



*Pine River Area Schools  
Athletic Code and Policy Book  
2023-2024*

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## **PHILOSOPHY OF ATHLETICS**

Athletics at Pine River Area Schools are a part of the total educational program. The focus of athletics at Pine River Area Schools is on educational outcomes and student learning, thus allowing students the opportunity to demonstrate physical, emotional, social, and intellectual growth.

### ***For those who are members of a team, the following educational goals can be achieved.***

1. The athlete learns the value of teamwork, self-discipline, hard work, and personal sacrifice; all of which are necessary in a democratic society. The athlete learns that there is no room for the denial or minimizing of others, bullying, harassing, hazing, or creating an unsafe environment for teammates, coaches, or other people, that their contribution to the team is more important than their personal goals or desires.
2. The athlete learns to be a good sport. Through participation in athletics, you must develop emotional control, honesty, and an ability to cooperate with others. You must learn to be modest in victory and gracious in defeat.
3. The athlete learns the importance of having a sound, physically fit body. To enjoy life and to be a contributing citizen, one should develop good health habits and maintain a high degree of physical fitness.
4. The athlete learns techniques for handling, in a positive manner, the competitive nature of our society. The athlete learns the value of success realizing that there are no shortcuts, that success is a product and result of desire to get better, effort to improve, willpower to sacrifice, grit, self-discipline, determination, compassion for others, and love of sport.

**In addition to educational goals, the athletic program at Pine River Schools is governed by these general guidelines:**

*Participation in interscholastic athletics at Pine River Schools is a privilege and not a right and all who do so are part of something bigger.*

**To be eligible for participation in athletics, student-athletes will be expected to meet Pine River Athletic Department standards in each of the following areas:**

- A. Daily practice attendance**
- B. Cooperative team effort and attitude**
- C. Practice expectations and work ethic**
- D. Adhere to all requirements of the Pine River "Athletic Code"**
- E. Additional coaches' rules (as approved by the athletic director)**
- F. Adhere to all requirements as set forth in the Middle School and High School student handbooks**

**General Notes of Guidance**

1. While we do strive for maximum participation, interscholastic athletics is for those students who have both physical skills in their respective sports and a willingness to follow those expectations outlined in the Pine River athletic policy guide.
2. The success or failure of our athletic programs will not be determined by won or lost records. Our program will be evaluated in light of our educational goals and general guidelines.
3. The athletic program will reflect our school and community in a positive light.
4. We will provide our athletes with quality teaching and coaching personnel. We encourage teaching staff members to be involved with our students in their extra-curricular activities.
5. We will provide our athletes with the best facilities and equipment that are available in relation to the financial conditions which exist at the given time.
6. We will provide spectators an opportunity to identify with and support the interscholastic teams of Pine River Schools.
7. We encourage our coaching staff, athletes, student body, and adult followers to act in a manner that represents Pine River Schools in a positive manner. Sportsmanship is the underlying value of all high school activities.
8. Our athletic program will provide athletes an opportunity to grow physically and emotionally, acquire positive values, and learn life lessons through participation in interscholastic athletics.
9. We will follow a pre-established chain of command when wishing to discuss items of concern within the interscholastic athletic department.

*Participation Philosophy of Pine River Athletics*

**Middle School team limitations: Volleyball minimum (8), maximum (18); Cross-Country minimum (4), no maximum; Track minimum (8); and Wrestling minimum (6); both Track and Wrestling maximum is unlimited; Football minimum (14), unlimited maximum; Basketball minimum (7), maximum (15)**

The Middle School will serve as a "skill development" period in terms of the focus to be placed on player participation.

- A. Player skill development will be emphasized first and foremost.
- B. Participation opportunities will be provided to each student/athlete on a per game basis as long as playing standards have been adhered to.
- C. Playing time will be distributed among team members at the coach's discretion and in a manner consistent with our middle school philosophy.

**High School--Freshman, Junior Varsity and Varsity Team Selections/Limitations = Discretion of Coach in consultation with varsity coach and/or athletic director with following minimums and maximums [minimum number must be achieved ten (10) calendar days prior to the first scheduled competition; failure to achieve the minimum number by this time will result in the immediate dissolution of the team for that season]. If a sport season begins and the number of team participants slips below the minimum requirement, 1 week will be given to once again establish the minimum number of participants or the team will be dissolved:**

<u>Sport (per team)</u>	<u>Minimum to Maximum</u>
Football	13 to unlimited
Soccer	13 to unlimited
Volleyball	8 to 15
Basketball	7 to 15
Cross Country	4 to unlimited
Competitive Cheer	8 to 16
Sideline Cheer	6 to 14
Wrestling	7 to unlimited
Track	8 to unlimited
Baseball	10 to 18
Softball	10 to 18

The Junior Varsity and Varsity levels will serve as a "competitive" period in terms of the focus to be placed on player participation.

