

West Bonner County School District  
Coaches Handbook



2026 - 2027

# Table of Contents

1. District Mission, Vision, and Core Values
2. Mission of the Athletic Department
3. Coaching Philosophy & Expectations
4. Chain of Communication
5. Coaching Authority and Staff Structure
6. Sports Programs by Season
7. Minimum Participation Requirements
8. Coach Assignment and Hiring Procedures
9. Renewal and Evaluation Process
10. Roles of Superintendent, Principal, and AD
11. Responsibilities of All Coaches
12. Head, Assistant, and Volunteer Coach Duties
13. Practice, Supervision & Transportation Guidelines
14. Game Management & Conduct Standards
15. Athletic Budget and Purchasing Guidelines
16. Out-of-Season & Summer Participation
17. Legal Considerations and Risk Management
18. Forms and Signatures
19. Social Media & Public Conduct Expectations
20. Conflict of Interest and Dual Roles
21. Parent/Coach Communication Protocol
22. Emergency Action Plan (EAP) Overview
23. Title IX Compliance
24. Hazing, Bullying, and Harassment Policy
25. Fundraising Guidelines
26. End-of-Season Requirements

## 1. District Mission, Vision, and Core Values

**Mission:** To provide a structured, respectful, and supportive environment where students are challenged to grow academically, physically, and personally, preparing them to lead productive and principled lives.

**Vision:** To graduate students who demonstrate strong character, personal responsibility, and a commitment to serving their families and communities, equipped with the skills and values necessary to thrive in today's world.

### Core Values:

- **Responsibility** – Own your actions and commitments.
- **Respect** – Value others, rules, and traditions.
- **Integrity** – Do what is right, even when no one is watching.
- **Work Ethic** – Approach every task with determination and effort.
- **Service** – Give back to your school and community.
- **Accountability** – Be answerable for your conduct and performance.
- **Discipline** – Maintain focus, order, and self-control.
- **Community Engagement** – Contribute meaningfully to the greater good.

## 2. Mission of the Athletic Department

The mission of the West Bonner County School District Athletic Department is to build character, foster lifelong habits of health and discipline, and promote excellence through athletic participation. Our department is committed to developing student-athletes who lead by example, work as a team, honor the game, and represent our community with class.

### **3. Coaching Philosophy & Expectations**

Coaches serve as educators and role models, shaping both athletic performance and character development. Each coach is expected to:

- Lead with integrity, fairness, and consistency.
- Promote physical, emotional, and academic development.
- Reinforce sportsmanship, teamwork, and accountability.
- Teach technical and tactical skills appropriate to the sport.
- Uphold district policies, school rules, and IHSAA guidelines.
- Create a safe, structured, and positive team environment.

### **4. Chain of Communication**

Clear communication supports positive relationships and problem-solving. When concerns arise, the following chain should be followed:

1. Assistant Coach(es)
2. Head Coach
3. Athletic Director
4. Principal
5. Superintendent
6. School Board (only if issue remains unresolved)

Concerns not initiated at the appropriate level will be redirected to ensure transparency and accountability.

### **5. Coaching Authority and Staff Structure**

The Head Coach is the leader of their program and is accountable for team conduct, instruction, safety, and staff coordination. Assistant Coaches are expected to follow the direction of the Head Coach, support program goals, and model exemplary conduct. Volunteer Coaches must:

- Be pre-approved by the school board.
- Complete all required training and background checks.
- Operate under the direct supervision of the Head Coach.

## **Proposed Addition – Junior High Coaches**

- Junior High (JH) coaches are considered part of the overall program structure and report directly to the High School Head Coach for their respective sport.
- JH coaches are expected to follow the program philosophy, systems, and expectations established by the Head Coach.
- JH coaches will be evaluated jointly by the Head Coach and the Junior High Athletic Director.

