

**Palo Alto High School**

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# **STUDENT-ATHLETE HANDBOOK 2018-2019**



**PALO ALTO HIGH SCHOOL**  
50 Embarcadero Road Palo Alto, California 94301  
(650) 329-3701

# INTRODUCTION

The Palo Alto High School Athletics Handbook is a reference guide for coaches, student-athletes and parents, concerning the policies that govern interscholastic athletics at Palo Alto High School.

The coach of an athletic team reports to the Athletic Director and is primarily responsible for the compliance by his/her squad members to the rules, regulations, and policies governing athletics at Palo Alto High School. The Athletic Director will administer these rules and regulations as they relate to inter-squad and inter-coach relationships.

Sound reasoning, good judgment, and adherence to the school's core values will be the standard by which situations outside these stated rules and regulations are determined and evaluated.

Interscholastic athletics is a voluntary program. Students are not obligated to participate and participation is not required for graduation. Thus, competition in high school athletics is a privilege and not a right. Accompanying this privilege is the responsibility to conform to standards established for the high school athletic program. This privilege may be revoked if the athlete fails or refuses to comply with the rules.

## SPORTS OFFERED AT PALY

FALL SPORTS	WINTER SPORTS	SPRING SPORTS
<i>Earliest start date: Aug 3<sup>rd</sup></i>	<i>Start Date: Oct 29th (for all athletes not still playing a PALY fall sport)</i>	<i>Start Date: Jan 28<sup>th</sup> (for all athletes not still playing a PALY winter sport)</i>
Cross Country – Boys*	Basketball - Boys	Badminton – Boys/Girls
Cross Country – Girls	Basketball - Girls	Baseball - Boys
Field Hockey	Soccer - Boys	Golf - Boys
Football*	Soccer - Girls	Lacrosse - Boys
Golf - Girls	Wrestling – Boys*	Lacrosse - Girls
Tennis - Girls	Wrestling – Girls*	Softball - Girls
Volleyball - Girls		Swimming & Diving – Boys*
Water Polo - Boys		Swimming & Diving – Girls*
Water Polo - Girls		Tennis - Boys
		Track and Field – Boys/Girls
		Volleyball- Boys

## ATHLETICS OVERVIEW

Education based athletics is an integral part of the Palo Alto High School community and exists to enhance the facilitation of continuous learning that coincides with the participation of athletic competition. Palo Alto Athletics models a student centered approach while creating a diverse and inclusive environment emphasizing academics, student athlete welfare, sportsmanship and Viking pride. 'Once a Viking always a Viking'.

## PHILOSOPHY

The Athletic Department is an integral part of the educational program of Palo Alto High School. Being involved in athletics provides the student with opportunities to learn skills, good sportsmanship, develop leadership skills and learn the ideals of fair play and ethical behavior that are necessary for competition and cooperation in our society. It should also provide our students with the unique opportunities for self-discipline, self-sacrifice, and loyalty to the community, the school and the team. Palo Alto High School encourages all students to participate in athletics by offering a well-rounded program of interscholastic athletics for young men and women.

## **SPORTSMANSHIP**

As members of the Palo Alto High School athletic program, students, coaches and parents are expected to demonstrate proper respect for each other, opponents, opposing coaches, teachers, officials, spectators, and the community. Student athletes and coaches are expected to exhibit the highest level of conduct, both on and off the playing fields, as they are at all times a representative of their team, school and community.

## **COMMITMENT**

All team members are valuable, and each team needs to know that it can count on its members to be there. Often this means sacrificing social life, family trips and other events, which come in conflict with the training and competition schedules. Learning how to make choices is one of the most valuable life lessons an athlete takes from a good athletic program. All players are expected to attend all practices and competitions, even if the sport is “no cut”.

## **ATHLETIC STAFF/COACHES**

Palo Alto High School strives to hire experienced coaches, committed to educating student athletes in individual skills, teamwork, good sportsmanship and fair play. Our preference is always to recruit coaches from our faculty and staff. For those coaches hired from outside the school, every effort is made to integrate them into the entire school community. The same behavior expected of a teacher in the classroom is expected of all coaches during practices and games.

Coaches manage their teams under the supervision of the Athletic Director. Varsity coaches have general oversight of the JV and Frosh/Soph programs for their sport.