- A. Player skill development *and* overall team success will be emphasized--when the team wins, the members of the team are winners.
- B. Participation opportunities will be provided to student-athletes at the coach's discretion.
- C. Playing time will be distributed among team members at the coach's discretion.

## CONDUCT AND VALUES OF AN ATHLETE

1. In the classroom, the athlete should work hard, have good study habits, good behavior, and have good attendance.
2. During the competition, the athlete is expected to exhibit good sportsmanship. Use of profanity or illegal tactics will not be tolerated. Athletes are not to argue with or show disrespect toward any contest official, school personnel, or game management personnel.
3. On trips, athletes directly represent the community, school, and coaches. Therefore, it is expected that all concerned will conduct themselves in an acceptable and respectful manner.
4. Team members will “dress as a team” on the day of games, both home and away. If the athletic contest is on a Saturday, “dress as a team” day will be on Friday. Specific game day attire will be determined by the coach and/or the head coach of each program. Non-compliance by the student-athlete may result in the student being suspended from their athletic contest for that evening. Coaches are responsible for monitoring their team and establishing a “dress as a team” theme appropriate for our athletic department.
5. Conduct in and out of school shall be such as to bring no discredit to the athlete, parents, school, or team. Any conduct considered unbecoming to an athlete will be brought before the administration for disciplinary action. Examples of conduct unbecoming to an athlete are as follows (the list is not all-inclusive): Stealing; classroom misconduct; abusing school property; disrespect for authority; commission of any crime—including youthful offender status; hazing; sexual misconduct; verbal sexual harassment; fighting; school suspensions; school detentions; removal from an athletic team due to behavior or attendance; (including violations of the student code of conduct as outlined in the MS/HS student handbooks and this policy)

**Each offense: Depending on the nature of the misconduct, the penalties range from game/practice suspensions to total dismissal from athletics.** Hazing will not be tolerated and is covered earlier in this handbook.

### ATHLETIC CODE

Participation in interscholastic athletics is a privilege, and it is also a responsibility. Student-athletes wear school uniforms on the field of play and they wear symbols of their participation while off the field. Athletes are representatives of their school in the particular sport in which they participate. They may be held in esteem by fellow students and the community at large. As athletes, they are looked up to by younger students, both on and off the field. Responsibility for an athlete's conduct is not removed with the removal of the uniform. Thus, athletes are expected to be exemplary school citizens (as outlined under ‘Conduct and Values of an Athlete’) and are not at any time or in any way to be involved with or use alcohol, tobacco, steroids, performance-enhancing drugs, or any controlled substance or drug. **This policy is in effect 12 months a year and applies from the first day of fall sports in the athlete's seventh-grade year (or sixth-grade if participating in specified sports) until the last date of competition in the athlete's senior year. Students wishing to participate in athletics are**

**subject to the provisions of the athletic code throughout their middle and high school careers regardless of when they join an athletic team.**

### **Purpose of the Athletic Code**

A. Through the establishment and enforcement of uniform standards, it is expected that all student-athletes will strive for and attain high standards of self-discipline in all areas of their life, thereby allowing them to reach their full potential as students and athletes.

B. The Athletic Code, as adopted by the Pine River Board of Education, establishes uniform standards for all student-athletes and details the penalties for violations of these standards.

**Athletic Code standards have been established for the following:**

- 1. Substance abuse**
- 2. Attendance**
- 3. Academic performance**
- 4. Transportation**
- 5. General conduct and behavior**
- 6. Equipment**
- 7. Dropping a sport**
- 8. Student Participation**

### **Student-Athlete Defined**

A student-athlete is any member of an athletic team, including managers, statisticians, etc., who participate in a role affiliated with one of our Pine River athletic teams. When a student goes out for any interscholastic team for the first time and begins official practice, the student is regarded as a student-athlete and is subject to all rules and provisions thereof.

### **Rules Governing the Provisions of the Athletic Code**

A. The provisions of the athletic code are in effect for the calendar year. All student-athletes are regarded as student-athletes whether in season or not.

B. When serving a team suspension (in-season) a student-athlete may participate in all practice sessions and must be present, with the team, at all contests during the suspension. During a suspension, student-athletes will not be allowed to dress in uniform--in part or whole--at competitions/games/contests.

C. If a student-athlete is involved in a second offense while a previous penalty is still being served, the penalty for a second offense will begin immediately after the penalty for the first offense has been served.

