

MT. PLEASANT TIGERS ATHLETIC HANDBOOK

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OVERVIEW

INTRODUCTION

The athletic program at Mt. Pleasant High School is to be held in conjunction with the academic philosophy of the school. We believe that athletics plays an extremely important role in the overall well-being of the student athlete. The purpose of our athletic program is to provide the opportunity to compete in athletic contests with other schools, improve the community and school spirit, develop leaders and teach sportsmanship.

This handbook should assist all personnel in interpreting the procedures of the Mt. Pleasant High School athletic program. The principal of Mt. Pleasant High School may have additional rules they implement beyond expectations outlined in this handbook.

PHILOSOPHY

Athletics help the player achieve a higher standard of mental, moral, social and physical fitness. Through athletic competition, the player relates the rules of the game to the rules of life. High school sports provide the student-athletes the opportunity to improve leadership skills, accountability, friendships, improved fitness and the ability to make life-long memories.

GOALS

The goals of the Mt. Pleasant High School athletic program are:

1. To improve the image of athletics
2. To strive always for playing excellence
3. To ensure growth and development that will raise the number of individual participants
4. To provide for the physical, mental and emotional growth and development for all of our athletes
5. To encourage team play with the development of loyalty, cooperation, fair play, and other desirable traits
6. To establish and maintain an effective on going public relations program with the community

TENNESSEE SECONDARY SCHOOL ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION

School personnel are responsible for adhering to all of the bylaws of the TSSAA.

Coaches are expected to review the bylaws of the TSSAA on a regular basis. They are responsible for all rules governing their sport.

SPORTS OFFERED

Mt. Pleasant High School is committed to offering a broad scope of opportunities for students. We are only limited by our financial resources and student interest.

The following is a list of current athletic programs that may be offered at our school or in conjunction with another school.

Baseball	Basketball	Cheerleading	Cross Country
Football	Golf	Softball	Tennis
Track	Volleyball		

ADMINISTRATION RESPONSIBILITIES

PRINCIPAL

The Principal of the school is held responsible for the operation of the athletic program. The appointments of the athletic director, and all coaches, including head, assistant, and volunteer coaches are made at the discretion of the principal on an annual basis. Specific duties include but are not limited to the following:

1. Following directives from Director of Schools
2. Compliance with coaching supplements as allocated by Director of Schools
3. Coaching staff selection
4. Approval and signing of all game contracts and TSSAA forms
5. Overseeing conduct of students (fans and athletes) at athletic events
6. Assignment of administrative coverage at home athletic events
7. Ensuring that the athletic department's program is integrated into the total school program
8. Ensure that the athletic program remains on a sound financial footing

ATHLETIC DIRECTOR

The athletic director (AD) at Mt. Pleasant High School is responsible to the principal of the school and assists the principal in supervision of the coaches and others involved in the school's athletic programs. The athletic director is to provide overall leadership and coordination among the school's various athletic teams that provide students worthwhile learning experiences. Specific duties include but are not limited to the following:

1. Responsible to the principal on the overall athletic department program
2. Establish and maintain an open line of communication between administration, coaches, athletes and fans
3. Responsible for administrating all interscholastic rules and regulations of the TSSAA, the Maury County Board of Education and all MPHS policies
4. Develop, control and approve all expenditures of monies related to athletic purchases (budget and internal club accounts) and collections of money. This will include (but not be limited to) ticket reconciliation, separation of duties, internal controls, bank deposits, etc
5. Approve all game contracts after coaches develop schedules with input from the athletic director
6. Responsible for sending completed schedules to the TSSAA to have officials assigned at home contests
7. Schedule all gym activities (games and practices). Sports 'in season' will always have priority in the use of school facilities
8. Approve all required TSSAA forms (eligibility lists, district tournaments lists, etc.)
9. Prepare transportation requests (request must be made by the coach at least two weeks in advance of the trip)
10. Advise the athletic booster club as needed
11. Responsible for overall condition of athletic facilities with the individual Head Coach responsible for daily conditions