The Athletic Director reports to the Assistant Principal in charge of Athletics, and ultimately to the Principal. The Athletic Director provides for overall leadership and coordination of the various sports to facilitate programs that provide student athletes with worthwhile learning experiences

# **ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT INFORMATION, EXPECTATIONS, PRACTICES & POLICIES**

## **ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY**

Student-athletes must be currently enrolled in at least 25 semester units and have passed in at least 20 semester units at the completion of the last regular grading period. In addition, student athletes must have at least a 2.0 GPA for all enrolled courses on a scale of 4.0 at the most recent grading period. Only official grading periods (semester and quarter grades) can be used for eligibility. There are no interim grade checks during a grading period.

No student-athlete whose nineteenth birthday is attained prior to June 14th shall participate or practice on any team in the following school year.

Once a student-athlete is deemed to be academically ineligible they will return to P.E. and no longer receive the P.E. prep.

## **RESIDENTIAL ELIGIBILITY**

All transfer and foreign exchange students are initially ineligible. They must complete a separate Central Coast Section (CCS) transfer form to be eligible to participate. This applies to transfers of any kind (family move, inter-district transfer, living with relative, etc.) even if the student **DID NOT PLAY** a sport at their previous high school. If this applies to you, please see the Athletic Director ASAP.

## **HEALTH ELIGIBILITY**

Athletes must obtain a "Ticket to Play" from the Athletic Office prior to participating in any tryouts or practices. Coaches will collect the "Ticket to Play" before allowing a student to participate. In order to obtain a "Ticket to Play" the following must be completed: (Although Complete and detailed instructions can be found on the Paly Athletics Web page)

- FIRST - Register and get clearance through Paly's electronic registration system. Instructions and the link to the registration system can be found on the Paly Athletic Website.
- NEXT - Have a current physical on file in the Athletic Training room. This physical form requires the signature of the doctor who has examined and cleared the student for competition per California Interscholastic Federation (CIF) rules. The Physical exam is valid for one year from the date it is completed. Failure to renew the physical before the expiration date will result in the athlete not being able to participate in any practices or competitions.

There will be certain windows of time before the start of each season where athletes can pick up the "Ticket to Play". Information about these pick up times will be posted on the Paly website. Multi-sport athletes must get a new "Ticket to Play" for each season.

## **TRYOUTS**

Student-athletes should listen to the InFocus Show, check the bulletin, or visit [www.palyathletics.com](http://www.palyathletics.com) for announcements regarding pre-season meetings for each sport. Generally, coaches will hold a pre-season meeting for all interested student-athletes explaining the tryout schedule and any pre-season voluntary conditioning sessions. All athletes meeting eligibility requirements may try out for a team. Prospective athletes are given a minimum of 5 days to try out for a squad. Multi-sport athletes must finish the current sport's season before trying out for a new team. However, it is a good idea to communicate with the coach of the new team of intentions to try out after the current season ends. Athletes coming from another sport are given the same 5-day tryout once their season ends.

If a student-athlete is dismissed from a team, he/she cannot try-out or participate in another sport until the original team's season is completed.

## **RELEASE FROM/RETURN TO PHYSICAL ED CLASSES**

Only the P.E. teacher of record can excuse an athlete from her/his Physical Education class. The Athletic Director notifies the physical education teachers once he/she has received a team roster and checked eligibility. The student must return to her/his Physical Education class after the last competition or if she/he is released from or quits a team, or is academically ineligible. If a JV/F-S player is called up to Varsity for CCS playoffs, the coach must notify the AD, who will inform the PE teacher.

## **PRACTICES**

Coaches will have regular practice schedules depending on availability of field, pool or gym space. Varsity practices are typically 2-3 hours in length, 4 - 6 days per week. JV and Frosh/Soph practice are generally 3-5 days per week. Early morning practices may be held due to facility availability. Coaches may set practice times during vacations depending on the season. All players are expected to attend all practices and competitions.

## **CONFLICTS WITH OTHER SCHOOL COMMITMENTS**

Athletes may request to miss a practice and games to participate in another academic or extra-curricular **school activities**. Athletes are expected to arrange this directly with their coaches at the earliest known date. Missed practices or games may result in the coaches decision regarding playing time in future competitions.