D. If a penalty, involving student-athlete suspension, is not served during a given sport season, the remaining percentage of time not served will be carried over to the next sport season in which the athlete participates. A student-athlete must complete the sports season or seasons to have fulfilled the requirements of their suspension (ex: a student-athlete may not serve a 50% of season suspension then quit so that their next sport will be suspension-free; this is contrary to the spirit of

the student-athlete as a teammate and a person of integrity. Student-athletes who quit a team or fail to finish a season in good standing while serving or after having served an athletic code violation will be deemed to having NOT served any suspension and will NOT be allowed to participate in another sports season or as part of another Pine River team until the suspension is served in full).

E. These offenses accumulate throughout the athlete's Middle School career and then throughout their High School career.

### **ATHLETIC VIOLATIONS AND PENALTIES**

**ALL VIOLATIONS OF THE ATHLETIC ACTIVITY CODE OF CONDUCT WILL RESULT IN AN INTERNAL INVESTIGATION PERFORMED BY THE ATHLETIC DIRECTOR AND/OR THE BUILDING PRINCIPAL. ANY DISCIPLINARY ACTION ISSUED TO THE ATHLETE/PARTICIPANT WILL BE BASED SOLELY ON THE INTERNAL INVESTIGATION OR THE REPORT OF A RECOGNIZED, PROPER, LEGAL AUTHORITY.**

**AT THE CONCLUSION OF ANY INVESTIGATION, THE ATHLETIC DIRECTOR OR PRINCIPAL WILL NOTIFY THE STUDENT-ATHLETE AND PARENT-GUARDIAN OF ANY CONSEQUENCE. WHERE STUDENT-ATHLETES ARE SUSPENDED OUT-OF-SCHOOL, THE ATHLETIC CODE CONSEQUENCE(S) SHALL BEGIN UPON THE STUDENT-ATHLETE'S RETURN TO SCHOOL. THIS DOES NOT CHANGE OR IMPACT THE FACT THAT STUDENT-ATHLETES SUSPENDED FROM SCHOOL SHALL NOT PRACTICE OR COMPETE DURING ANY SUSPENSION PERIOD.**

**FOR THE PURPOSE OF PROGRESSION, ALL PENALTIES FOR THIS CODE OF CONDUCT SHALL BE CUMULATIVE BEGINNING WITH THE STUDENT'S FIRST DATE OF ELIGIBILITY TO PARTICIPATE IN MIDDLE SCHOOL ATHLETICS (GRADES 6-8) AND WILL START OVER, ANEW UPON THE STUDENT'S FIRST DATE OF ELIGIBILITY TO PARTICIPATE IN HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETICS (GRADES 9-12).**

Any offense listed herein documented at any time are subject to Athletic/Extra-Curricular Code discipline and consequences. The number of listed offenses is cumulative during the total middle or high school career.

1. Commission/involvement in an incident or any crime inside or outside of school that results in a misdemeanor or felony conviction, hazing, *or* an infraction of the Student Code of Conduct resulting in an out-of-school suspension of more than five (5) days as a result of an incident.
2. Use, possession, or distribution of Tobacco/e-cigarettes, vaping, alcohol or illegal drugs is prohibited. This includes steroids, unauthorized medicines or prescriptions, narcotics, and synthetic or look-alike drugs. Also included is the association with, aiding and abetting of any such activity listed above, including the promotion of or distribution of information on where and how to obtain it (failure to leave a place where these substances are knowingly being consumed or bought-sold).



3. Assisting others in committing an offense; including obtaining, using, or distributing any above-listed substance; including falsifying information, lying, or knowingly obstructing a legal or school investigation.

Progressive Discipline - Any athlete involved in a listed offense will be subject to the following disciplinary action. A coach may establish more stringent discipline if approved by the athletic director and Superintendent. Consequences begin upon notification from the principal's office or athletic director to the athlete/parent or guardian.

First Offense: Suspension from the next scheduled 50% of the contest dates, including scrimmages versus other teams (even though scrimmages will not count towards the 50% suspension) where the student-athlete, as a member of a team, participates.

**Note: If the offense results in a felony conviction, then upon notification to the district, regardless if any portion of a season has already been missed, the first offense will result in suspension from all extracurricular activities for one (1) calendar year; if the offense results in a misdemeanor conviction, then the first offense will result in suspension from all extracurricular activities for 100% of a season.**

Second Offense: Suspension from all extracurricular activities for 100% of a season. If the offense results in a second misdemeanor or felony conviction, then the second offense will result in suspension from all extracurricular activities for the rest of the high school career.

Third Offense: Suspension from all extracurricular activities for one (1) calendar year. If the offense results in a second misdemeanor or felony conviction, then the second offense will result in suspension from all extracurricular activities for the rest of the high school career.

