

Vista PEAK Preparatory High School

**HANDBOOK  
FOR  
PARENTS OF ATHLETES**



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## Handbook for Parents of Athletes

Being a parent is often challenging. This effort and responsibility is frequently complicated by being a parent of an athlete. This handbook, with its guidelines and suggestions, will give you some insights into this responsibility.

There are many relationships which are involved in being the parent of an athlete.

### The Player-Coach Relationship:

Unfortunately, through televised games and the more recent proliferation of cable TV, many adults feel that they understand or perhaps know more than many coaches. Everyone becomes an expert. While this newfound expertise may heighten your appreciation of a sport, as a parent, however, you are not the coach.

The player-coach relationship is perhaps the most critical relationship in athletics. Unfortunately, a parent can have a pronounced effect on this very important and delicate relationship. While you may not agree with all decisions of a coach, how and when you express your feelings can have a decided effect upon your child.

If you express a negative opinion in the presence of your child, you need to remember that he or she will return to practice the next day and may carry with him or her your convictions. Your son or daughter will then have to interact with this coach. You, as the parent, can greatly affect this delicate relationship.

Receiving technical or strategic instruction at home may interfere and conflict with the instructional process at practice sessions and games. This may ultimately impede your son or daughter's progress and affect his or her playing time or even winning a starting position.

### The Parent-Coach Relationship:

In your role as a parent, you obviously love and are concerned about your child's welfare. You want the best for him or her. But an athlete can have only one coach. Allowing the coach to instruct and guide the team is crucial in many respects.

Should you have any questions or concerns, do not approach the coach immediately at the conclusion of a contest. At this time, coaches have other responsibilities and it may be an emotional time. Call and make an appointment for a later time and approach this meeting in a calm, courteous and logical manner.

One of the responsibilities which a coach has at the conclusion of a contest is to have a brief meeting with his or her players. Athletes should not pause to talk to parents or friends immediately after games. These brief meetings are essential to the learning process involved in athletics.

#### The Parent-Player:

Some parents may try to live through their child's athletic efforts. Being positive and supportive is important, but adding pressure and unrealistic expectations can be extremely harmful. Allow your son or daughter to enjoy and grow from this valuable experience. In numerous national studies, it has been determined that most athletes participate for enjoyment or fun. Excessive pressure or expectations can alter this most fundamental reason for playing.

When you do speak with your child after a contest, don't dwell on his or her play, how many points they scored or if they started. Instead, first ask how the team did? Did you son or daughter play hard, give 100% and have a good experience?

#### Relationships with Officials:

There is an age-old refrain often used by irate fans. "How much are you paying the officials?" The home school does not get the officials. The commissioner of the particular sport assigns all officials and neither team has control of which officials are assigned.

Officials agree to and follow a code of ethics. They really do not care or have a vested interest in which team emerges as the victor. It is also important to understand that they are a very necessary part of a game. A contest cannot be played without them.

So while you may not agree with all of their calls (who does?), please do not harass and taunt them. It is also important to remember that they are in charge of the contest and have complete authority to have unruly spectators removed. In many sports, a team will see the same official several times during a season. Coaches, athletic administrators and schools often work hard to establish a rapport and good working relationship which can easily be damaged by spectators.

#### Spectator-Cheerleader:

Cheerleaders try to infuse spirit into the fans/spectators and to lead them in selected cheers. Taking this responsibility into your own hands is not appropriate. Fans who leave the stands to direct cheers may often cause or lead to

confrontations with the opponents. Following the cheerleaders' directions, therefore, is absolutely necessary at all athletic contests.

The emotion and atmosphere at athletic contests can be very exciting and the cheerleaders need to be allowed to direct and control this aspect of the event.

#### Mission Statement for Athletics

The Aurora Public School District supports the philosophy that a quality interscholastic athletic program is vital to the positive social, physical, and educational development of students. The interscholastic athletic program enhances and supports the academic mission of the school system. We are committed to promoting the proper ideals of sportsmanship, ethical conduct, and fair play at all athletic contests. We support high standards of good citizenship and propriety, along with regard for the rights of others.