12. Purchase all awards, letters, certificates, pins, etc., for all athletic teams when purchased for a group presentation. Coaches will be responsible for individual presentations
13. Ensure that all equipment is properly inventoried and stored with the head coach of each sport
14. Responsible for hiring security for home contests, when needed
15. Assist local sportswriters and media personnel with information concerning our athletic teams, players and coaches
16. Represent the school in all athletic department business at the county, district, region and state meetings
17. Verify grades of all athletes
18. Serve as the tournament director for all TSSAA tournaments that are assigned to the school
19. Arrange athletic staff meetings as they are needed
20. Maintain a permanent file of parent/player permission forms, required medical forms, awards and other appropriate athletic information
21. Report all negligence in the performance of duties by members of the coaching staff to the principal
22. Work with the band and cheerleaders and their sponsors in coordinating activities
23. Provide Emergency Management Systems with schedule of home games
24. Make arrangements to have announcers and scorekeepers at contests as required
25. Serve as the liaison between the athletes, parents and the coaching staff with the school's principal and other administrators
26. Help to resolve conflicts that may develop from time to time within the ranks of the Athletic Department
27. Maintain an active program that promotes sportsmanship and welcomes the competing teams and guests

28. Responsible for the annual review of the coaches' handbook
29. Constantly evaluates the overall athletic program, always seeking ways of improving interscholastic athletics
30. Advise the principal on athletic department matters
31. Perform other duties as the principal may direct
32. Enforce school rules and ensure athletes follow the district code of behavior and discipline policies

COACH RESPONSIBILITIES

HEAD COACH

The head coach of each sport is responsible to the athletic director who provides overall objectives for the athletic department in conjunction with the school's principal. By definition a coach is anyone who instructs or supervises student-athletes in practices or contests. In most cases, the head coach must advise, coordinate and support a staff of assistant coaches in conjunction with the athletic director and the principal. The head coach understands the proper administrative chain of command and refers all student and parent requests or grievances through proper channels. The head coach is responsible to instruct athletes in the fundamental skills, strategy and physical training necessary for them to realize a degree of individual and team success. At the same time, the student shall receive instruction that will lead to the formulation of moral values, pride of accomplishment, acceptable social behavior, self discipline and self confidence.

The duties of the head coach include but are not limited to the following:

1. Conduct a parent meeting before practice starts to inform and communicate all procedures and expectations with parents and to establish and maintain an open line of communication throughout the season. Parents must sign off that they have attended the meeting or have met with the coach to discuss this. Communication is the key
2. Verify that all athletes adhere to the rules and regulations of the Maury County School Board, TSSAA, and all building level policies
3. Attend coaching clinics when possible to enhance the program. Funds may not be taken from your account to pay for these clinics
4. Prepare a list of names (roster) of all students trying out for any team. This list should be provided as soon as possible to the Athletic Director in order for each athlete to be declared eligible for participation prior to the first contest
5. Tryouts must be conducted and must be fair and equitable by establishing criteria for making the team
6. Explain eligibility requirements to prospective athletes

7. Check eligibility of athletes (The athletic director will verify eligibility when grade information becomes available from data processing)
8. Verify that every athlete has completed, in full, all of the required TSSAA, and school required forms prior to participating in tryouts, practices, or contests (including required physical)
9. Conduct practices in such a manner that skills are developed and within a reasonable time limit that respects time needed for school work and family. The coach should have a written or typed practice plan for each practice. This will include drills, coaching, water breaks, etc., along with times that should be spent on each activity. The coach will maintain all practice plans throughout the season and should be able to present them if asked
10. Verify that every student manager or trainer has a completed parent permission form on file
11. Ensure there is proper supervision when players under your charge are in the locker room. An adult should be in the locker room when athletes are in the locker room and remain until all athletes have left the locker room. A non-faculty coach cannot be the sole supervisor
12. Be responsible for team members, managers, and trainers whenever they are under your supervision before, during, and after practices and contests.
13. Provide the proper environment for the safety and health of the athletes under your supervision
14. File an accident report any time a player/manager is injured at practice or during a contest. This must be done within 24 hours
15. The head coach must explain to the athletes the proper handling and daily care of equipment. They are also responsible to keep an inventory of what equipment they have
16. Cooperate with the local media (newspaper, radio, and TV). If media is not covering the event the head coach is responsible for submitting contest results within 24 hours of the event to the local newspaper
17. Request in writing all transportation requests at least two weeks prior to the athletic trip
18. Follow all applicable rules and district policies regarding the transporting of students
19. To comply with Maury County School Board procedures when purchasing items from the athletic budget, the athletic director must approve all purchase orders prior to submitting an order to the principal. Failure to follow this procedure will result in the coach being held personally responsible for the expenditure