Fourth Offense: The athlete may not represent Pine River High School in any extracurricular activities for the rest of the student-athlete's school career.

Notes: 1. If the consequence begins during the season, and an athlete/participant is unable to serve their entire suspension, the suspension will carry over to the athlete's/participants next season. If it is possible to compete again in that sport as part of the season-in-question or the next, participants may continue practicing with the team/activity during this period with the coach's and Athletic Director's permission, provided it does not prove a distraction to the team, but cannot dress, play, or participate, during the contests/events, including scrimmages versus other teams. If the suspension is for 100% of a season and the consequence begins during an existing season, the consequence will be pro-rated according to the remainder of the existing season and added to the following season in which the athlete next participates and finishes in good standing to equal 100%. If the consequence is applied between seasons, then the 100% will be met by the athlete practicing, serving as a team manager, and finishing the season in good standing as determined by the coach and the athletic director—under no

circumstance will the athlete be allowed to compete against other schools or represent Pine River in extracurricular activities until the suspension is fully served.

2. Student-athletes suspended for one (1) calendar year or more may not practice with any team other than as a manager and then only by a contract written by the coach and approved by the athletic director and superintendent.

3. It is understood that a disciplinary action imposed by the Board or the administration may interrupt an athletic suspension such that it will still need to be completed upon return from such disciplinary action.

### **Self Report**

In an effort to reinforce honesty and integrity, the District will consider an athlete's self-report of any offense, one time and one time only; should this be employed it is for the following:

- A time of reflection and a time for individual growth.
- Any consequence will be reduced by one-half.
- Self-report must be made by the athlete to his/her coach, the athletic director, or the building principal *prior to arrest or issuance of a citation by law enforcement or issuance of consequence by a school official.*

Athletic code contest suspensions shall **not** be considered served if the contest or contest date is moved or canceled due to weather and/or the joint agreement of both schools. In this case, the athletic director will notify the athlete and coach of the readjustment.

## **Procedures for Reporting Substance Abuse Violations and Rule Enforcement**

An alleged substance abuse violation of the athletic code can be reported through personal admission or from a reliable source.

The athletic department will accept reports pertaining to alleged violations of the athletic code from any police, court, or social work system throughout a student-athlete's middle school or high school years

*Reported infractions to school administration will be checked in the following manner:*

The athletic director/administration will meet with the accused telling them the allegations of the infraction. The athletic director may involve law enforcement, the building principal, other administrators, and parents/legal guardians. The student-athlete will be provided an opportunity to share his/her side of the story. The athletic director/administration will render a decision following the meeting.

Pine River Schools will honor the athletic code and consequences of other schools when a student transfers into the Pine River School District with an existing offense; furthermore, any offense at a previous school will be considered when adjudicating any new offense at Pine River.

Anonymous “tips” are generally not followed up on unless there is indisputable, physical, and tangible evidence supplied by the source to the athletic director/administration.

## Appeal Procedure

The parents or legal guardian may appeal the Athletic Director’s decision to the Superintendent within five (5) school days after receiving written notification from the Athletic Director. The Superintendent will schedule a hearing within five (5) school days where all parties can attend; and, after hearing the appeal in person, will render a decision in writing within five (5) school days. The decision of the superintendent is final where the consequence is 50% or less of a season.

Where the consequence involves more than 50% of the season, the parents or legal guardian may appeal the Superintendent’s decision to the Board of Education within five (5) school days after receiving written notification from the Superintendent.

The Board of Education shall review the appeal no later than twenty-five (25) school days from the date the appeal is received, in a closed session where the student-athlete and his or her parents/guardians are expected to attend. A final decision will be made by the Board of Education and expressed in writing within five (5) business days of the closed session hearing.

While an appeal of penalty is being sought, the student-athlete shall remain suspended from participation.

## **ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE**

All students must be eligible under MHSAA regulations. Additional guidelines for participation are as follows:

1. Every athlete must be enrolled in a full academic schedule.
2. Weekly Academic Eligibility – Weekly Academic Eligibility Grade checks will be made every Monday commencing with the 4<sup>th</sup> Monday of each semester at the middle and high school level. Any student-athlete with a failing grade or an “I” in any class at Pine River Middle/High School will face eligibility consequences as listed below in the Weekly Academic Eligibility Policy.  
**Weekly eligibility runs from Monday to Sunday and is cumulative for the semester.**

### **Weekly Academic Eligibility Policy for MS/HS Athletics**

The Athletic Department and Principal’s Office will be monitoring the weekly academic progress of our high school and middle school student-athletes. The following description is intended to outline and communicate the procedures that will be used for monitoring academic progress and expectations for students if they fail to maintain satisfactory academic progress in the classroom. Student-athletes with two or more “F”s and/or “I”s will be ineligible to compete until at least the next grade check.

