

Prospect Hill Academy Charter School



ATHLETICS HANDBOOK

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PROSPECT HILL ACADEMY **CHARTER SCHOOL**

Mission Statement

Prospect Hill Academy Charter School will prepare each student for success in college, inspire a lifelong love of learning and foster responsible citizenship.

A Letter From The Athletic Director

At Prospect Hill Academy Charter School, the athletic experience is an integral part of the total educational process. The goal at every level of athletics is to strive for excellence. As with the academic program, the implications of a strong athletic program are far-reaching. Athletics affords students who participate the opportunity to push themselves to higher levels of achievement. They become more focused and more disciplined as they compete amongst their peers for honor and respect. Athletics can also play a significant role in the development of a child's self-esteem and well being.

The overall athletic experience provides every single student attending PHA a sense of belonging, a sense of pride and a sense of accomplishment. It can instill a sense of school spirit and devotion as they work with and cheer for their classmates who willingly engage in the arena of competition. Competition teaches the fundamental values of teamwork, sacrifice and sportsmanship. Athletics can also galvanize an entire school community, providing everyone the opportunity to view and interact with these students outside the classroom setting. The athletic program must also be flexible and reflect the values of PHA in order to address the needs of the entire student population.

As Director of Athletics, I have been able to work closely with the students, faculty, and staff of the Prospect Hill Academy Charter School community and am grateful for being given the opportunity to serve. It is the firm belief of my colleagues and I that athletics have many life lessons to teach which can be shared by all of us, for many lifetimes to come.

Sincerely,

Jack O'Brien
Director of Athletics
Prospect Hill Academy

Preface

The material outlined in this guide defines some of the policies and procedures for all students participating in the Prospect Hill Academy Charter School Athletic Program. It is intended to provide you with a better understanding of the athletic department's philosophy, goals and policies. Please refer to it during the course of the school year to help answer any questions you may have concerning your child's athletic experience. Also, please show your support by regularly attending your child's athletic contests. This will greatly enhance their self-esteem and the overall educational experience that athletic competition has to offer.

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Dr. Angela Allen, Head of School Jack O'Brien, Director of Athletics

I. Fundamental Information

A. Program Goals

1. To enable as many students as possible to experience the benefits of athletic competition and team membership.
2. To develop appropriate attitudes toward competition, sportsmanship and self-discipline.
3. To develop and acquire athletic skills.
4. To improve physical conditioning as a requisite for good health.

Participation in PHA Athletics is a privilege. All student/athletes are expected to provide leadership for other members of the student body and to act in an exemplary manner.

B. Commitment To The Program

Participation on an athletic team is a rewarding experience which requires students to commit their time, energy and spirit if they are to reap the benefits that athletics has to offer. All students are expected to attend all daily practices and team meetings unless the coach excuses them **before** the scheduled practice. Some practices are held on Saturdays and during vacations. It is expected that all team members arrive and be picked up on time and work to the best of their ability.

Failure to comply may result in removal from the team.

II. Athletic Offerings

The PHA Athletic Program is divided into three seasons and is comprised of the following activities:

Fall Season

Varsity Boys Soccer
Varsity Girls Soccer
Varsity Boys, 7/8 Cross-Country
Varsity Girls, 7/8 Cross-Country
Varsity Girls Volleyball

Winter Season

Varsity Boys Basketball
Varsity Girls Basketball
JV Boys Basketball
JV Girls Basketball
7/8 Boys Basketball
7/8 Girls Basketball
5/6 Boys Basketball
5/6 Girls basketball
Varsity, 7/8 Cheerleading

Spring Season

Varsity Baseball
Varsity Softball
Varsity Boys Track
Varsity Girls Track
7/8 Boys Track
7/8 Girls Track
Varsity Boys Volleyball

Fall – Soccer, Cross-Country, Girls Volleyball

Tryouts begin the last week in August. Please refer to the PHA website for dates, times and locations. The regular season ends before the last week in October. Tournament play begins.

Winter – Basketball, Cheerleading

Tryouts begin the 1st week students return from Thanksgiving break. Please refer to the

PHA website for dates, times and locations. The regular season ends before the last week in February. Tournament play begins.

Spring – Baseball, Softball, Track, Boys Volleyball

Tryouts begin the 3rd Monday in March. Please refer to the PHA website for dates, times and locations. The regular season ends before the last week in May. Tournament play begins.

III. Governance of High School Athletics

Prospect Hill Academy is a member of the Massachusetts Charter School Athletic Organization (MCSAO). Established in May of 2005, the MCSAO is the legislative body which governs and promotes all member charter school athletic programs.

IV. Participation Guidelines

Any candidate for an athletic team must meet the following eligibility requirements.