20. Constantly encourage athletes in their academic endeavors in addition to their athletic endeavors
21. Make arrangements for the filming of contests if desired
22. Responsible for ensuring that the proper first aid equipment is on hand at all times and that injured athletes receive proper treatment
23. Regular communication with the athletic director
24. Schedule your awards banquet, picnic or ceremony within the guidelines requested by the athletic director in a timely manner
25. Attend required meetings of the TSSAA and school coaching staff
26. Submit game schedule upon completion to the athletic director. Notify AD of any changes in schedule ASAP
27. Conducts self before the students and the community so as to instill respect and good sportsmanship
28. Understands the proper administrative line of command and refers all requests or grievances through proper channels
29. Maintains discipline, adjusts grievances and works to increase morale and cooperation
30. Performs such other duties which may be assigned by the athletic director and/or principal
31. Seek help from the athletic director for greater clarification of any rules or practices
32. Call meetings with his/her staff to prepare for and/or review the upcoming/previous games or to address any team matter. These meetings are held solely at the discretion of the head coach and as such are required duties.

ASSISTANT COACH

The assistant coach reports to the head coach. By definition a coach is anyone who instructs or supervises student-athletes in practices or contests. Assistant coaches may be full-time employees, retired educators, classified employees, or non-faculty coaches. Duties include but are not limited to the following:

1. Assist the head coach in verifying that athletes adhere to the rules and regulations set by the TSSAA, the Maury County School Board and all building level policies and procedures, and report any violations to the appropriate party
2. Ensure supervision of all student athletes at all times. An adult should be in the locker room when athletes are in the locker room and remain until all athletes have left the locker room. A non-faculty coach cannot be the sole supervisor
3. Provide the proper environment for the safety and health of the athletes, including the prevention of and proper care of injuries
4. Perform any duties deemed necessary by the head coach. Understands the proper administrative chain of command and refers all student and parent requests or grievances through proper channels
5. Conducts self before the students and the community so as to instill respect and good sportsmanship
6. Be loyal and supportive of the head coach
7. Seek help from the athletic director for greater clarification of any rules or practices
8. Each head coach may expect regular or called meetings with his/her coaching staff to prepare for and/or review the upcoming/previous games or to address any team matter. These meetings are held solely at the discretion of the head coach and as such are required duties.

NON-FACULTY (VOLUNTEER) COACHES

By definition a coach is anyone who instructs or supervises student-athletes in practices or contests. In a continuing effort to further ensure the safety and welfare of students and staff, the Maury County Board of Education shall require criminal history records checks and fingerprinting of non-faculty coaches. Any costs incurred by conducting such investigations of volunteer coaches shall be paid by the sport of which the volunteer coach will coach. The Board may approve volunteer coach assignments contingent upon satisfactory background check results. Individuals desiring to serve as a volunteer coach must first make application to the appropriate school on forms provided by the school.

Volunteer coaches must successfully complete the NFHS (National Federation of State High School Associations) “Fundamentals of Coaching” and “First Aid, Health, & Safety for Coaches” online courses prior to having any contact with the students in the capacity of a coach.

Volunteer coaches must be approved annually by the principal and the Director of Schools before being submitted to the TSSAA. In addition, schools will not allow anyone under the age of 21 (or at least three years after graduating from high school) to work as a volunteer coach with any of our teams. Any exception to this policy must have the approval of the Director of Schools.

A volunteer coach cannot conduct a practice or be the sole supervisor of any team unless they are the head coach of that team. Seek help from the athletic director for greater clarification of any rules or practices

BUDGET

The athletic director will oversee the entire athletic department budget. The following expenses for approved contests must be covered by the athletic department budget: officials, school bus transportation, and security. Equipment, field maintenance, and security must also be paid from the athletic department budget, as needed. At the beginning of a season, the athletic director will give each head coach a budgeted amount of money for the current school year based on the above information and a uniform formula and required district schedule each school year. Any additional money needed for additional contests or equipment must be raised in approved fundraisers or money donated by your booster club. The athletic director must approve all account expenditures.

