



UNION AREA MIDDLE/HIGH SCHOOL

2106 Camden Avenue
New Castle, PA 16101

ATHLETIC HANDBOOK

**“Utilizing interscholastic athletics in order to fulfill the objective of
the Union Area School District - “Commitment to Excellence Today,
Youth Preparing for Tomorrow”.**

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PREFACE

The Union Area School District is a member of District 7 of the Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association (P.I.A.A.) and Western Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic League (W.P.I.A.L), and must conduct all actions and activities in accordance with their by-laws.

This handbook was compiled to help our coaches effectively perform their duties. It is the hope, of the Union Area School District administration, that the listing of various proven practices and procedures presented in this handbook will help to bring about a more efficient operation of the interscholastic athletic program at Union Area Middle/High School.

THE SCHOOL BOARD

The School Board, with the recommendations of the administration, sets policy with regard to the conduct of the athletic programs within the Union Area School District. The Principal, in all matters pertaining to the interscholastic athletic relations of his/her high school, is responsible to the P.I.A.A. He/she may delegate some of those powers, but such delegation shall not relieve him/her of responsibility for any infraction by his/her school, of the Constitution and By-Laws of the P.I.A.A.

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE PRINCIPAL RELATED TO ATHLETICS

1. To sanction all contests in which his/her school participates.
2. To have such powers concerning interscholastic athletics within his/her school as are in keeping with the growth and needs of the school and By-Laws of the P.I.A.A.
3. To be responsible for certifying in writing the eligibility of all contestants in accordance with the By-Laws of the P.I.A.A.
4. To exclude any contestant who, because of improper conduct, would not represent his/her school in a positive manner, and also to exclude any contestant who has suffered serious illness or injury until that contestant is pronounced physically fit by a licensed medical physician.
5. To evaluate the Director of Athletics annually.

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE DIRECTOR OF ATHLETICS

Refer to job description of Director of Athletics

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE HEAD COACH

1. Attend P.I.A.A./W.P.I.A.L. mandatory rules meetings prior to the start of each season as directed by the Athletic Director. Failure to attend will result in the coach being responsible for any associated fines.
2. Have a firm understanding of, and abide by, the rules, regulations, and bylaws of the Union Area School District, Union Area School District Athletic Department, W.P.I.A.L., and P.I.A.A.
3. Provide to the Athletic Director, prior to the student-athlete's participation, the P.I.A.A. physician certificate/parent certificate form and the signed Union Area Athletic Department Policy Handbook from student-athlete and parent/guardian, for each participating student-athlete.
4. Prepare and submit to the Athletic Director a roster of his/her team by the start of the second week of official WPIAL practice. It is the Head Coach's responsibility to contact the Athletic Director with any additions or subtractions to their original roster as the season progresses.
5. Head Coaches are required to ride school sponsored transportation with their student athletes.
6. At athletic contests, in the absences of a designated game manager, the Head Coach is the acting authority (game manager) of the event.
7. Head coaches are responsible for the behavior, safety, and welfare of the members of his/her team during practices, games, and all team-associated events. Coaches should encourage and personally exhibit proper conduct at all times. This includes, but is not limited to, exhibiting good sportsmanship, use of proper language, and showing respect for opponents, officials, and opposing fans. Players must be supervised at all times when under the coach's jurisdiction.
8. Ensure that all student-athletes have a ride home from practices, games, and team-associated events before leaving the facility.
9. Ensure that all outside doors are closed and locked during and at the end of all practices and games.
10. Adhere to the Anti-Bullying policy as described in the Union Area School District student handbook.
11. Work collaboratively with the team trainer and/or team physician in order to ensure each student-athlete's health and safety.
12. Head coaches must make all purchase requests through the Athletic Director. Head coaches are not to request booster assistance without direct communication with the Athletic Director.

13. At the completion of the season, head coaches must turn in the following to the athletic director before the athletic director submits their name to the business manager for compensation.

- list of all letter winners from the season
- completed list of inventory of equipment and uniforms
- plans for the next season and offseason
- "needs and wants" list of supplies/equipment

RELATIONSHIP WITH THE UNION BOOSTERS CLUB

The relationship between the Union Area Athletic Department and the Union Boosters Club is critical to the success of our organization. The Union Athletic Department works collaboratively with the Boosters Club in fundraising in order to provide the best possible athletic experience for our student-athletes. As the only sanctioned Booster Organization of the Union Area Athletic Department, we encourage coaches, community leaders, parents, and student-athletes to participate in their efforts.

DRUG, ALCOHOL, AND TOBACCO POLICY

The use, possession, distribution, and/or selling of alcohol, tobacco, and/or controlled, illegal substances are forbidden for student-athletes and coaches, as per PA State Law (Title 18). As per Union Area School District Policy #227.1, all students who participate in athletic programs or extracurricular activities may receive random drug and alcohol testing. The Union Area School District prohibits the possession, use, misuse, and/or the distribution of drugs and alcohol. No student will be permitted to participate in any interscholastic sport without his/her parent/guardian's consent to be randomly tested. In addition, any student-athlete and/or coach that engages in other illegal activities will be subject to disciplinary action, via the School Board and/or Law Enforcement.

BEHAVIOR CONDUCT

Coaches, administration, staff, and student-athletes must represent Union Area School District at all times in an appropriate and professional manner. Failure to represent the school district in accordance with the code of conduct may result in suspension or termination from one's position as student-athlete or employee at Union Area School District.

ATHLETIC ELIGIBILITY

To be eligible to compete in interscholastic athletics for the Union Area School District, the student-athletes must be in compliance with the W.P.I.A.L. and P.I.A.A. rules and regulations. Additional eligibility metrics may be put in place at any time by the Union Area School District athletic department.

