

TEAM HANDBOOK

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Introduction

The Ponte Vedra High School (PVHS) Track & Field Team is a varsity athletic organization. The skill level of the student-athletes currently range from All-State honorees to beginner athletes who simply love the sport and want to participate. The success of the individual athlete and team is built on each individual's willingness to work hard and learn as one united team. Student-athletes of all skill levels are encouraged to join and will all be held to the same standards.

Student-Athletes

The primary goal of the coaching staff is to aid parents, teachers, and administrators in the formation of young men and women of strong moral character. It is far more important that student-athletes are known for their respect, sportsmanship, diligence, integrity, teamwork, honor, and work ethic than any of their athletic achievements. Each student-athlete represents the team in the classroom, on the track, and in the community. The coaching staff expects that all student-athletes will act in a manner that honors their team.

Team Rules

Those who do not comply with the SJCSD and FHSAA rules as outlined in the Student-Athlete Code of Conduct and Pursuing Victory with Honor contracts will be disciplined at the discretion of the coach. Disciplinary action can range anywhere from suspension from one or more meets to being removed from the team.

Eligibility

In order to maintain eligibility, student-athlete must meet all of the following conditions:

- Be either enrolled in PVHS or zoned for PVHS.
- Have a cumulative 2.8 GPA average on a 4.0 unweighted scale.
- Document their age with the school and it cannot exceed 19 years and 9 months.
- Not exceed the 4-year eligibility limit.
- Have all paperwork approved by the Athletic Director thru HOME CAMPUS (and verified by the Athletic Trainer) before participating in practice.

Letter Requirements

A varsity letter is not given, it is earned. To receive a varsity letter, a student-athlete must meet at least one of the following criteria:

- 2023 Letter criteria coming soon

Attendance

Attendance will be taken every day. All student-athletes are expected to **attend every practice, meet, and team event**. Please keep this in mind when planning family events and trips. Please arrive to practice and meets at least 10 minutes early so that we can start on time...our time together is valuable and limited.

Excused Tardiness/Absence

To be considered "excused" all absences must be submitted by a parent or guardian via email or text (or phone call) to the head coach for documentation, **prior to the start of practice**. Messages received after the start of practice **will not be accepted**. Tardies and absences related to school are automatically excused with proper notification. Furthermore, any practice time missed for medical reasons will also automatically be excused with proper notification. The

head coach will decide if a monthly attendance report is to be presented to the parents/guardians.

Unexcused Tardiness/Absence

If a student-athlete does not practice consistent and punctual attendance, they will be disciplined. The number of infractions will correlate to the disciplinary action taken (see below).

Unexcused Tardiness:

- 1st and 2nd offenses: Student-athlete will receive a verbal warning.
- 3rd and 4th offenses: Student-athlete will receive another verbal warning and parents will be notified.
- 5 or more offenses: Parents will be notified and student-athlete will not be allowed to compete in the next meet.

Unexcused Absence:

- 1st offense: Parents will be notified.
- 2nd offense: Parents and athletic director will be notified that this is the final warning. The student-athlete will not be allowed to compete in the next meet.
- 3rd offense: Parents and athletic director will be notified and student-athlete will be dismissed from the team.

Practices

Practice is at the school track Monday thru Friday except when there is a Varsity Meet (usually Friday or Saturday). Practices are from 4:05pm thru 6pm with the exception of Wednesday when school gets out early. Practice will be from 3:05 thru 5:00pm on Wednesday.

Pre-Season Conditioning

Pre-season conditioning is optional but a good way to get yourself a jump-start on the season. Times and dates are still TBD so check the website weekly for updates.

Practicing on Your Own

If you are not able to make a scheduled practice for excused/unexcused absences, you must coordinate with your event coach(s) to arrange for an alternate workout plan to get the training in on your own. You will be held accountable to that plan to remain in good standing on the

team. Similarly, you may be asked to workout on your own over the weekend/holiday/spring break/etc.

While we understand student-athletes have a life outside of track & field and have commitments to work, get tutoring, and participate in school related extra-curricular activities, we recommend missing not missing practice except in the most extreme of situations, otherwise things like "lack of training, improper preparation for meets, etc." start to creep in.

Meets

Please keep in mind that athletically our main goal is to perform at our best for the championship meets (District, Region, and State) at the end of the season. Regular season meets are a vehicle for us to measure ourselves against competition and foster improvement but are not our main focus. We may ask our student-athletes to do more/less/different events than they will at the championship meets in an effort to get them ready and/or keep them fresh for the championship season. While it would be great to win individual or team honors at a regular season meet, we will not do so to the detriment of our student-athletes chances for long-term success at the championship meets.