Weekly grade checks will occur at 10 a.m. each Monday (commencing the 4<sup>th</sup> Monday of each semester) for the purpose of determining eligibility. Notification of teacher errors must be made to the Athletic Director by 3:00 pm on the same day eligibility is pulled. Notification must come from the teacher verbally or in writing. Grades will represent the student's **cumulative** grade in each class for the semester.

Unsatisfactory Grade Procedures:

**Any student-athlete that receives one "F" grade or "I"** during the weekly check will be required to perform one hour of academic recovery, time and location to be determined by the team's coach as approved by the athletic director (coaches will ensure this recovery time will be supervised by a member of the coaching staff, teaching staff, Help Desk staff, or administrator—in the subject area where available).

Coaches will count an athlete's attendance at Help-Desk as an excused absence from practice, however, there may be an impact on playing time.

**Any student-athlete who receives two or more "F" or "I" grades** during the weekly grade check will be declared academically ineligible and therefore unable to participate in any contests (including scrimmages versus opposing schools) for that week and will be required to attend the next two (2) available Help Desk sessions. Student-athletes will not participate in practice on days that they are required to attend Help Desk regardless of practice times not conflicting with Help Desk. Coaches will count an athlete's attendance at Help-Desk as an excused absence from practice.

**Failure to attend assigned academic recovery or help desk** will result in a one-week extension of academic ineligibility; failure to attend a second week will initiate a meeting with the A.D., coach, and athlete to consider removal from the team.

In cases where a student-athlete is not in school or otherwise unable to attend Help Desk, the athletic director will consider options with the coach and athlete.

Help Desk teachers will provide each student-athlete in attendance with further, more specific, Help Desk procedures and expectations.

When so assigned, student-athletes attending academic recovery or help desk are to leave their phones in their locker, bring materials from the class where the deficiency exists, and stay focused on academic study for the duration—failure to do so will result in failure of academic recovery or Help Desk and the attendance therefore will not count and it will be reassigned; the student-athlete will also forfeit the privilege to participate in any competition that day or night—or if there is no competition that day or night, then the next date of opportunity to compete will be forfeit.

Middle School/High School students who are declared academically ineligible for the week may not be allowed to participate in upcoming interscholastic contests, including scrimmages versus opposing schools. Practice participation will be determined by the building principal/athletic director in conjunction with the head coach and coach of that sport.

**The third time** that a student is declared academically ineligible for the week in any one sport season; the A.D., Principal, and Coach will meet to determine if it's in the best interest of everyone involved for that student-athlete to continue as a member of the team. The student-athlete and parent will be given the chance to speak/be heard by this committee in rendering a decision.

### **Overall Academic Eligibility--Semester Grades**

· If at the end of a semester, a student-athlete has received a grade of "F" in **ONE (1)** of his/her semester classes, the athlete will remain eligible for the start of next semester.

If at the end of a semester, a student-athlete has received **TWO (2)** grades of "F" in his/her semester classes, the athlete will be ineligible to participate in athletic competition (games or scrimmages versus opposing schools) for 25% of their current or upcoming sport season during the next semester.

· If at the end of a semester, a student-athlete has received **THREE (3)** grades or more of "F" in his/her semester classes, the athlete will be ineligible to participate in athletic competition for the upcoming semester.

*\*Eligibility appeals are to follow those guidelines as set forth in the High School/Middle School Student Handbooks.*

*\*Additional policies pertaining to eligibility requirements for High School/Middle School student-athletes are outlined in the High School/Middle School Student Handbooks.*

Students involved in dual enrollment, CTC/Co-Op, and enhanced high school are also held accountable to regulations concerning overall academic eligibility listed above.

Students who drop a dual enrollment course without replacing it on their semester schedule are ineligible for the entire upcoming semester.

\*If a student fails a 2-hour block class at Pine River High School, this will be equivalent to 2 failing grades and he/she will sit out 25% of the current or upcoming season. If a student fails CTC/Co-op, this will be equivalent to 4 failing grades and he/she will be ineligible for the entire upcoming semester.

\*No opportunity to make up an "F" in credit recovery will be offered to reduce the penalty.