TENNESSEE ATHLETIC COACHES ASSOCIATION

The school athletic department is strongly encouraged to purchase a school membership in the Tennessee Athletic Coaches Association. The school membership includes liability insurance as well as a coach's registration at his/her TACA sports' clinic but does not cover hotel accommodations, travel, or meals. These expenses may be paid from the account for that sport or by the booster club.

COACHES' CONDUCT AND EJECTION

Coaches should exhibit sportsman like behavior before, during and after all athletic contests. And, the head coach should instill proper conduct in all athletes. The coach should avoid confrontations with officials and outward displays of emotion over their decisions.

Coaches are expected to maintain their composure and not be ejected from any contest for any reason. Any coach who is ejected from an interscholastic athletic contest must meet with the Director of Schools and the Principal per TSSAA requirements. Any coach who is ejected from an interscholastic athletic contest shall be suspended from coaching for the remainder of that contest and in any interscholastic contest for the next one game of football and the next two games of any other sport.

If the disqualification occurs in the last contest of a season, the coach will be suspended for the same period of time as stated above in the next sport in which he/she coaches. An ejection as a result of gross unsportsmanlike conduct or a second or subsequent act of general unsportsmanlike conduct shall be suspended from coaching in any interscholastic athletic contest for a period of up to six weeks.

TSSAA bylaws will be enforced to their fullest extent in this area and additional penalties will be imposed at the discretion of the principal if it is determined that a coach initiated and/or continued to aggravate a bad situation. Immediate notification of any coach ejection to the principal and/or athletic director is required. Any fine assessed by the TSSAA for a coach ejection shall be paid, in full, by cash or money order within seven days by the individual coach. The coach will not return to coaching in contests until this fine has been paid in full to the school (who will then pay the fine to TSSAA within the required time frame). Under no circumstance will the athletic department pay any fines incurred by an ejected coach.

PROCEDURES FOR DISMISSING A PLAYER

The head coach should have the final say as to who should be allowed to be on their team. Tryouts will be held to determine who makes the team. Those who do not make the team should be notified by the coach in a timely manner. If a player needs to be dismissed after making the team, the following must be followed:

1. There should be an escalating series of consequences before consideration of a dismissal
 - a. In-house discipline such as sitting out a practice or a game along with a parent phone call and notification to the athletic director
 - b. 2nd in-house discipline such as sitting out a practice or game along with a letter sent to parent cc'd to athletic director
 - c. Conference with athletic director recommending a dismissal. If athletic director agrees then,
 - d. Actual dismissal
2. Notify the parent that the student is being dismissed. If a meeting is requested the coach will meet with the parent (s). The athletic director will also attend this meeting
3. The documentation enumerated in number 1 will be discussed at the dismissal meeting

The reasons for the dismissal will never be discussed with student-athletes

GAME AND PRACTICE SUPERVISION

Understanding that supervision of students is of utmost importance, the head coach is responsible to make sure that all players and managers affiliated with their team are supervised at all times. A coach should always strive to arrive at a practice or game at least 15 minutes prior to the time the players are asked to arrive. They must also stay after every practice or game until all players have left the premises.

SUNDAY AND WEDNESDAY PRACTICE AND GAMES

Games will not be scheduled that will conflict with normal church attendance times on Sundays or Wednesdays. Tournament games may be played since those are controlled by another body. Practices should be scheduled as to not conflict with the students' ability to attend their church activities. Church attendance will always be considered as an excused absence. However the athlete must inform the coach in a timely manner.

ATHLETE RESPONSIBILITIES

ELIGIBILITY

Head coaches are responsible for ensuring that all of their athletes, student managers, scorekeepers, trainers, and video camera operators, etc., meet all eligibility requirements established by the Maury County Board of Education and the TSSAA.