## **6. Sports Programs by Season**

### **High School:**

- **Fall Sports:**
  - Football
  - Boys Soccer
  - Girls Soccer
  - Volleyball
  - Cross Country
- **Winter Sports:**
  - Boys Basketball
  - Girls Basketball
  - Boys Wrestling
  - Girls Wrestling
- **Spring Sports:**
  - Baseball
  - Softball
  - Golf
  - Track and Field
- **Year-Round Programs:**
  - Cheerleading

## Junior High:

- **Fall Sports:**
  - Football
  - Volleyball
  - Cross Country
- **Early Winter Sports:**
  - CoEd Wrestling
- **Late Winter Sports:**
  - Boys Basketball
  - Girls Basketball
- **Spring Sports:**
  - CoEd Track and Field

## 7. Minimum Participation Requirements

To ensure that each program is viable, equitable, and appropriately staffed, the following participation thresholds and coaching ratios have been established. These standards promote fair play opportunities, adequate supervision, and alignment with West Bonner County School District values and safety protocols.

To remain eligible for operation during the given season, all teams must meet the minimum participant threshold by the end of the **second week of official practice** as defined by IHSA or district guidelines. Programs that do not meet this requirement may be subject to cancellation or consolidation by the Athletic Director and administration.

## High School:

- **Football:** Minimum 14 **athletes** Participates
  - 14–22 players = 2 coaches
  - 23–34 players = 3 coaches
  - 35+ players = 4 coaches
- **Soccer:** Minimum 14 athletes
  - 14–18 players = 1 coach
  - 19+ players = 2 coaches

- **Baseball/Softball:** Minimum 11 **athletes** Participates
  - 11–16 players = 1 coach
  - 17+ players = 2 coaches
- **Basketball:** Minimum 8 **athletes** Participates
  - 8–12 players = 1 coach
  - 13+ players = 2 coaches
- **Volleyball:** Minimum 8 **athletes** Participates
  - 8–16 players = 2 coaches
  - 17+ players = 3 coaches
- **Wrestling:** Minimum 8 **athletes** Participates
  - 8–15 athletes = 1 coach
  - 16+ athletes = 2 coaches
- **Track:** Minimum 4 **athletes** Participates
  - 4–11 athletes = 1 coach
  - 12–21 athletes = 2 coaches
  - 22+ athletes = 3 coaches
- **Cheerleading:** Minimum 4 **athletes** Participates
  - 4–14 athletes = 1 coach
  - 15+ athletes = 2 coaches
- **Golf:** Minimum 4 **athletes** Participates
  - 4–10 athletes = 1 coach
  - 11+ athletes = 2 coaches
- **Cross Country:** Minimum 4 **athletes** Participates
  - 4–11 athletes = 1 coach
  - 12+ athletes = 2 coaches

### Junior High:

- **Football:** Minimum 14 **athletes** Participates
  - 14–22 players = 2 coaches
  - 23–34 players = 3 coaches
  - 35+ players = 4 coaches
- **Basketball:** Minimum 8 **athletes** Participates
  - 8–12 players = 1 coach
  - 13+ players = 2 coaches

- **Volleyball:** Minimum 8 **athletes** Participates
  - 8–16 players = 2 coaches
  - 17+ players = 3 coaches
- **Wrestling:** Minimum 8 **athletes** Participates
  - 8–15 athletes = 1 coach
  - 16+ athletes = 2 coaches
- **Track:** Minimum 4 **athletes** Participates
  - 4–11 athletes = 1 coach
  - 12–21 athletes = 2 coaches
  - 22+ athletes = 3 coaches
- **Cross Country:** Minimum 4 **athletes** Participates
  - 4–11 athletes = 1 coach
  - 12+ athletes = 2 coaches

## 8. Coach Assignment and Hiring Procedures

All coaching assignments must comply with district and state regulations. Head Coaches are selected through an open hiring process and must meet certification, background check, and training requirements. Assistant Coaches may be recommended by the Head Coach but are subject to approval by the Athletic Director, Principal, Superintendent, and School Board. Job postings will be publicly available and transparent.