A. Permission to Play

Parents/Guardians are required to register their children online through their PowerSchool account in order for them to be eligible to participate in the athletic program.

B. Physical Examination

Pass a physical examination performed by a registered physician within one year prior to participation. Physical examinations are good for 13 months from the date of examination and must be renewed before they expire if participation is to continue. An updated copy must be kept on file in the school's athletic office prior to the first tryout or practice.

C. Heads-Up Concussion Course Completion Mandate

Parents/Guardians are required to complete the CDC on-line training HEADS UP Concussion course, type their full name and the full name of their child onto the certificate. An updated copy must be kept on file in the school's athletic office prior to the first tryout or practice.

D. Chapter 766

Any student who is currently receiving special education services under Chapter 766 and who has an Individual Education Program (IEP) can be declared eligible if all of their requirements satisfactorily meets the Special Education Directors approval.

E. Student Handbook

All student/athletes/spectators, first and foremost, are subject to school rules and regulations governing student behavior as cited in the PHA Student Handbook. Violations of school rules resulting in suspension (in/out of school) from school will automatically preclude student involvement in athletic activities until the student is officially readmitted to school. Student/athletes will receive additional consequences as outlined in Section 8 – Disciplinary Eligibility for any/all infractions incurred.

Chronic offenders to school rules will be removed from the athletic program for a season, for a year or permanently, depending upon the severity of the infraction.

F. Attendance

Students will not be allowed to participate in any athletic practice/contest on the same day they are absent from school unless the absence has been approved in advance by the Upper School (UP) or Collegiate Institute (CI) Director. Students must be in attendance in school for four (4) class periods to be eligible to participate in an athletic practice/contest. If a practice/contest is scheduled for a weekend, the student must be in school on Friday for four (4) class periods.

G. Age

Students must be 19 years of age or under prior to September 1st but may compete during the remainder of the school year provided his/her 20th birthday falls on or after September 1st of that school year.

H. Injuries

If any injury or illness should occur during the season which requires medical attention, the student must submit written approval from the attending physician to the athletic office prior to returning to athletic participation. This rule also applies to any student who was injured or ill prior to the start of that season but would be joining that team after the start of that season.

I. Amateur Status

All students must be of amateur status. An amateur is defined as an athlete/participant who competes for the intrinsic value of the game and at no time, under any circumstances, accepts money or compensation for his/her efforts involving the activity in question.

J. Equipment and Responsibilities

Students are responsible for the care and maintenance of all athletic equipment and uniforms issued to them. They will be charged replacement value for any equipment or uniform that is lost, stolen or damaged. All equipment and uniforms must be returned within one week of the season close. Students may wear their uniforms only at times specified in team regulations.

K. Alcohol/Tobacco/Drugs

During the course of the school year, students are prohibited from using, consuming, possessing, purchasing, giving away or being in the presence of any beverage containing alcohol, tobacco products, marijuana, non-prescription steroids or controlled substances. Possession of a legally prescribed drug by the student's physician for a specific purpose is not a violation.

L. Steroid Use

Use of non-prescription Anabolic Androgenic Steroids is strictly prohibited. It has been proven that steroid use has serious short and long-term effects. We encourage all our coaches to take a proactive approach in educating students about the harmful effects of steroid use.

M. Fraudulent Documentation

Any student, parent or coach who knowingly falsifies any official document(s) or participates under an assumed name will be immediately suspended from further competition for one year from the date of the infraction.

N. Hazing

Hazing is considered a crime in Massachusetts. The Mass General Law is defined

in CH. 269,s. 17 - 19 as: "Any conduct or method of initiation into any student organization, **whether on private or public property**, which willfully or recklessly endangers the physical or mental health of any student or other person". Such conduct shall include whipping, beating, branding, forced calisthenics, exposure to weather, forced consumption of food, liquor, beverage, drug or other substance or any other brutal treatment or forced physical activity which is likely to adversely affect the physical health or safety of any such student or other person or which subjects such student or other person to extreme mental stress, including deprivation of sleep or rest or extended isolation.

Consent to such treatment does not make Hazing legal.

O. Penalties Incurred

Violations of Participation Guidelines can range from exclusion from entering the program, half game suspensions, full game suspensions, removal from the team or termination of participation from the athletic program.

Attending athletic events does not entitle anyone to jeer, criticize or downgrade players, coaches or officials. The Prospect Hill Academy Athletic Department reserves the right to warn, place on probation, remove or suspend, for up to one calendar year, any player, coach, school official, spectator or team deemed to be acting in a manner contrary to the standards of good sportsmanship as outlined in this handbook and the PHA Student Handbook. Also, individuals who choose to ignore any reasonable request by the athletic department on the manner in which they conduct themselves at athletic events will be prohibited from attending said events.