BASIC ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

In order to participate on an interscholastic athletic team, each prospective athlete must:

1. A student's academic, attendance and discipline record will be considered during tryouts
2. A student is ineligible while on suspension from school. A second suspension during the school year will result in immediate dismissal from athletics
3. A completed physical examination on the appropriate form for the current school year must be on file in the school (dated after May 1)
4. A Parent Permission form for the current school year, signed by the student's parent or guardian, must be on file at school. It shall be the responsibility of the parent(s) or guardian(s) to provide health and hospitalization insurance for all students participating in interscholastic athletics

ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

Understanding that academics have a great impact on the success of a student, we propose believe the student-athlete should show progress and advancement in the classroom throughout the year. To achieve this the following will take place.

1. Coaches will maintain a grade check on their athletes every three weeks. This grade check will also include class participation, preparedness, absenteeism, attitude, etc.
2. If an athlete is not making necessary progress in a class he/she will be put on probation and must submit weekly progress reports. If there is no progress then the athlete will be suspended from playing in a game/match.
3. The football program has an academic coach to assist them with their academics throughout the school year. This coach will maintain weekly contact with teachers and help those players who are not achieving progress in the classroom.

Methods to help the student-athlete be successful in the classroom will include:

A parent contact will be made by the coach when he/she discovers the athlete is not making the appropriate progress in class.

The athlete may participate in remediation before, during and after school.

Credit recovery options will be pursued.

The athlete will seek any additional help from the teacher.

DUAL SPORT PARTICIPATION IN THE SAME SEASON

If an athlete desires to play dual sports in the same season, the player, head coaches and the parent(s) will work out the priority sport. If a resolution cannot be reached, it will be referred to the athletic director and/or principal.

STUDENT MANAGERS, TRAINERS, SCOREKEEPERS

Student managers, trainers, scorekeepers, etc., are required to meet the same academic requirements as athletes. Managers must also have a completed parent permission form on file with the school giving them permission to participate in their assigned capacity as well as traveling to away contests in personal vehicles, rented vehicles, and school buses. The head coach is to carry a copy of this form to all practices and contests.

ATTENDANCE AT SCHOOL

Athletes are expected to be in attendance for at least 50% of the school day in order to participate in interscholastic contests. Any exceptions to this rule must be granted by the athletic director and/or principal or their designee. Athletes are subject to the same tardy policy as all other students. In addition, each athlete must satisfy their coach's specific disciplinary policy as it relates to tardiness and attendance. Athletes must attend school in order to be eligible to practice that day. Any exceptions to this policy must be granted by the athletic director and/or principal or their designee.

ATTENDANCE FOR ATHLETICS

Athletes are expected to attend all practices and games as scheduled by the coach. The coach should always give ample notice to the players as to when these will be held. If an athlete misses practice or a game because of a school function, the coach cannot discipline the athlete for this. Athletes are expected to make up whatever they missed while absent from the practices or games.

FAILURE TO COMPLETE THE ATHLETIC SEASON

Once the first official contest has been completed for an athletic season, the following rule will go into effect. If a student-athlete does not complete the season because they decide they no longer want to be a part of the team or because they are dismissed by the coach or administration, they may not participate in the next athletic season until their previous sport completes their season. This includes post-season participation from the team. The student-athlete may not participate in any pre-season workouts, conditioning, weight training, off-season workouts or any aspect of being a teammate with the next sport until the final date in which the previous sport competes.

SPORTSMANSHIP AND ATHLETES CONDUCT

The head coach is responsible for the conduct of all players, as well as the conduct of spectators at contests. It is the responsibility of the head coach to instill the appropriate conduct of all athletes. Likewise, the coach must conduct himself/herself in a professional manner. At no time should an athlete be permitted to be an embarrassment to the school, team, or coach. Head coaches are expected to handle inappropriate behavior quickly and to discipline the athlete in a fair but effective manner. Anytime an athlete is ejected or removed from an interscholastic contest, the incident must be reported to the athletic director immediately.

Coaches should teach their players to accept the officials' decisions without outward displays of emotions. In the event a player exhibits poor conduct in front of the crowd, the coach will promptly remove the player from the contests. Coaches are expected to shake hands with the opposing coach after the game on the court or field and will ensure that athletes will do the same with opponents. The head coach will actively participate in any sportsmanship program adopted and being promoted by the TSSAA and the athletic department.