## 9. Renewal and Evaluation Process

Each coach will receive an annual evaluation conducted by the Athletic Director. This process includes both written feedback and formal observation of practices and games. Criteria include leadership, communication, program management, compliance with district policy, and student-athlete development. Coaches are required to submit a letter of intent for renewal each season. Reappointment is contingent upon satisfactory performance and district need.

## 10. Roles of Superintendent, Principal, and AD

- **Superintendent:** Approves district-wide athletic policy, budgets, and personnel recommendations.



- **Principal:** Oversees building-level compliance and supports the integration of athletics with academics.
- **Athletic Director:** Administers all athletic programs, manages scheduling and eligibility, ensures compliance, facilitates communication, evaluates coaches, and ensures adherence to all local and IHSA policies.

## 11. Responsibilities of All Coaches

Coaches at all levels—Head, Assistant, and Junior High—are responsible for the overall safety, development, and representation of student-athletes. Key responsibilities include:

- **Supervision:** Maintain supervision of athletes before, during, and after all practices and competitions. No athlete should ever be left unattended.
- **Communication:** Keep athletes and families informed about practice times, game schedules, bus departure times, and changes. Relay all updates promptly and professionally.
- **Instruction:** Promote skill development, conditioning, teamwork, and discipline appropriate to the age and level of athletes.
- **Program Collaboration:** Junior High coaches are expected to communicate regularly with high school head coaches to align terminology, expectations, and culture. This includes integrating program-wide routines or systems when applicable.
- **Uniforms & Equipment:** Distribute and collect uniforms and gear. Maintain an accurate inventory and report lost or damaged items to the Athletic Director.
- **Facility Care:** Ensure practice and locker room areas are maintained and left in good condition.
- **Administrative Duties:** Submit all required rosters, medical release forms, incident reports, and end-of-season inventories by district deadlines.

- **Evaluation & Planning:** Complete coaching self-evaluations and participate in end-of-season meetings. Reflect on team progress and submit goals or needs for the following season.
- **Representation & Conduct:** Model professional behavior, sportsmanship, and leadership at all times, both in person and online.
- **Junior High Focus:** Prepare athletes for high school by teaching how to communicate respectfully with coaches, how to approach conflict constructively, and how to take ownership of team responsibilities.

## 12. Head, Assistant, and Volunteer Coach Duties

- **Head Coach (Including JH):** Responsible for total program oversight, practice planning, game strategy, and staff supervision. Must lead in alignment with district values.
- **Assistant Coach:** Supports instruction, safety, and logistics as delegated by the Head Coach. Assists with skill development, discipline, and communication.
- **Volunteer Coach:** Must complete all district-required approvals, and always serve under the supervision of a certified staff member. Volunteers may not assume independent roles.

## 13. Practice, Supervision & Transportation Guidelines

- **Clearance Requirement:** No athlete may participate in practice until they have submitted a **district-issued clearance card** signed by the Athletic Director. It is the responsibility of each coach to verify this clearance prior to allowing an athlete to engage in any team activity.
- Practices must begin and end on time and be adequately supervised.
- Athletes must never be left unattended.
- Coaches must remain with students until all are picked up.
- Use district transportation when available. Non-district **travel**-transportation must be pre-approved **by AD and Principal.**
- Parent drivers must have current authorization on file.

## 14. Game Management & Conduct Standards

- Coaches must demonstrate professional conduct at all times.
- Address officials respectfully and hold players accountable for sportsmanship.
- Supervise athletes at home and away events.
- Ensure equipment and uniforms are in proper order and represent the school appropriately.

## 15. Athletic Budget and Purchasing Guidelines

All purchases related to athletics—including equipment, uniforms, camps, ect. —must be pre-approved by the Athletic Director. Use of personal funds without prior approval is discouraged and may not be reimbursed. Fundraising must follow district protocols and reflect equity across all programs.