## **SCHOOL ATTENDANCE**

It is expected that athletes will attend class on school days in order to attend practice or competitions. If a student has a known cut on a competition day, then they will not be able to compete.

## **NON-SCHOOL OR OUTSIDE COMPETITION RULE**

According to CIF rules, a student-athlete on a high school team becomes ineligible if the student-athlete competes in a competition on an "outside" team in the same sport during the student-athlete's high school season of sport. Individual sport athletes like swimming and wrestling may compete in the same sport but **MUST** enter the outside competition in "unattached status."

## **PARENT INFORMATION NIGHT**

At the start of each season, the Athletic Director will hold an information session for parents to review policies of the Palo Alto Athletic Program, including philosophy, sportsmanship and funding. Most coaches will hold their **team meeting** in conjunction with this event, so attendance is strongly recommended. The dates for the meetings will be posted on the website and communicated through the coaches.

## **TRANSPORTATION**

All team members **MUST** ride with the team to and from competitions, when transportation is provided by PAUSD (Vans or Bus). Busses, school vans or arranged parent carpools are all methods of transportation that teams will use. Only school employees with (proper paperwork filed) may drive the school vans. For emergencies only and with prior approval from the school administration, students may drive their own cars. At no time should students ride with a student driver. With prior permission of the coach, parents may drive their child after a competition. Parents must fill out an insurance form to be eligible to drive athletes to away games. Please see the Athletic website for the driving forms.

## **UNIFORMS & EQUIPMENT**

Athletes are issued uniforms and equipment for each team. All equipment and uniforms must be returned to the head coach or athletic department within 7 days of the last game. **If the uniform is not returned nor the uniform bill paid, the student will not be cleared for athletic participation for the next sport season, and for Sr's a hold will be placed on their Diploma.** Athletes should be appropriately attired if out of the athletic area of campus (i.e. swimmers and water polo players should wear clothing outside of the pool deck). Deck changing is strictly prohibited by CCS rules.

## **CLUB SPORTS**

Many athletes and coaches are involved with club sports. Paly teams are independent from all club sports. Participation in club sports does not fulfill PE requirements, nor is it a criterion for playing on a Paly team. Participation on an outside club sports team is not a valid excuse for missing Paly team practices or competitions.

## **PARTICIPATION DONATION**

The high school athletics program in PAUSD cannot function without your support. The Athletic programs are self-funded except for coaching stipends. Your donation is used to pay for major operating costs including transportation, officials, league fees, equipment, tournament entries, uniforms, first aid supplies and team/athlete awards. A contribution of \$200 to the Paly Sports Boosters is requested (not required) from each athlete upon his/her selection to a team, for each sport, each season. Without your generous donations, sports at Paly cannot be offered. High school sports cost much less than outside club teams and we appreciate your help in keeping our Viking teams viable.

## **PALO ALTO SPORTS BOOSTERS**

Paly Sports Boosters supports the athletic programs at Palo Alto High school. In recent years, Paly parents, through the Sports Boosters, have funded 100% of the non-coaching costs of Paly's athletic program – totaling over \$300,000.

- **Participation Donation:** Families are requested to contribute \$200 for each team, each season. The participation donation is necessary to maintain the sports program.
- **Fund Raising:** Parents have helped raise funds for the athletics program through a variety of activities. These include running the concessions stand for football and basketball games, the Annual Auction, , participation in the e-scrip program, scheduling restaurant nights, Paly Gear Sales (T-Shirts, caps, etc.), and the Golf Tournament.
- **Parent Participation/Team Parent:** Parents are encouraged to support their athletes, go to games, serve as team parents, help out in the concession stands, coordinate fund raising efforts such as Paly gear, e-scrip, and other events. Everyone is encouraged to attend Booster monthly meetings to share comments/suggestions/ideas. Sports Boosters meet every 3rd Wednesday of the month. Information about time and location will be sent in the PalyLink. In order to facilitate communication between the different teams and the Sports Boosters, each team has a Team Parent who represents their team at the Boosters meetings, coordinates team fund raising efforts and plans team parties, etc. Please contact the coach if you are interested in being a Team Parent.
- **Scholarships:** The Boosters Club offers two \$500 scholarship awards each year to the most outstanding graduating female and male athletes at Palo Alto High School. These are awarded at Senior Awards Night held at the end of the year.