JV Meets

We have created an extensive schedule of "Wednesday" JV meets in partnership with a handful of other local schools. As many of our invitational meets limit the number of participants per event, these low-key meets are a great venue for our younger and less experienced athletes to compete and get better. Meets will be hand-timed and have less events (varies week to week) so we can get the athletes home earlier and have more athletes participate. Participation in JV meets does not mean an athlete cannot run at a varsity meet later in the season. We hope that these meets will serve as a stepping stone for our athletes to compete at a varsity or championship meet later in the season. In the past, we have promoted an average of 10 to 15 athletes onto varsity competition at the District Level.

FHSAA Championship Meets

These meets are at the end of season (starting in mid-April and lasting through early-May) and offer a progressive and systematic approach to determining the best teams and individuals in the State. Qualification for these meets is as follows:

- Participation in the District Meet is solely up to the discretion of the coaches. We are limited to 4 athletes per individual event and 1 team of 4 athletes per relay event. Not all student-athletes will participate.
- Top 8 finishers at District Meet in each event earn All-District accolades and will score points for the team.

- Top 4 finishers at District Meet in each event advance to Region Meet.
- Top 8 finishers at Region Meet in each event earn All-Region accolades and will score points for the team.
- Top 4 finishers at Region Meet in each event will advance to State Meet. In addition, the next 8 fastest times/best marks in each event from across the (4) Region Meets will advance to the State Meet.
- Top 8 finishers at State Meet in each event earn All-State accolades and will score points for the team.

Transportation

The team will provide busing (or other transportation) to each non-home meet we attend. Coaches have a responsibility to make sure that all student-athletes are accounted for while at a meet representing the school. In order to facilitate that accounting, the following school/county/team rules are in place:

- Do not be late for the bus or you will get left.
- For meets that fall on a non-school day, student-athletes will travel by bus or with their parent/guardian only.
- Student-athletes who want to leave a Saturday meet (with their parent/guardian only) before the bus leaves must have their parent/guardian send the head coach an email at least 24 hours in advance of the meet. At the meet, the head coach must also see the parent and receive verbal confirmation from the parent that they are taking their student-athlete from the meet before they can leave.
- Unexcused absence from the team bus for the trip home may result in a multi-meet suspension.
- In no circumstances can a student-athlete drive themselves or their teammates to or from a meet.
- **In no circumstances can a student-athlete ride with another teammate's parent or guardian to or from a meet.**

Required Equipment

Athletes who use school-issued equipment will be responsible for ensuring their poles, starting blocks, implements, etc. arrive to the meet/practice and are promptly returned back to the team equipment room after the meet/practice. Additionally, all athletes will be responsible for bringing the following to each meet/practice:

- Sweats
- Shoes
- Full length or $\frac{3}{4}$ compression tights (sprinters, hurdlers, jumpers)
- Dry clothes for after workout/race
- Water bottle
- Watch
- Team Shirt (meets only)
- Uniform (meets only)

Wellness

Track & field is a physically demanding sport where injuries are not uncommon but oftentimes preventable. Student-athletes break down their bodies every time they workout and rely on proper recovery and refueling to come back stronger the next time. Coaches will do their best to prepare student-athletes for the physical rigors they will face but much of the recovery process is in the hands of the student-athletes. It is normal to be a little sore and tired at times but please let your coaches know if these symptoms persist, become cause for concern, or are otherwise hampering your performance. Part of this process is proper warm-up, cooldown and (eccentric) stretching at night to improve athletic performance and prevent injury!

Athletic Trainer

The athletic trainer is available to students to assist them in preparing for competition and practice. The ATC hours for evaluation and rehabilitation are during all three lunch periods M/Tu/Th/ F from 12:00pm to 2:00pm, and W from 11:25am to 1:19pm. The athletic trainer is also available after school for game and practice preparation. Since class participation is a significant key to student success, student-athletes are NOT ALLOWED to miss class to see the trainer.

Shoes

Everyone's running form (and feet) are unique. Properly fitted shoes are of the utmost importance to helping our student-athletes stay injury free. Specialty running stores offer a fitting service not found in large chain athletic stores or online. Having the right fit ensures you are in the right type of running shoes for your individual needs. Improperly fitted shoes can lead to undo stress on the body and injuries. 1st Place Sports (www.1stPlaceSports.com) is a local

specialty running store that offers this service. Consult with your event or Head Coach to ensure you get the proper shoes for your event.