## **Student Participation (Specific Sports Requirements or Limitations)**

1. Seniors may not participate on sub-varsity teams.
2. Juniors may participate on a reserve team by invitation only - to be determined by the Athletic Director, head coach of sport, and coach of the team involved.
3. A student is considered to be in a sport from the first official practice for that sport until the awards program for the same sport.
4. All Pine River High School students in grades 9-12 are eligible to participate in varsity-level athletics if they are selected for the team.
5. Freshmen and sophomores must receive permission from their parent(s) or legal guardian prior to being eligible to participate in a sport at the varsity level.
6. The final selection of eligible participants for varsity level competition will be made at the discretion of the head coach.
7. The head coach of every team, at every level, will establish team rules governing the participation of team members in “outside” sports activities during the regular 7-12 school sports season. (Requires compliance with the MHSAA rules and approval of the Athletic Director). Student-athletes must be conscious of their participation on both non-school teams and with other school-sponsored activities while serving as a member of a current sports team at PRAS.
8. Student-athletes may not participate in more than one sport per season unless the athlete is a junior or senior and it has been so approved by the athletic director and acknowledged by the head coaches of both sports. Starting in the Winter sports season of 2022-2023, student-athletes wishing to participate in dual sports will need to obtain a request form from the athletic director and follow the guidelines established by the athletic department involving dual sport participation prior to the first MHSAA-approved practice date for either team during the season for which participation in dual sports is applied. [All rules, procedures and processes are subject to change, but reside with the athletic director. Student-athletes who are interested in dual sports should see the athletic director for more information.]
9. Junior Varsity team members who are suspended from athletics during the current sport season for a violation(s) of the athletic code will forfeit their opportunity to “move up” to the varsity team at any time during that season.
10. Student-athletes who are suspended from athletics during a sports season for a violation of the athletic code may forfeit their opportunity to receive postseason awards and recognition.
11. Student-Athletes are required to report to the first day of practice. Exceptions may be made for such reasons as family emergencies, illness, transfers, pre-arranged/pre-approved family obligations, and failure to make another sports team. This shall be acted upon by the head coach

of the sport, the athletic director, and where applicable, the coach of any other team involved. Athletes who miss team practice sessions will be required to make up missed practice days prior to being eligible for interscholastic competition (an exception may be made for students transferring between sports during the same sport season).

12. Coaches may conduct a “tryout” period in order to determine team selection. Coaches are under no obligation to place students on an athletic team who have not been in attendance during the “tryout” period. Exceptions may be made for such reasons as family emergencies, illness, transfers, and pre-arranged/pre-approved family obligations. This shall be acted upon by the head coach of the sport, the athletic director, and the coach of the team involved.
13. No student may practice with an athletic team unless they are on the team’s master eligibility list. Exceptions will be made for students who will become eligible to be placed on the team’s master eligibility list prior to the end of the sport’s season. Thus, 6th-grade students may not practice with or on 7<sup>th</sup>/8th-grade teams (with the exception of specified sports) and 7<sup>th</sup>/8th-grade students may not practice with or on PRAS high school-sponsored teams.
14. Student-athletes, after beginning practice and/or participation with a team, may not transfer to another sport’s team within that same sport season without permission and not after the second week of practice. A decision will be made by the athletic director/building principal with input from both coaches involved if a transfer will be allowed within the first two weeks of practice. Students who transfer sports would be required to make up missed practice days within the sport they wish to join prior to being eligible for interscholastic competition.
15. Students who have outstanding charges or have not returned uniforms from previous sport’s seasons will not be allowed to participate in any current season competitions.

#### **Attendance Regulations for Student-Athletes**

1. *An athlete must be present in school for the entire day on the day of an interscholastic competition or practice session.* This rule will be implemented upon discovery and can be enforced on a subsequent day to coincide with attendance reports. Requests for exceptions to the attendance policy are to be made by the parent or legal guardian prior to the student’s absence. Exceptions may be granted by the building principal or athletic director without prior approval for participation in school-related functions, medical appointments, unexpected/emergency situations (flat tire, traffic accident, etc).
2. An athlete who is suspended from regular classroom attendance (this applies to both in-house and out-of-school suspensions) may not practice or take part in an interscholastic competition that evening and/or throughout the duration of said suspension - nor may they attend any athletic function or event during the time of their suspension.
3. An athlete, after signing out of school due to illness, may not return after school for a practice session or game. Upon discovery, student-athletes who practice or compete anyway will be denied participation in the next competition for his/her sport.