## **SAFETY**

### **ATHLETIC TRAINING**

Paly is fortunate to have a highly qualified and skilled full-time trainer as a member of our staff. The trainer is on site every day and for all home games. Daily hours are posted weekly on the training room window. The training program exists to help athletes receive the best possible care. At certain times, however, the trainer and training room facilities are extremely busy. Consequently, access to the training room and its services is limited to athletes who require care only. Training services are granted on a first come, first served basis on practice days. On game days, students will be treated in an order that will allow bus and/or game commitments to be met.

### **ACCIDENTS/INJURY**

Coaches will have access to their student-athletes' medical information at all practices and competitions. Coaches are trained in basic first aid. It is the responsibility of the athlete to report ALL injuries to their coach. The coach and/or athlete will then communicate the injury to the Head Athletic Trainer. All sport related injuries must be reported to the athletic trainer and a student may not return to competition without clearance by the trainer, which may also include written permission from a physician.

### **ILLEGAL & PERFORMANCE ENHANCING SUBSTANCES**

Any athlete found to be in possession of or involved in the use of alcohol, tobacco, smokeless tobacco or narcotics during the season, while attending school or at any Paly-sponsored activity, will be suspended from athletics for a period of time determined by the Paly Administration and/or Coach.

Performance enhancing substances are strictly prohibited. The Board of Education recognizes that the use of androgenic/anabolic steroids (“steroids”) and other performance- enhancing supplements presents a serious health and safety hazard. As part of the District's drug prevention and intervention efforts, the Superintendent or designee and staff shall make every effort to ensure that students do not begin or continue the use of steroids or other performance-enhancing supplements. Students in grades 7-12 shall receive instruction on the effects of steroids as part of their health, physical education, or drug education program.

Students participating in interscholastic athletics are prohibited from using steroids or any other performance-enhancing supplements. Coaches shall educate students about the District’s prohibition and the dangers of using these substances.

Use of energy drinks (i.e. 5 Hour Energy, etc.) is highly discouraged and detrimental to an athlete’s health and athletic performance.

As part of the registration process, a student athlete and his/her parent/guardian shall sign an agreement that the student athlete shall not use steroids, unless the student has a written prescription from a fully licensed physician, as recognized by the American Medical Association, to treat a medical condition.

A student who is found to have violated the agreement or this policy shall be restricted from participating in athletics and shall be subject to disciplinary procedures including, but not limited to, suspension or expulsion in accordance with law, and board policies, and administrative regulations.

## **ATHLETICS CODE OF CONDUCT**

Paly has a duty to ensure that their athletic programs impart important life skills and promote the development of good character. At all practices and athletic competitions, coaches, players and parents are expected to emphasize the proper ideals of sportsmanship, ethical conduct, and fair play.

### **Behavior Expectations**

- Be prompt to practices and games.
- Be gracious in victory and accept defeat with dignity.
- Be respectful to others – no profanity, obscene cheers or gestures, negative signs, artificial noise makers, offensive remarks of a sexual nature, trash talking, taunting, boastful celebrations or other actions that would demean individuals or the sport.
- Treat game officials with respect – no complaining about calls during or after an athletic event.
- Exercise self-control – no fighting or excessive displays of anger or frustration.
- Promote healthy life-style encouraging good nutrition and rest.
- Sexual or romantic contact of any sort between students and adults is illegal and a police report of such contact will be filed.
- Be open-minded, willing to listen and learn.
- Encourage teamwork on and off the field.
- Honor the spirit and letter of rules of the sport – avoid improper gamesmanship techniques that violate the highest traditions of sportsmanship.
- Positive cheering only. Spectators should not shout coaching comments – leave coaching to the coaches.

## **HAZING & BULLYING**

Hazing is defined as any conduct or method of initiation into any student organization that willfully or recklessly endangers the physical or mental health of any student or person. Please remember, ~~that~~ what one person may find “funny and harmless” can be perceived as embarrassing and traumatic to others. Hazing is strictly prohibited under the California Education Code.