### **Proposed Addition – Purchasing Request Procedure**

- All athletic purchasing requests must be submitted to the **Athletic Director by email prior to seeking an invoice or placing any order.**
- The email request should include the **item(s), vendor, estimated cost, and purpose of the purchase.**
- Upon review, the **Athletic Director will provide approval (or denial) for the coach to obtain a formal quote or invoice from the vendor.**
- Once a quote or invoice is received, the coach must **forward the document to the Athletic Director.**

- The Athletic Director will create a Purchase Order (PO) and submit it to the vendor before any purchase is finalized.
- Purchases made without prior approval and an issued PO may not be reimbursed.

### **Example Process:**

If the softball program wishes to purchase warm-ups, the coach must first email the Athletic Director requesting approval to obtain pricing. After approval, the coach may request an invoice from the vendor and then send that invoice to the Athletic Director so a Purchase Order can be created and submitted to the vendor.

## **16. Out-of-Season & Summer Participation**

Out-of-season activities are voluntary and cannot be used as a condition for team selection. Athletes must submit district-approved waivers to participate in summer workouts or conditioning. Coaches may consider athlete attendance when assessing readiness but must not violate IHSAA guidelines. Supervision and safety must be maintained year-round.

### **Proposed Expansion – Out-of-Season Participation (IHSAA Compliance)**

- Out-of-season workouts, open gyms, and summer activities must be completely voluntary and cannot be used as a condition for team selection, playing time, or team status, in accordance with IHSAA Rule 17-2-5.

- Coaches may provide opportunities for conditioning, skill development, or open facility use; however, student-athletes cannot be required to attend and no penalties may be applied for non-participation.
- Summer athletic programs must conclude by the last day of July as outlined in IHSAA Rule 17 (Seasons).
- Athletes participating in summer workouts, open gyms, or conditioning sessions must submit district-approved waivers or participation forms prior to involvement.
- Coaches may use attendance information only to assess athlete readiness or conditioning level, but may not use attendance as a determining factor in team selection or roster decisions.
- All out-of-season activities must maintain appropriate adult supervision and follow school safety expectations.

## **17. Legal Considerations and Risk Management**

- All coaches must complete state-mandated training, including CPR, First Aid, Concussion Protocol, and Sudden Cardiac Arrest.
- Any injury, accident, or behavioral concern must be documented and reported to the AD within 24 hours.
- Coaches must avoid situations involving one-on-one, unsupervised contact with students.

## **18. Forms and Signatures**

All coaches must submit and maintain current versions of:

- Coaching Contract/Letter of Assignment

- Handbook Acknowledgment Form
- Emergency Contact & Medical Release Forms
- IHSAA/NFHS Certifications and Concussion Training
- Communication Platform: SportYou will serve as the primary communication app for all school-sponsored athletic programs. All coaches are expected to use SportYou to share practice times, travel schedules, updates, cancellations, and team messages with athletes and parents. Consistent use of this platform is required to streamline communication and ensure timely delivery of information.

## 19. Social Media & Public Conduct Expectations

Coaches must use social media responsibly **as employees of the district**. Any post or comment that reflects poorly on the school, team, student-athletes, **or game officials** may result in disciplinary action. Political, inflammatory, or profane content should be avoided. Coaches are expected to lead by example in digital and public behavior.

## 20. Conflict of Interest and Dual Roles

Any coach who holds additional roles within the district (e.g., teacher, parent, administrator) must avoid favoritism or bias in team decisions. Playing time and recognition **must be-is** merit-based **on skill and attitude toward improvement**. Financial conflicts, including use of fundraising dollars, must be transparent and pre-approved.

## 21. Parent/Coach Communication Protocol

**Parents must wait 24 hours-**There is a 24 hour wait period after contests before **parents can initiate** discussions about their student-athlete. No meetings **will-are to** take place during or immediately after games. Coaches should document and notify the AD of any parent interactions related to discipline, safety, or complaints. **Discussions should focus on the athlete's growth, not other players-** Discussions should focus on the individual athlete's growth, including skill development, effort, and attitude toward improvement. Conversations should not center on other players, team strategy, playing time decisions, or coaching tactics.

## **22. Emergency Action Plan (EAP) Overview**

Each coach must review and understand their sport's Emergency Action Plan. Roles must be assigned prior to each season, including who contacts EMS, who manages crowd control, and who retrieves emergency equipment. Emergency drills are recommended at least once per season.