V. Academic Eligibility

Academic responsibilities are a student's first priority and take precedence over any athletic event. Students must maintain a minimum grade of **70** in all subjects at all times. Eligibility will be determined each and every Monday during the season, by the midterm progress report and the end of the quarter grade.

VI. Academic Warning

Student's will receive a "Warning" if their grade drops below **70** in any subject. They will be given 7 days from the date of the warning to get their grade up to a **70** or above without any interscholastic consequence. Students who are unable to attain a **70** or above grade at the completion of the warning period will be placed on Academic Probation.

VII. Academic Probation

If a student's grade remains below **70** in any subject (**65** for AP classes) after the warning period, they will be placed on Academic Probation. Each probation period is 1 week in length. During this time, participation in extracurricular activities will be limited. Students may be able to attend practice but will not be allowed to compete interscholastically until the probation period is over. When the student brings their grade up to a **70** or above, eligibility will be reinstated. Students unable to attain a **70** or above grade at the completion of the probation period will remain on probation until the next grade review.

Students who fail any subject at the end of a term, will be ineligible to participate in any extracurricular activity during the next term.

VIII.

Citizenship

Student/athletes must demonstrate exemplary behavior in the classroom, hallways, on school property, field trips and whenever, where ever school is in session. Lack of responsible citizenship will result in the student being placed on behavioral probation. The probation begins upon disclosure of the incident. Each probation period is 1 week in length. During this time, participation in extracurricular activities will be limited. Students may be able to attend practice but will not be allowed to compete interscholastically until the probation period is over.

IX.

Three-Strikes

Students intending to tryout for a Prospect Hill Academy team must have **less** than “Three-Strikes” on their quarterly report card (a combination of 2’s in citizenship rating or a combination of grades not below a 67 or both combined) in order to be eligible to tryout.

X.

Disciplinary Eligibility

Disciplinary responsibilities are also a student priority and take precedence over any athletic event. The following policy has been implemented to deal with student/athlete disciplinary issues that may occur during the school year.

1. Suspensions

Students receiving an In-House or External Suspension will be suspended from all team/athletic activities for three (3) school days. The athletic suspension will also include practices/games scheduled on weekend days and/or involve sanctioned league events. Each practice/game/event on weekend days will be equivalent to 1 school day. The athletic suspension will begin on the first date the suspension is served.

2. 2nd Suspension

Students receiving a 2nd In-House or External Suspensions can be removed from the athletic program for up to one (1) season from the date of the 2nd suspension.

XI.

Sportsmanship

PHA places a high value on good sportsmanship from its players, coaches and fans. Sportsmanship is the ability to treat everyone involved in an athletic contest with fairness, generosity, respect and courtesy. Please help us promote good will and fair play by being a positive role model and setting a good example so that others may follow. Attending PHA athletic contests is a privilege. Please remember that these contests involve young people, not professional athletes, who are trying to represent themselves and their school to the best of their ability. The price of admission does not entitle anyone to jeer, criticize or down grade players, coaches or officials. PHA reserves the right to warn, censure, place on probation or suspend for up to one calendar year any player, coach, school official, spectator or team deemed to be acting in a manner contrary to the standards of good sportsmanship previously mentioned.

XII.

Try-Outs/Policy on Cuts

Students may try-out for any sport that is offered at PHA providing they have met all the participation guidelines and academic eligibility standards. During the try-out period, each coach will describe their expectations for making the team. Athletes must demonstrate their ability to meet these expectations. For some sports, because of the large numbers of prospective athletes trying out, students may be cut from squads. In those situations, coaches will have the prerogative of selecting team members. If a student does not make a

team, they may contact the coach personally for an explanation. Once a student has been selected for a team, they will not be allowed to quit to join another PHA team. We try to accommodate as many athletes as the sport allows. If a student is not selected for a team, they should explore participation in another sport offering.

XIII. Team Selection

The coach and coaching staff for each sport has the sole responsibility for selecting players, deciding the appropriate level of play and determine the amount of playing time each student receives. Coaches decide who will play based upon their assessment of an athletes level of commitment, attitude and skill.

Every season is a new season and the roster is open to all those who tryout. There are no guarantees that athletes will maintain their status from season to season due to prior affiliations.

XIV. Selection of Team Captains

Coaches will decide on how team captains are selected. They may be voted on by the team, appointed by the coach or selected on a game to game basis. Team captains are expected to be leaders and readily assume duties appointed to them by the coach. They should have a complete understanding of all team rules and student/athlete responsibilities. Captains should be able to communicate with their teammates in a positive manner thus fostering teamwork and cohesiveness. Captains may be relieved of their position for violations of team, department or school rules.