Bullying (Ed Code section 48900(r)) is defined as any conduct that is:

Severe or pervasive physical or verbal act or conduct, including communications made in writing or by means of an electronic act, and including one or more of the following:

- Sex Harassment (48900.2)
- Hate Violence (48900.3)
- Threats, harassment, intimidation (48900.4)
- Has or reasonably predicted to have one or more of the following:
  - Reasonable pupil in fear of harm to person or property
  - Reasonable pupil to experience substantially detrimental effect to physical or mental health
  - Reasonable pupil to experience substantial interference with academic performance
  - Reasonable pupil to experience substantial interference with ability to participate in or benefit from services, activities, or privileges provided by the school

## **CONSEQUENCES FOR VIOLATIONS OF ATHLETICS CODE OF CONDUCT**

Student-athletes, coaches and/or fans may be ejected from a competition for inappropriate behavior. For persistent violations of the code of conduct, parents and/or fans may be asked by the coach or AD not to attend future competitions

For student-athlete’s violations of code of conduct during games or practices: playing time may be reduced, student-athlete may be removed from the team, or student-athlete may be referred to Assistant Principal and disciplined according to Paly school procedures.

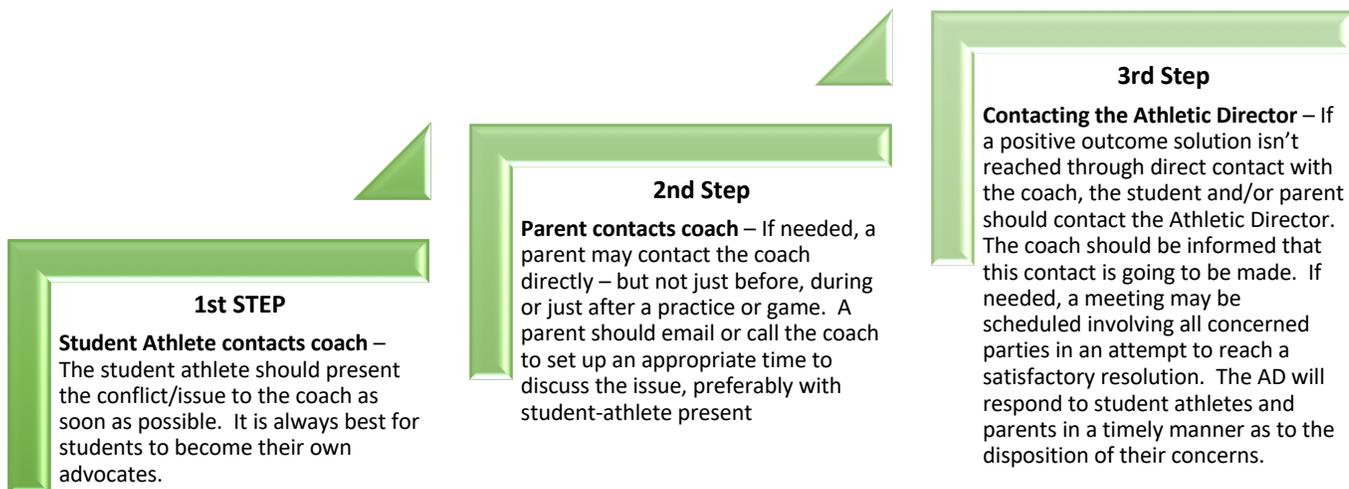
In addition to the above, coaches agree to abide by the State Board of Education’s Code of Ethics during games and practices. Unprofessional conduct will be addressed according to PAUSD Board Policies and Procedures.

<http://pausd-web.pausd.org/community/board/Policies/4000.shtml>

Parents and players are encouraged to address concerns about code of conduct violations through the conflict resolution process outlined below. Egregious conduct violations by parents, players and/or coaches will be brought to the attention of the Athletic Director and Principal immediately.

## **CONFLICT RESOLUTION**

When conflicts or issues arise, it is important that they be addressed immediately, with the goal of finding a positive solution. Coaching strategy and playing time are not appropriate subjects for complaint. In addition, parents should follow any instructions from the coach about the best way and time to approach the coach with questions or concerns.



