

March 18, 2026

WBCSD Board of Trustees  
134 Main Street  
Priest River, ID 83856

RE: March 18, 2026, Board Agenda Item -New Business X.H. Athletics – Coaches Handbook

Dear Trustees,

This past winter, an incident occurred in which sixth-grade girls from Priest River Elementary were approached to participate in 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade girls' basketball. Unfortunately, the other two elementary schools in the district (PLE and IH) were not informed of this opportunity, and as a result, the decision adversely impacted our daughter and other student-athletes across the district.

My wife and I contacted the Athletic Director, Mr. Zepeda, regarding what we believe to be a violation of Policy 3410, *School-Sponsored Student Activities*. Specifically, Policy 3410, Section 3(a)(i), states that all sports should be open to all students enrolled in the district with equal opportunity for participation. After our questions were unanswered and communication from the Athletic Director ceased, I reached out to Superintendent Spacek and arranged a meeting on January 26. See attachment 1.

During our discussion, Superintendent Spacek acknowledged several key points. First, that the situation was improperly managed, and the matter of sixth-grade students being elevated to compete at the junior high level could be addressed within the Coaches Handbook. Second, announcements regarding extracurricular opportunities should be distributed to all schools in the district to ensure equitable access for all students. Third, it was noted that established processes outlined in the Coaches Handbook were not followed.

At the conclusion of our meeting, Superintendent Spacek indicated he would meet with the Athletic Director and follow up with me regarding next steps. To date, I have not received any correspondence. The Board is now presented with proposed updates to the Coaches Handbook; however, these revisions do not address our issue. We are asking that all district elementary schools' administration be made aware of opportunities to participate or try out at the junior high level when appropriate, as needed.

By bypassing a formal tryout process and inviting select individual sixth-grade student-athletes, the athletic department may be acting in a manner inconsistent with the Mission of the Athletic Department and the *Coaching Philosophy & Expectations* outlined in the Coaches Handbook. It is also important to note that a portion of junior high athletics is funded through levy dollars, so junior high athletic opportunities for sixth graders apply to all eligible student athletes within the district, not just athletes from one elementary school.

While the district adheres to Idaho High School Activities Association (IHSAA) rules, those rules do not apply to sixth-grade or junior high athletics. Therefore, I respectfully request that the following additions be made to the Coaches Handbook:

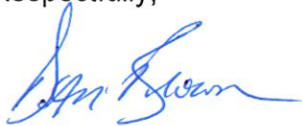
1. Develop a clear process and include specific terminology addressing grade school student athletes participating at the junior high level.
2. Revise Section 10 of the handbook to have the Athletic Director disseminate information to district administrators about athletic opportunities district-wide, consistent with the language and intent of Policy 3410.

Given the current low number of athletes participating in community and district athletics, we believe there will continue to be a need for the district to offer opportunities to sixth-grade student athletes. Therefore, now is the opportune time to create a clear, consistent, and fair process for when the need arises to fill teams. We believe there is significant value in allowing sixth-grade students to participate at the junior high level, as it can enhance both their academic engagement and athletic development, benefiting the future of district athletics. However, through this process, we have learned that such practices have occurred for years across multiple sports without consistent oversight or communication to all district elementary schools' administrators and eligible students. Unfortunately, through this experience, we have also met many parents and student-athletes who were excluded due to inconsistent selection practices and a lack of transparency.

Recently, a district-wide track announcement was posted, and information for all eligible students was sent home. We appreciate and view this as a step in the right direction. I respectfully request that this type of action be formalized as part of the standard process.

Thank you for your consideration. Please feel free to reach out if any additional information is needed.

Respectfully,



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\*Parent of three Priest Lake Elementary students

Enclosures – Attachment 1, Email Chain



West Bonner School District 83  
March 3 at 7:21AM · 🌐

Information on track and field for middle schoolers.

**6<sup>th</sup> - 8<sup>th</sup> Grade**  
**TRACK AND FEILD**

**JOIN COACH CARPENTER**  
Parent Info Meeting (IHS Cafeteria)  
Wed. March 11 @ 5:30

**SIGN UP**

[www.bigteam.com/applications](http://www.bigteam.com/applications)  
Pay \$50 ASB and Sports Physical  
First Practice: Mon. March 23rd

West Bonner School District 83  
Public School

Send message