4. Absences from a contest and/or practice sessions are excused only for illness, death in the family, and other emergencies at the discretion of the Coach and/or Athletic Director. Additional attendance policies may be established by the individual coach or sports team and included within their team rules. Mandatory practice sessions may be conducted on scheduled school days. Non-mandatory practice sessions may be conducted on non-school days – Students choosing not to attend practice sessions on non-school days, must understand the loss of learning along with the loss of skill development and personal growth that could potentially occur as a result of their absence from practice.
5. There will be occasions when the student-athlete will have a conflict of responsibilities. We will not excuse athletes from practice for routine conflicts which, with prior planning, can be scheduled around practice sessions and contests. (See 4, Attendance Regulations,).
6. Academics are most important, however, each athlete must make every attempt to arrange their academic obligations so that they do not conflict with scheduled practices and contests.
7. At no time are Pine River Area School athletic coaches expected to excuse a student-athlete from their responsibilities as a team member so they (the student-athlete) may participate in non-MHSAA sponsored athletic activities, employment obligations, social functions, or the like.

#### **Equipment Regulations for Student-Athletes**

1. Every athlete is responsible to maintain properly all athletic clothing and equipment assigned to them. If clothing and/or equipment are not returned to the coach at the end of the season or returned damaged, the athlete will be charged replacement costs on all items not returned. An athlete with fines outstanding from a previous sports season will not be allowed to begin the next sport season. Charges will be carried over and collected prior to clearance for graduation.
2. All participants are expected to furnish their own practice gear (attire proper for physical activity such as t-shirts, shorts, socks, etc.).
3. The Athletic Department will not be held responsible for personal equipment lost or damaged due to student negligence.
4. No school athletic department equipment is to be used for daily wear, physical education classes, or activities other than the sport for which they were issued.

#### **Locker Room Rules and Requirements:**

1. All money and valuables are to be locked in lockers issued to the athlete. Lockers and locks are issued by physical education staff members or coaches. Student-athletes who need help obtaining a locker assignment or lock should see their coach.
2. Each player is to keep his/her own equipment in his/her own assigned locker, and no equipment exchanges will be tolerated unless sanctioned by the coach in charge.



3. No athletic equipment, player clothing, school books, or other personal property is to be left on the floor or in unlocked lockers in the locker room before, during, or after practices and/or games.
4. "Horseplay," "hazing," "rough-housing," or "intimidation of others" in the locker room or anywhere on district property is not permitted—ever.
5. *Student-athletes are not to be in the locker room during practice sessions unless given permission by a coach or adult school employee.*

### **Transportation Regulations**

1. Transportation to away contests will be by school bus, school van, or school car. Exceptions will be granted only by the athletic director/building principal or designee and will follow the Board of Education transportation policies. Transportation to away contests will vary from round trip bus service to drop-off bus service (and in the case of some special events, transportation will not be provided. The level of school-provided bus transportation will vary among programs and be dependent on multiple factors regarding the day of competition. District transportation/driver availability will determine the level of school-provided transportation for all away interscholastic athletic contests.
2. All athletes will leave and return with the team (when round trip bus service is provided). There are three possible exceptions:
  - A parent or legal guardian, after providing written documentation to the coach, may take their son or daughter home following the completion of a contest with acknowledgement. It is expected that the student-athlete will return home with the parent or legal guardian who signed them out and not with any other individual.
  - The principal or athletic director's direction.
  - A parent or legal guardian, after providing written documentation to the athletic director, may request, in writing, that their child ride home with another athlete's parent/adult. Student-athletes will not be given permission to ride home with other high school student drivers or friends as drivers, etc.

*Student-Athletes will be penalized for failing to follow transportation regulations. Depending on the nature of the offense, the penalty can range from game/practice suspensions to total dismissal from athletics.*

3. All athletes, when being transported to away contests, will follow bus regulations as set forth in the Board of Education transportation policies. Exceptions will be granted in the following areas, as approved by the coach:
  - Music - may be played with headphones secured to both ears (music containing profanity, etc. is not permitted at any time).
  - Food/beverages - may be consumed respectfully in transit (proper disposal of containers wrappers, garbage, etc. is expected).

- Electronic games - will be allowed provided they can be played in a "silent mode."
- Other - needs the approval of the athletic director/coach

- A. Listed exceptions to be monitored by coach(es) and/or responsible adult(s).
- B. Listed exceptions are a privilege and can be taken away if standards are not met.
- C. Students/athletes accept responsibility for personal items.

**Athletic Injuries and Insurance:**

Pine River Area Schools do not assume financial responsibility for medical, hospital, or ambulance expenses incurred because of athletic injuries. Parents/guardians are encouraged to have their own insurance coverage for student-athletes.