ATTENDANCE POLICY REGARDING ELIGIBILITY

Student-athletes must attend a minimum of four (4) full class periods in order to participate in order to participate in a game or practice on that day. Student-athletes who are dismissed early from school for a medical illness will not be eligible to participate in their sport-related activity even if they have attended the minimum four (4) full class periods. Exceptions may be granted at the discretion of the Principal.

CHEERLEADERS

Refer to Cheerleading Constitution.

TRANSPORTATION

All student athletes must ride school provided transportation to and from events. Exceptions may be granted at the discretion of the middle/high school principal.

EQUIPMENT AND SUPPLIES

Coaches are required to submit their budget in January of each year. Failure to submit a budget may result in limited supplies for the following season.

FUNDRAISING

All fundraisers must be approved in advance by the Principal.

POSTPONING GAMES

Only the Athletic Director or Principal may postpone or cancel games.

PUBLICITY

All coaches are expected to report scores to the news media immediately after completion of the event.

RELEASE TIME

Athletes will be released from school at the discretion of the Principal and Athletic Director.

SCHEDULES

The Athletic Director will do all scheduling of interscholastic competition. Coaches are not authorized to reschedule an athletic event.

Practice schedules must be submitted to the Athletic Director for approval a minimum of one week prior, barring unforeseen circumstances.

Head coaches are required to coordinate, with the Athletic Director, an off season program designed to provide instruction and support for our student athletes.

Sunday practices and activities shall not be scheduled without permission from the Principal and/or Athletic Director. All Sunday athletic events will be optional for student-athletes.

SCRIMMAGES

All scrimmages must be sanctioned by the Athletic Director prior to their being held, and must be held in accordance with P.I.A.A. regulations. For all sports, the P.I.A.A. has established for two (2) scrimmages per season.

N.C.A.A. RECRUITING OF HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETES

Any recruitment of a Union Area School District student-athlete who is eligible for college or university athletic participation must be conducted within N.C.A.A. recruitment guidelines.

WEIGHT ROOM PROCEDURES AND REGULATIONS

The use of the weight room facilities must be under school-sanctioned supervision. The weight room coordinator and head coaches will communicate about athletes' and/or team needs.

MEDICATIONS

The School Nurse, Athletic Trainer, and/or a licensed medical practitioner will dispense all medications. Coaches and assistants will not dispense medications.

PARENT / COACH RELATIONSHIP

Both parenting and coaching are extremely difficult vocations. By establishing an understanding of each position, we are better able to accept the actions of the other and provide a greater benefit to students. As parents, when your student-athlete becomes involved in our programs, you have a right to understand what expectations are placed on them. This begins with clear communication from the coach of your student-athlete's program.

Communication you should expect from your student-athlete's coach:

1. Philosophy of the coach.
2. Expectations the coach has for your student-athlete as well as all players on the squad.
3. Locations and times of all practices and contests.
4. Team requirements, i.e., fees, special equipment, off-season conditioning.
5. Activities and/or behaviors that may result in the denial of your student-athlete's participation.

Issues NOT appropriate to discuss with coaches:

1. Team strategy.
2. Play calling.
3. Any other student-athlete.

There are situations that may require a conference between the coach and the parent(s). It is important that both parties involved have a clear understanding of the other's position. When these conferences are necessary, the following procedure should be followed to help promote a resolution to the issue of concern.

Do not attempt to confront a coach before, during, 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. In the event that a parent or spectator does physically and/or verbally attack a coach, player, and/or game personnel, coaches are directed to call 9-1-1 for Police assistance, resulting in the attacker being banned for the year or longer. If the guilty attacker does not comply with the suspension or chooses again to physically or verbally attack another coach, player, and/or game personnel, it will result in another 9-1-1 call for Police assistance, while also being banned from all Union school activities for one full year. In addition, charges will be filed with the Police Department and the District Magistrate.

CONTACT PROCEDURES FOR CONCERNS AND/OR COMPLAINTS

- STEP 1: contacting the athletic director to set up a meeting with the head coach
- STEP 2: a scheduled meeting with the Athletic Director (Mr. Stacy Robinson)
- STEP 3: a scheduled meeting with the high school principal (Mr. Rob Nogay)
- STEP 4: a scheduled meeting with the superintendent (Mr. Michael Ross)
- STEP 5: a scheduled meeting with the Union Area School Board of Education

PARENT MEETING POLICY

If a parent or guardian would like to set up a meeting to discuss a question or concern, the following procedure must be adhered to.

1. Call to set up an appointment in accordance with the order of “Procedure Concerns and/or Complaints”. Failure to follow the proper procedures will not be accepted.
2. When discussing issues concerning a non-head coach with the Athletic Director, the Head Coach of that activity should be present.
3. Meetings will take place at the convenience of all parties concerned.
4. Meeting will be conducted within forty-eight (48) hours of request.
5. All parties are expected to remain civil. At no time will those involved in the meeting raise their voice or make any threatening comments or gestures.
6. Meetings will have an agreed-upon agenda. All parties concerned will have this agenda twenty-four (24) hours in advance (when possible) of any meeting in order that the meeting should reach the highest degree of productivity.
7. Only the student’s issue/situation shall be discussed.
8. Anonymity of information is not guaranteed. All anecdotal information divulged at such meetings is subject to verification.
19. PA Law 2712-Assault on Sports Officials, which includes game officials, members of the athletic department, administrative staff, trainers, and coaches, is in effect. Violators will be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law.