Being a member of the interscholastic program is a privilege to be earned and maintained throughout the season. Each time participants step into a school or onto the practice field and anytime they participate in a game they are expected to represent themselves, and their family, team and school in a responsible, sportsmanlike manner.

It is our responsibility to provide challenging opportunities for our student-athletes to compete successfully at the county, regional, and state levels.

#### At Vista PEAK High School:

In addition to embracing and committing to the APS District Philosophy, at Vista PEAK, we will also encourage and promote:

- The belief that athletes should participate in multiple sports and not specialize in any one specific sport.
- The concept of the broadest-based participation possible by offering all of the teams which we can, and extending the opportunity to participate to as many students as possible.
- The premise that all teams are considered vital for our student-athletes and each is a valued part of our athletic program. No one sport is considered more important than any other.
- The approach that all teams are treated as fairly as possible.

#### Athletic Chain of Command

At Vista PEAK, the following chain of command is in effect:

Principal  
Athletic Director  
Head Coach  
Assistant / JV Coach  
Players

If there are any questions or concerns involving some aspect of our athletic program, the athlete should first contact the appropriate coach. If there is no resolution, he or she would then go to the head coach, etc. The athletics director will facilitate any meeting that is needed, but only after the appropriate chain of command has been adhered to.

### Expressing Concerns

When expressing an occasional concern with a coach, please refer to and use the following guidelines:

- Never approach a coach immediately after a contest. This is not the proper time or place for a discussion concerning your child or the team.
- Call the following day and make an appointment which is convenient for both you and the coach to meet.
- Raise your concern in a calm and civil manner. Yelling, being rude or using foul language is totally unacceptable.
- Once you have stated your question or concern, listen to the explanation. Often a parent may be blinded by emotion and this overrides logic and reason. Listening receptively may really help you to understand any explanation which is given.

### Sportsmanship

Since athletics should be educational in nature, it is important that all parents demonstrate good sportsmanship and serve as role models for our athletes and students. Sportsmanship is an overt display of respect for the rules of sport and for all others – players, coaches, officials and fans. It also involves a commitment to fair play, ethical behavior, and integrity. This means:

- There can be no vulgar or inappropriate language from our fans or spectators.
- Taunting or trash talking of our opponents and their cheerleaders cannot and will not be tolerated.
- Spectators cannot leave the bleachers or enter onto the court or field during a contest.
- Fans should be supportive and positive. Cheering should be done for our team and not against our opponent.
- We should not impede or interfere with our opponent's cheerleaders from leading their cheers.
- In some specific sports such as basketball and volleyball, we should not yell while an opponent takes a foul shot or as a player attempts to serve.

### Sportsmanship for the Athlete (The VP Ejection Policy)

- We will adhere to all CHSAA ejection rules for contests and will allow coaches to make judgments on egregious violations of conduct policies.
- An athlete who is ejected from a game for unsportsmanlike conduct or fighting will not be allowed to participate in the next game.
- A substitute who leaves the team box and enters the playing area during a fight will be ejected.
- The **SECOND** time an athlete is disqualified in the same sport or any other sport during the school year, the penalty shall be doubled.
- The **THIRD** time an athlete is disqualified in the same sport or any other sport during the school year shall result in immediate dismissal from the team for the remainder of the season. The offending athlete shall be prohibited from any further participation in the interscholastic program for the remainder of the school year. Interscholastic participation by such individuals in subsequent school years may be jeopardized and will be judged on a case-by-case basis.
- An ejection or disqualification prevents a player from attending the next regularly scheduled contest. This includes riding the bus, being in the locker room, on the sidelines, the bench, the stands, or anywhere on the contest site.
- Any player who physical assaults an official, coach, player or spectator shall be immediately dismissed from the team for the remainder of the season.
- Once a player has been disqualified, appeals from a coach, player, official, or other party will not be honored.