**General Athletic Department Information:**

*We offer the following interscholastic sports programs to all students, grades 9 -12*

**GIRLS SPORTS**

Basketball.....Winter  
 CO-ED Soccer.....Fall  
 Cross Country.....Fall  
 Cheerleading..... Winter  
 Volleyball.....Fall  
 Track.....Spring  
 Softball.....Spring  
 Sideline Cheer .....Fall

**BOYS SPORTS**

Football.....Fall  
 Soccer.....Fall  
 Cross Country.....Fall  
 Basketball.....Winter  
 Wrestling.....Winter  
 Track.....Spring  
 Baseball.....Spring

*We offer the following interscholastic sports programs to all students, grades 7 – 8*  
*\*designates those available to 6th grade*

**GIRLS SPORTS**

Basketball.....Winter  
 \*Cross Country.....Fall  
 Volleyball.....Fall  
 \*CO-ED Wrestling..... Winter  
 Track.....Spring

**BOYS SPORTS**

Football (Club).....Fall  
 \*Cross Country.....Fall  
 Basketball.....Winter  
 \*Wrestling..... Winter  
 Track.....Spring

**As an athlete, you are not permitted to participate in interscholastic competition until the following items have been completed and are on file with the Athletic Director:**

1. **PHYSICAL EXAMINATION** - must be completed prior to your 1<sup>st</sup> day of practice. The physical form must be signed by both the physician and parents or guardians. Parents must also sign the Parents' Consent section on the physical exam form. MHSAA physical exam forms will be available in the Main Office during the entire summer and school year. You may receive your

physical any time after April 15th, for the upcoming school year. Record of this examination must be on file in the athletic office. Students are encouraged to keep a copy of the physical examination for their records.

2. **INSURANCE** - Athletes are encouraged to have medical insurance coverage. Pine River Area Schools does not provide medical insurance coverage for student-athletes. Pine River Area Schools does not assume financial responsibility for medical, hospital, or ambulance expenses incurred by student-athletes.
3. **ATHLETIC CODE AGREEMENT** - An athlete must have on file in the athletic director's office an athletic code agreement signed by both the student and their parents or legal guardian. Due prior to participation in the 1<sup>st</sup> contest!

**MHSAA Eligibility Requirements:**

1. **AGE** -  
You are not eligible for interscholastic competition if you turn 19 years of age prior to September 1 of the current school year. Age limitations are also in place for 7-8 grade student-athletes.
2. **SEASONS OF COMPETITION** -  
You must not have competed for more than 4 consecutive first and 4 consecutive second semester seasons.
3. **SEMESTER OF ENROLLMENT** -  
You must not have been enrolled in grade 9-12, inclusive for more than 8 semesters. The 7th and 8th semesters must be consecutive. Enrollment in a school for a period of 3 weeks or more counts as a semester. Participation in 1 or more interscholastic athletic contests also constitutes a semester of enrollment.
4. **AMATEUR STATUS** -  
You must not accept awards for athletic participation in the form of cash, merchandise certificates, or any other type of negotiable documents or items of merchandise. You may not be paid for your sports participation.
5. **Limited Team Membership** –  
You may not participate in any athletic competition not sponsored by your school which would be considered the same sport during the same season (i.e.: you cannot play in competition on an outside basketball team during the school basketball season).

### **Awards for Athletic Participation**

1. You may not accept any award exceeding \$40.00 in value. The award can be a trophy or merchandise. It may not be cash or a gift certificate of any kind.
2. Special awards may be given to student-athletes at the high school awards assembly each spring.
3. A senior awards plaque will be given to any senior athlete who has earned six varsity letters or more during high school.
4. The athletic department will recognize one senior male and one senior female student as “Athlete of the Year.” This award shall be awarded based on citizenship, leadership, multi-sport participation, and athletic achievement.
5. The award banquet is part of the sports season and attendance is encouraged.

### **Award Schedule for Pine River Student-Athletes:**

#### VARSIITY

1st award - certificate, 7-inch chenille PR, sports inserts  
2nd, 3rd, 4th award, same sport - certificate and service bar.

**Varsity award is presented to any student-athlete that competes/scores at the varsity level for 50% of the contests for that sport season.**

#### JUNIOR VARSITY

1st award - certificate  
2nd and 3rd award, same sport - certificate

MIDDLE SCHOOL - All awards = certificates

**A student-athlete who is suspended, for any length of time, during the sports season may forfeit their opportunity to receive awards.**

**Coaches may award specialty awards at the varsity level but are discouraged from giving specialty awards at the sub-varsity level**

#### **Gifts to Coaches:**

Students and their parents and/or outside organizations are discouraged from presenting gifts to district employees. When an athlete/team feels a desire to present a gift to a staff member, the gift shall be of small monetary value. No employee may solicit or accept any gift, gratuity or favor that has substantial economic value, or that could be interpreted by others as being of such a nature that it could affect his/her impartiality. Letters of appreciation to staff members shall be considered more appropriate than material/monetary gifts.