Running shoes wear down after time and miles and need to be replaced periodically to ensure you are getting the proper benefits from the shoe. Here are a couple rules of thumb on shoe buying:

- Distance runners need to replace training shoes every 2-4 months.
- Sprinters/jumpers/throwers will likely need a new pair of trainers every 4-6 months. Additionally, you should have a practice pair of spikes/jump shoes/throwing shoes as well as a pair for meets. A good guideline is to use your prior year's meet spikes/shoes as your current year's practice shoes.
- Choose shoes based on fit, feel, and comfort rather than how they look or if they match your outfit.
- Alternating shoes helps them last up to 50% longer than running in the same shoes every day. A good example of this would be wearing your newest pair of shoes on longer days and harder workouts and then a (slightly) older pair on easy days.
- If possible, only wear your running shoes when actually running. Wearing them all day at school / walking around the mall / mowing your grass / etc. will wear them down much quicker.

Hydration

Student-athletes need to drink plenty of water. Living in Florida there is no way around it. A great guideline is drinking 85% of your weight (in ounces) (i.e. for a 100lb athlete, 85oz.) in water/electrolyte drinks to ensure proper hydration. It is recommended that all student-athletes drink at least six to eight 16oz. bottles of water each day. This amount is double the average person. Gatorade is great for after workouts, but water is better before and during workouts.

Bring a water bottle to school and practice every day. Caffeine is a diuretic, which means it actually pulls water out of your system. When we drink a 12 oz Coke, we have to drink 24oz of water to get to our desirable level of hydration. Caffeine and carbonation should not be consumed by serious athletes.

Nutrition

Proper nutrition is essential for student-athletes to compete at their best. It gives us the energy to perform, the building blocks to recover and grow stronger after workouts, and finally it strengthens our immune system so that we can be healthy enough to do it again the next day. There is a wealth of information on nutrition online and many of it is conflicting. In general, balance and moderation are key but here are a few sample guidelines:

- A good target for your calorie intake is 60-65% carbohydrates, 15-20% protein, and 20-25% fat.
- Nutrients like calcium (for bone strength), iron (for oxygen transport), sodium/electrolytes (facilitating hydration), and antioxidants like vitamins A, C, E (for preventing cell damage caused by free radicals) are especially important for runners.
- Try to eat within 20 minutes of a workout (post cool down and stretching) to maximize nutrient absorption. This means you may need to plan ahead and bring a snack with you to practice and meets.
- There is very little nutritional value in junk food. If it is a necessary part of your diet, practice moderation.

Sleep

Research shows that high school students on average don't get enough sleep, (This is really relevant for PVHS Athletes as we are the NR1 Academic Public High School in the State of Florida). Lack of sleep can affect performance, concentration, and general health of the student. During sleep, your body does it's heavy lifting with regards to muscle repair and growth. We've all heard the rule of thumb that 8 hours of sleep is necessary for the average person. You are not an average person, you are an athlete. Try to incorporate as much sleep as possible into your daily routine. Consistency is important. Sleeping in on the weekends can't make up for a consistent lack of sleep. Similarly, don't worry if you have pre-race jitters the night before a race and can't sleep. One night of bad sleep won't slow you down much if you get consistent sleep throughout the week.

Parents/Guardians

Coaches expect a personal, yet businesslike, approach in their relationship with parents/guardians. The coaches will answer all questions and listen to concerns before or after their coaching duties have ended at practice. Coaches can be reached via email, text, or by phone. Every coach we have all have children and understand your concerns as a parent and discuss how our decisions can affect not only the athlete but the parent(s) as well. We get it but please trust us to properly coach your athlete. A few things for parents/guardians to consider:

- Coaches will have **final say in what events each student-athlete will enter**. Please, respect the coach's decision and allow your student-athlete(s) to work out any issues privately with them.
- **Please, do not interrupt the coaches while they are coaching student-athletes.**

- Parents/guardians must acknowledge that their student-athlete may be disciplined, or removed, from the team if he/she violates any of the rules outlined in this handbook, the FHSAA handbook, or the St. Johns County Student-Athlete Code of Conduct “**Pursuing Victory with Honor**” contract. Since parents/guardians can be held responsible for the actions of their student-athlete, it is important that they are aware of the rules and consequences if the rules are broken.

Communication

All information about the PVHS Track & Field Team can be found on our team website. Our Coaches work extremely hard to communicate early and often to clear up any issues... We encourage every Track & Field family member to visit the website daily for updates.

Additionally, team members and their parents/guardians will be asked to sign up for email alerts as part of the registration process. We will make every effort to share information about practice, meets, etc. in a timely manner. Please keep in mind that we are often at the mercy of weather and other inconveniences.