### Responsibilities of an Athlete

Most coaches would expect an athlete to adhere to the following guidelines:

- The team's goals, welfare and success must come before any individual.
- An athlete needs to consistently attend practice sessions. This also includes weekend and holiday periods.
- Players must be receptive to coaching.
- Team members are responsible for all issued uniforms and equipment.
- As a member of a team, an athlete must agree to and follow the team rules. Athletes need to remember that they are ambassadors and represent not only themselves, but also the coaching staff and the school.
- If injured, an athlete must report all injuries to a member of the coaching staff. It is vital that treatment is received and the proper rehabilitation program is followed in all treatment of injuries. If a coach is not made aware of an injury or medical condition that can severely injure or harm an athlete, the ability for the coach to help protect that student/athlete is greatly impacted.

### Responsibilities of a Coach

At Vista PEAK, a coach has the responsibility for the following:

- The selection of the squad.

- The determination of the style of play, including the offensive and defensive philosophy.
- The teaching and instruction at practice sessions.
- The determination of who starts and how long an athlete plays in a contest.
- The decision of who plays in what position.
- The establishing of team rules.
- The selection of team captains.
- The establishing of the requirements to earn a letter.
- The communication with athletes and parents with respect to when practice sessions will be held, and when the sessions will start and finish.

### Eligibility Requirements for Athletes

- Any student receiving a failing or incomplete grade in any two or more subjects for the preceding semester is ineligible.
- Any ineligible athlete can become eligible to play no earlier than the third school day following the distribution of report cards. However, this student can become eligible to practice 14 calendar days before the end of the semester in which the ineligibility occurs.

### Participation on an Athletic Team

It is important to understand that participation on an athletic team at Vista PEAK is a privilege and not a right. Being on and maintaining one's membership on the team means accepting all the responsibilities of an athlete. However, unlike recreation or intramural teams, equal or guaranteed playing time does not exist. In an effort to win, a coach will use players best suited to the conditions or demands of the contest at that time.

### Selecting (Cutting) the Team

While our ultimate goal is to promote the greatest athletic participation possible at Telluride High School, it may be necessary in some sports or activities to cut members of a squad. This may occur due to limitations of our facilities, regulations specific to some sports, travel restrictions, and other factors.

Every coach has the responsibility and authority for selecting his or her team. The criteria for selecting the team are developed by the coach. A copy of the written criteria is then distributed to our athletes prior to the tryouts and to our parents at our pre-season meetings.

It is also important to remember that there are no guarantees. Players from the previous year's JV team for example, do not automatically make either the JV or varsity squad the following year. Having been a member of a team during the

previous year or even being a senior does not ensure that an athlete will make the squad.

Parents should expect that every candidate is treated fairly and given every consideration. Coaches are sensitive to feelings of disappointment, will handle the task as positively as possible, and will be available to answer athletes' questions.

While we understand that being cut is disappointing for many athletes and even for their parents, we unfortunately cannot keep everyone. Anyone cut from a team is welcome to try out again next season or to try another sport. When parents and athletes understand and support the coach's decision, this difficult process becomes a less painful experience for all.

We have some activities that may have limitations in place where cutting members of a squad may be needed. We will do our best to include every student-athlete that wants to participate in our athletic programs in their particular sport.

### The Purpose of a JV Team

JV Teams exist to provide those athletes who are unable to participate on the varsity squad an opportunity to develop skills and gain experience. While the athlete's age, size, or skill level may be the limiting factor in not making the varsity team, participation on a JV team may enhance the athlete's potential to make the varsity squad in the future.

A caution, however, must also be given. Being a member of a JV team does not guarantee that an athlete will automatically move up the following year to the varsity squad. The athletes best suited for varsity competition will make the squad each year.

Striving to win is important in athletics. However, compiling a great record or winning a championship should not be the primary objective of a JV team. The development of athletes should be the ultimate purpose of a JV squad, while at the same time acknowledging the value of winning, learning, and enjoying being a member of a team.