## **23. Title IX Compliance**

All West Bonner athletic programs are committed to equal access and opportunity for all students. Coaches must ensure that uniforms, facilities, travel, scheduling, and playing time policies align with district equity standards. Title IX concerns must be reported immediately to the AD.

## **24. Hazing, Bullying, and Harassment Policy**

Hazing, bullying, and harassment of any kind are strictly prohibited. This includes verbal, digital, and physical misconduct. Coaches must educate athletes about acceptable conduct, report violations immediately, and foster a safe team environment.

Hazing, bullying, and harassment of any kind are strictly prohibited. This includes verbal, digital, and physical misconduct. Coaches must educate athletes about acceptable conduct, report violations immediately, and foster a safe and respectful team environment. All incidents must be handled in accordance with **West Bonner County School District Board Policies 3295 (Hazing, Harassment, Intimidation, Bullying, and Cyberbullying) and 3330 (Student Discipline).**

## **25. Fundraising Guidelines**

Fundraising must be approved in advance by the Student Body Counsel, AD, and Principal. All funds must be accounted for using district-approved tracking. Fundraisers must not be used as a condition for playing time or team status. Equity across programs must be considered in all fundraising activities.

## 26. End-of-Season Requirements

At the conclusion of each sports season, all coaches are required to complete a series of tasks to ensure proper program closeout, accountability, and planning for the future. These responsibilities align with district expectations and evaluation procedures outlined in the West Bonner County School District Athletic Handbook and Coach Evaluation forms.

- **Inventory and Equipment Return:** All athletic equipment, uniforms, and gear must be cleaned, inventoried, and returned to the designated location. Uniforms and equipment are mandatory to be turned in by the Monday after the final event of the season. An End-of-Season Inventory Form must be submitted to the Athletic Director within two weeks of the final contest.

-All athletic equipment, uniforms, and gear must be cleaned, inventoried, and returned to the designated location. Uniforms and equipment are mandatory to be turned in by the Monday after the final event of the season. **Any missing or unreturned items must be reported to the Athletic Director.** An End-of-Season Inventory Form must be submitted to the Athletic Director within two weeks of the final contest.

- **Facility Clean-Up:** Locker rooms, weight rooms, practice fields, storage spaces, and team areas must be cleaned and returned to an orderly condition.
- **Evaluation Submission:** Coaches must complete the **Season-End Coaching Self-Evaluation** and schedule a meeting with the Athletic Director **within 30 days** of the final contest. These evaluations



contribute to the coaching record and impact future contract renewals.

- **Program Reflection:** Head Coaches are encouraged to review team development, retention, and culture. This reflection should be documented in the evaluation and include suggested program improvements or support needs.
- **Awards Ceremony Coordination:** Head Coaches must coordinate with the Athletic Director to finalize program-specific awards, letters, and certificates. Program award nominations should be submitted at least **two weeks prior to the end-of-season banquet**, and coaches must attend the athletic awards event.
- **Junior High Awards:** Junior High coaches are not required to host or participate in a formal awards banquet. While optional, recognition events are encouraged when feasible and appropriate for the age group.
- **Parent Communication:** A final thank-you message or wrap-up notice should be sent to families summarizing the season, reminding them of any award night details, and addressing equipment collection if still outstanding.

Failure to complete all end-of-season responsibilities will result in a delayed stipend and a deduction of \$500 from the coach's final paycheck for that season.

## Coach Handbook Acknowledgment Form

I acknowledge that I have received, read, and understand the West Bonner County School District Coaches Handbook. I agree to adhere to the policies, expectations, and responsibilities outlined in this document. I understand that failure to comply with these expectations may affect my coaching assignment and/or eligibility for stipend compensation.

By signing below, I confirm my commitment to uphold the standards of professionalism, safety, and educational leadership described in this handbook.

**Coach Name (Printed):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Sport/Program:** \_\_\_\_\_