the established policy above.

Hierarchy of Scheduling Athletic Fields / Courts

1. School Sponsored - In season Varsity teams
2. School Sponsored - In season JV teams
3. School Sponsored - In season Freshman teams
4. School Sponsored - In season Middle School teams
5. Curricular Organizations (Band, Quiz Bowl, Robotics, etc.)
6. School Sponsored - Offseason Varsity teams
7. School Sponsored - Offseason JV teams
8. School Sponsored - Offseason Freshman teams
9. School Sponsored - Offseason Middle School teams
10. School Affiliated Organizations (PTO, Booster Clubs, etc.)
11. Non-School Sponsored or Affiliated Groups (Red Cedar, Jr. Football, Youth Baseball/Softball, etc.)

ONWARD PIRATES!