### Practice Sessions and Games

Practice sessions are normally closed to spectators and there is a very sound reason for this. These sessions are the equivalent of a teacher's classroom and there is real, quality instruction taking place. Interruptions and interference to an athlete's concentration and focus in practice cannot be allowed any more than a disruption would be tolerated in an academic setting. Education in any setting cannot be compromised.

At Vista PEAK, practice sessions:

- May last two hours or more.
- May start and end at different times due to the schedule of the coach or of our facilities. Check with the coach for the specific times.
- Will not be held when school is dismissed early due to inclement weather.
- Will not be held when school is not in session due to inclement weather.
- May be held on Saturdays and over holiday periods.

Spectators at games, however, are very much encouraged. Positive and nurturing support of teams and athletes can be very helpful to performance in athletic contests.

### Team Captains

There may be several good reasons for having captains of a team. These athletes may serve as positive role models, links between the team and the coach, and they certainly should be leaders. A good captain can be a real asset to the team and coaching staff.

While some coaches may allow their team to select captains, the ultimate responsibility lies with the coach. It is also important to understand that serving in the capacity of a captain is not reserved solely for seniors on a team, but rather this position is for the athlete who is best suited to filling the responsibilities.

### Hazing

In athletic settings, some may view hazing as a harmless rite of initiation or an important activity for team bonding. However, it is actually a form of Harassment and represents a VP Disciplinary Code offense. A More complete explanation of harassment can be found in the VP Student Handbook.

Hazing, therefore, cannot and will not be condoned or permitted in the athletic program at Telluride High School. This means on the field or courts, in the locker rooms, on the bus, or at any other activity in which athletes represent Vista PEAK.

### Abusive Substance Avoidance Pledge

The following is the pledge that our student-athletes are expected to honor and follow at Vista PEAK:

In all aspects of a student's life, Vista PEAK's primary concern is for the student's health and safety. It is expected that an athlete will refrain from smoking or using chewing tobacco products, using illegal drugs, drinking alcoholic beverages, or abusing prescription and non-prescription drugs and/or

performance-enhancing substances. These substances would include over-the-counter diet pills, caffeine pills, Creatine, steroids, inhalants and human growth hormones.

As an athlete at Telluride High School, I pledge to abide by these expectations. Furthermore, I understand that my failure to follow these guidelines can result in possibly being suspended or removed from the team.

### Risks of Athletic Participation

In spite of protective equipment, and the supervision and sound instruction by our coaches, there are some risks associated when someone participates in athletics. Injuries in some of our activities can and do occur. In extremely rare cases, serious, life altering injuries and death could also result. All athletes and parents need to be aware and understand this possibility. At Vista PEAK, we will do all that we can to ensure a safe and healthy environment for our athletes. It is equally important that all participants (parents and athletes) understand that there is no way that we can avoid all injuries that can occur throughout a sports season.

### Team Travel

Teams will be transported to away contests by either APS buses, small vehicles or approved, private, bonded carriers. Athletes are expected to travel to and from these contests with their team on these forms of transportation unless otherwise communicated by the head coach.

If there is a special reason to travel with parents (rare occurrences only) an athlete must present a signed note to their coach and the athletics director detailing this situation one full day previous to the travel situation.

Before an athlete leaves an away contest with parents, the parent should make contact with the coach to indicate that they are leaving and sign the district approved sign-out waiver. A waiver must be signed each time a student rides home with their parent. For safety and legal reasons, athletes may only leave with their parents and not with other relatives or friends. If, in the rare case, a student-athlete needs to ride home with another family, a prearranged form must be filled out one day prior to departure on the trip that is verified with the Athletics Director and Principal.

## Fund Raising

Whether to supplement the budget or to purchase additional discretionary items, fund raising in athletics has become increasingly important and in many cases necessary. At Sheridan High School, fund raising by all organizations, including athletics, is organized and structured by the administration.

At the beginning of each school year, the administration holds a meeting for all coaches and sponsors who are interested in conducting a fundraiser for their team or club. During this meeting, each sport's or club's fundraiser is assigned and listed on the school calendar to ensure that all are treated fairly. Only these approved fund raising efforts are permitted to take place within the school.