XV. Coaching at PHA

At PHA, we expect our coaches to present themselves in a manner which will earn them the respect of their players, opponents, officials and the PHA community. We want our coaches to model the standards of behavior and sportsmanship that we expect from our students. They should be effective communicators, knowledgeable of their sport, organized and be able to motivate their players to compete at the highest level possible. The coach is the key contact person during your child's athletic experience. Any questions or messages regarding schedules, games, equipment, team rules or unavoidable lateness or absences should all be directed to the coach. It is our belief that communication is your greatest ally for creating a more positive athletic experience for your child.

XVI. Conflict Resolution

Athletic participation is highly charged, emotional and a time consuming experience. When conflicts arise, please follow the established protocol.

1. Student to Coach Contact

As soon as possible, the student should approach the coach and request a meeting at some point outside of the normal practice schedule in which the issue at hand can be brought forward. This can also be done over the phone.

2. Student – Parent/Guardian to Coach Contact

If a satisfactory resolution is not reached through the Student to Coach Contact, the student and their parents and/or guardians should schedule a meeting with the coach outside the normal practice schedule during which the issue at hand can be further discussed. This can also be done over the phone.

3. **Parent/Guardian – Coach to Athletic Director Contact**

If a satisfactory resolution is not reached through the Student – Parent/Guardian to Coach contact, the parents/guardians should schedule a meeting with the Athletic Director and the coach in an attempt to reach a satisfactory resolution.

4. **Parent/Guardian – Athletic Director - Administration Contact**

If there is still no satisfactory resolution, the student or parents/guardians should contact the Middle School (MS), Upper School (UP) and/or Collegiate Institute (CI) Director and schedule a meeting at a time convenient to all concerned parties. The Athletic Director should be informed that this contact is going to be made.

It is very important that all students and parents know that all concerns or issues raised will be addressed. There are no guarantees that all parties will agree with all resolutions or findings. However, by respectfully communicating differing perspectives, a productive relationship can be established which can lead to a clearer understandings in the future.

XVII. Transportation to and from Practices/Contests

PHA provides bus transportation to away contests and is restricted to team members only. In the event a bus is not available, private transportation may be needed. These vehicles will be driven by responsible adults (parents of athletes or coaches). Transportation is not provided to practices or home games. Please be aware that these practice/game sites are removed from the Prospect Hill Academy campus and that **parents are ultimately held responsible for dropping-off and picking-up their children on time.**

XVIII. PHA Athletic Event Locations

The following locations have been utilized by the Athletic Program in the past and are subject to change:

Soccer

- Girls practices are held at Sennott Park located just behind the Area IV Youth Center in Cambridge. Boys practices are held at Magazine Beach Park off Memorial Drive in Cambridge.
- Home games held at Danehy Field located behind the Fresh Pond Shopping Mall in Cambridge.

Cross-Country

- Practices held at Sennott Park located just behind the Area IV Youth Center in Cambridge and along the Charles River by Memorial Drive.
- Meets will be held at MCSAO designated venues. See PHA website for dates/times/venues or go to www.mcsao.org for further details.

Girls Volleyball

- Practices will be held at the former St. Clement HS in Medford or the Winter Hill School in Somerville. Home matches at the Area IV Moses Center, Cambridge.

Cheerleading

- Practices held at the Early Childhood Campus, Webster Ave. in Somerville. Home games are held at the former St. Clement HS School, Boston Street, Medford.

Basketball

- **Varsity** – practices held at the Argenziano School located just outside Union Square on Washington Street in Somerville. Home games are held at the former St. Clement HS, Boston Street in Medford.

JV's - practices/home games held at the Capuano School, 150 Glenn Street in Somerville.

MS - practices/home games held at the Capuano School, 150 Glenn Street in Somerville.

5.6 - practices/home games held at the Capuano School, 150 Glenn Street in Somerville.

Baseball

- Practices held at Sennott Park located just behind the Area IV Youth Center in Cambridge. Home games are held at St. Peters Park located on Sherman Street, Rindge Field located on Pemberton Street and MIT's field on Vassar Street. All facilities are located in Cambridge.

Softball

- Practices held at Sennott Park located just behind the Area IV Youth Center in Cambridge. Home games are held at St. Peters and/or Danehy Park located on Sherman Street, Gore Park near the Twin City Plaza and at MIT located on Vassar Street. All facilities are located in Cambridge.

Track

- Practices held at Sennott Park located just behind the Area IV Youth Center in Cambridge. Meets will be held at MCSAO designated venues. See PHA website for dates/times/venues or go to www.mcsao.org for further details.

Boys Volleyball

- Practices and matches are held at the former St. Clement HS, Boston Street, in Medford.