- ✓ It is our hope that the majority of concerns will be resolved at this first meeting between student-athlete and coach.
- ✓ Athletic Director will always ask if steps 1 and 2 are met before engaging with parents, unless its deemed a concerning circumstance (to AD's discretion)
- ✓ If there is still not a satisfactory resolution, the student or parent may contact the AP of Athletics. The Athletic Director should be informed that this contact is going to be made. While there can be no guarantee that all parties will agree with all resolutions or findings, a thorough, respectful airing of different perceptions and experiences can lead to more productive relationships and clearer understandings in the future.

## **LEAGUE/CIF INFORMATION**

### **CENTRAL COAST SECTION (CCS) OF THE CALIFORNIA INTERSCHOLASTIC FEDERATION (CIF)**

Palo Alto High School is a member of the Central Coast Section of the California Interscholastic Federation (CIF). CIF is the governing body of high school athletics in the state of California. The objectives of this organization are:

1. To serve as an organization through which member high schools mutually adopt rules and regulations for interscholastic athletic competition so that Boards of Education and school faculties will regard interscholastic athletics as an educational resource to be encouraged and fostered.
2. To establish the responsibility for the administration of high school athletics by member schools in order to ensure satisfactory supervision.
3. To provide a constitution, by-laws, and organization through which member schools shall administer their interscholastic athletic programs.
4. To cultivate cordial and friendly relations among schools through good standards of sportsmanship.
5. To promote equal opportunities for all involved in California secondary school athletic programs regardless of race, religion, gender, or national origin.
6. To promote the acceptance of the Cardinal Principles and Code of Ethics of the California Interscholastic Federation.

## **CIF CODE OF ETHICS**

It is the duty of all concerned with High School Athletics:

1. To emphasize the proper ideals of sportsmanship, ethical conduct and fair play.
2. To eliminate all possibilities which tend to destroy the best values of the game.
3. To stress the values derived from playing the game fairly.
4. To show cordial courtesy to visiting teams and officials.
5. To establish a happy relationship between visitors and hosts.
6. To respect the integrity and judgment of sports officials.
7. To achieve a thorough understanding and acceptance of the rules of the game and the standards of eligibility.
8. To encourage leadership, use of initiative, and good judgment by the players on a team.
9. To recognize that the purpose of athletics is to promote the physical, mental, moral, social and emotional well being of the individual players.
10. To remember that an athletic contest is only a game – not a matter of life and death for player, coach, school, officials, fan, community, state, or nation.

Failure to follow the “spirit and intent” of CIF rules and regulations may result in the following penalties for your athletes and school: Forfeiture of all league games and championships and elimination of your school from Play-Offs in the particular sport.

## **SANTA CLARA VALLEY ATHLETIC LEAGUE**

Palo Alto High School is a member of the Santa Clara Valley Athletic League. The league is divided into two divisions based on strength of program. The De Anza is for upper division teams, and the El Camino is for lower division teams. The assignment to each division is based on past performance and is evaluated at the end of each season by the coaches, AD’s and Board of Managers.

### Member Schools

Cupertino	Fremont	Gunn	Homestead
Los Altos	Los Gatos	Lynbrook	Milpitas
Monta Vista	Mountain View	Palo Alto	Santa Clara
Saratoga	Wilcox		

As a member of the SCVAL, Palo Alto High School is responsible for following the Constitution, By-Laws, and Sport Regulations as established by the Executive Board of the SCVAL. The SCVAL Constitution, By-Laws, and Sport Regulations are continually being revised and up-dated.

## **VARSITY, JV & FROSH/SOPH TEAMS**

All boys’ sports are Frosh/Soph and Varsity; all girls’ sports are Junior Varsity (JV) and Varsity per SCVAL rules. Coed sports are JV and Varsity. The Varsity coach supervises the athletic program for each sport. On occasion, Varsity coaches may select JV or F/S players to attend practices or games, and/or CCS playoffs. The coaches of Varsity, JV and F/S teams work together to build skills and develop players to compete successfully at all levels.

## **FRESHMEN**

The SCVAL does not support a Freshman League. Paly currently offers Freshman teams in Volleyball and Boys Basketball if there are sufficient interested athletes.

Generally, freshmen should play at the frosh/JV level. In the case when a coach assesses that a ninth grader has the skill and maturity to participate at the varsity level he/she will consult with AD prior to selecting a freshman athlete for varsity level play.