## Web Page

Vista PEAK Prep has it's own web page at <https://vistapeakprep.aurorak12.org/> and the Athletics has its own page on the school site. Please visit our site and get the information that you will need in regards to schedules, game times, rosters and directions to game sites, etc...

On the following pages, you will find a copy of Vista PEAK's Athletic Policies for: Pre- and Post-Practice and Game Responsibilities and sportsmanship expectations.

Please feel free to call (or e-mail) with your comments concerning this handbook. Hopefully, you have found it useful. You might also want to take a few minutes and share this information with your son or daughter. Have a great season!

Sheridan High School

Sportsmanship Expectations

## Acceptable Behavior

- Applaud during the introduction of players, coaches and officials
- Recognize a player's performance who has fouled out with applause from both sets of fans and with a hand shake from opponents
- Accept all decisions of officials
- Follow the lead of cheerleaders in positive school cheers in a respectful manner
- Shake hands at the end of the contest between participants and coaches regardless of the outcome
- Treat the competition as a game and not a war
- Search out and congratulate opposing coaches and players
- Applaud the performance of all participants at the end of a contest
- Show concern for an injured player regardless of which team he or she plays for
- Encourage only sportsmanlike conduct which includes class, dignity and respect

## Unacceptable Behavior

- Yelling or waving arms during opponent's free-throw attempt
- Performing disrespectful or derogatory yells, chants, songs, or gestures
- Booming or heckling an official's decision
- Criticizing officials in any way; displays of temper with an official's call
- Yelling anything that might antagonize the opponents
- Refusing to shake hands or give recognition for good performances
- Blaming loss of game on official, coaches or participants
- Taunting or name-calling to distract an opponent
- Using profanity or displays of anger that draws attention away from the game
- Performing your own cheers instead of following the lead of the cheerleaders

## Athletic Department

# Pre- and Post-Practice and Game Responsibilities

Student-athletes waiting in the lobby pose potential problems at Vista PEAK. Risk of injury, property damage and disruption of meetings can possibly result from unsupervised gatherings and activities. In part to address this issue, the following guidelines will be used.

The **coach** will be responsible to:

- Report the game results to maxpreps
- Supervise the locker room while the athletes change
- Secure all equipment, locker rooms and gymnasiums
- Supervise the lobby area and hallways until the last athlete's transportation has arrived and he/she leaves Telluride High School

**Athletes** are responsible to:

- Wait in the locker room or gym hallway after school while waiting for practice sessions to begin
- Arrange in advance for the necessary transportation after all practice sessions and games
- Leave the building and grounds within a half hour after the conclusion of a contest or practice session

Vista PEAK Prep

Athletic Department

While under the supervision of the coaching staff at Vista PEAK, and while engaging in any activity connected with a team, an athlete must at all times place the best interests of his/her team and his/her school above his/her own person interests. This includes all practice sessions, contests, traveling to and from such events and in any other situation where the purpose of the activity is related to team membership.

In cases where the conduct of an athlete becomes inappropriate for a representative of our school's interscholastic program, he/she may be subject to expulsion from the team. Such measures will be taken only after consideration of the circumstances by the coach.

The following is a list of violations which our coaching staff considers to be unacceptable behavior and which would, in all probability, result in the forfeiture of team membership. This list should not be considered complete, since there could be other infractions occurring of the same severity.

- Use of drugs
- Use of tobacco products
- Use of alcohol
- Stealing
- Flagrant misconduct
- Insubordination
- Failure to meet responsibilities to the team: family vacations (other than during the times designated by the school calendar), routine dental check ups, hair appointments, baby-sitting, etc. are examples of unacceptable substitutes for team practice sessions and games
- Poor sportsmanship

We believe that one of our foremost educational objectives in working with young people in a sports setting is to foster the development of responsible and ethical behavior. For this reason, we would like each athlete and parent of the athlete to become familiar with this aspect of our coaching philosophy and to indicate his/her awareness of this philosophy by signing below.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Athlete

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

This form must be signed & returned to your coach.