The head coach should emphasize the following points to all athletes:

1. Play hard, but play fair
2. An athlete must learn that losing is part of the game, and that he/she should be gracious in defeat and modest in victory
3. The use of profanity or illegal tactics is strictly prohibited
4. Players and coaches should congratulate the opponent on a well played game after the contest regardless of the outcome

5. Abide by the decision of game officials. No one but the appointed team captain should talk to an official, and a captain should speak in a tone of respect and only for the purpose of clarifying a call or asking the official to watch for a certain situation
6. Athletes should always show respect for students, faculty members, and officials at all times
7. Athletes should be well groomed and attempt to make a good impression, always remembering that they represent their school, community, home, and family
8. Maintain poise and self control at all times
9. Student athletes are expected to follow all school rules and school board policies

FEES TO PARTICIPATE

Each sport should be self sufficient and be able to pay their own expenses for the year. Monies can be garnered through gate admission, fundraisers, donations and participation fees. If a coach determines that a participation fee is warranted, he/she must do the following.

1. Communicate this to the player and the parent before the season begins
2. Collect the money and deposit into the appropriate account immediately
3. Keep records as to who has paid and the amount they have paid
4. Athletes must pay their entire fee in full before participating in competition during the regular season. If they cannot pay the full amount then a payment plan must be submitted to the coach and athletic director for approval. If such a payment plan is agreed upon, the payment must always be current for the athlete to continue participation. If not the athlete will be suspended from play until the payment is secured. Circumstances beyond the control of the athlete and their family will be considered on an individual basis by the principal.

GENERAL INFORMATION

TRANSPORTATION TO AWAY CONTESTS

The transporting of athletes to interscholastic contests is an important responsibility and all district policies and procedures will be followed. Transportation to and from sporting events is left to the discretion of the athletic director and coach and/or principal. Transportation must be provided by one of the following approved methods.

School Bus – Preferred method of travel

The county transportation department requires a two week notice for scheduling school buses. The head coach should communicate with the athletic director if school bus transportation is going to be needed. The cost of this transportation will be paid from the school athletic budget for the sport requesting this service.

Private Vehicles

The use of private vehicles is governed by Maury County Board of Education Policy. In addition, the transportation form “Permit for Use of Personal Vehicle” must be used. The following also apply:

Under no circumstances should athletes be transported in a 15 passenger van. Every person must have a belted position. Student athletes are not allowed to drive themselves to athletic contests except under the following condition. Student athletes are permitted to drive to an athletic contest only after written parental permission is given, and the coach, athletic director and the principal all agree in advance. Students are never allowed to transport other student athletes except for siblings.

Any school employee or school representative may transport athletes to contests only if they have a “Permit for use of Personal Vehicles” form along with proof of insurance on file in the Athletic Director’s office prior to students being transported. Copies of completed forms are also filed at the district level.

Drivers are required to observe all traffic laws (especially the speed limit and each and every student being transported is required to buckle their seat belts). Under no circumstance may a coach text while driving with students in their vehicle. Phone usage should be kept to a minimum and for emergency situations.

If multiple vehicles are needed to transport the team these rules must be followed. A caravan will be developed with the head coach in the front vehicle. Subsequent vehicles must follow behind the coach until the destination is reached. At no time shall any driver transporting students deviate from the purpose of the trip. They must remain behind the head coach going to and returning from all athletic trips. If the head coach makes a stop for any reason, all vehicles must also stop. At no time may a vehicle in the caravan make a stop without the head coach and all other vehicles stopping also.

SCHOOL CLOSINGS

When an emergency arises for which the Director of Schools has officially closed a school or schools, all school activities will close on the first day. This includes practice, games, or any other event. On subsequent days of school closings, the principal will make the decision whether to have practice or games. To reduce questions, the typical pattern will be to NOT have practice or games if the Director of Schools has decided to close school.

EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES PROCEDURES

A coach may conduct extra-curricular activities such as camps or clinics during non-school hours. The camps or clinics will be operated as a school activity. The following will apply:

1. All money received must be deposited into the school account. Checks from participants must be made out to the school. No checks will be made out to an individual staff member. The coach may not receive any compensation for the camp.
2. Only Maury County School employees will be allowed facilities usage without additional liability insurance and facilities usage charities.
3. If the coach is not a Maury County School employee, he/she must file use of facilities form, show proof of insurance and pay facilities usage fees according to board policy.
4. No additional money from other revenue sources can be used.