

**Cody Middle School
Athletics
Student/Parent
Handbook**

2017-2018

Football
Volleyball
Cross Country
Co-Ed Swimming
Basketball
Wrestling
Track

Welcome

On behalf of the Activities Department of the Cody Public Schools, we welcome everyone to the new activities season. We are very proud of our student athletes and are excited to have your child as part of our programs.

Activities are one of the most important elements in the overall education of our students. Activities provide an opportunity to extend the learning process. The intention of this manual is to provide students/parents with a guide for understanding the philosophy, programs, procedures, organization, and expectations of the Cody Public Schools Activities Department. We hope this manual will be used by students/parents to make the direction we are going clearly understood.

Why Activities?

The answer to this question is simple: it gives the participant the opportunity to further develop the skills needed for success as an adult. Some of the important skills introduced, developed, and fostered by students include: loyalty, honesty, hard work, leadership, organization, perseverance, socialization, cooperation, and discipline. In a nutshell, activities are an excellent laboratory for life skills.

Research also tells us that one of the key characteristics of successful adults is their previous association in activities. Students who are active in the workings of their school tend to be the most successful academically and socially. In addition, they are able to develop and maintain more positive and lasting interpersonal relationships.

Philosophy

Activities are an extension of the educational experience offered to our students in the classroom atmosphere. We are not a separate entity – therefore our philosophy is the same as that of the district.

Goal/Motto

The Cody Public Schools Activities Department exists to provide motivated students with the opportunity to develop skills and interests in the arena of competitive sports and activities. Our goal is to provide as many students as possible with the opportunity to be involved in activities that will assist in the overall development of skills, knowledge, attitude, and interests at a level they are capable of and willing to work to achieve. Our approach to achieving this goal is very simple- *Do your best each and every time you have the opportunity.*

Objectives

The objectives we are striving to meet within the Cody Public Schools Activities Department are:

1. Develop the key skills which participation cultivates: leadership, cooperation, dependability, organization, sociability, self-control, respect for rules and regulations, role acceptance, prioritization and agenda development, good health habits, and teamwork.
2. Develop the fundamental physical skills needed for participation in activities.
3. Develop life long vocational and recreational interests.

Parent Code of Conduct

As parents, you are an invaluable part of your child's educational and athletic development. Your attitudes and actions have the most impact upon the outcome of your child's learning. Therefore, it is important that you see activities for what they can do to help your child's development. The Parent Code of Conduct is:

- Be a positive role model through your own actions to make sure your child has the best athletic experience possible.
- Be a "team" fan, not a "my kid" fan.
- Weigh what your children say; they may tend to slant the truth to their advantage.
- Show respect for the opposing players, coaches, spectators and support groups.
- Be respectful of all officials' decisions.
- Don't instruct your children before or after a game, because it may conflict with the coach's plans and strategies.
- Praise student-athletes in their attempt to improve themselves as students, as athletes and as people.
- Gain an understanding and appreciation for the rules of the contest.
- Recognize and show appreciation for an outstanding play by either team.
- Help your child learn that success is experienced in the development of their skills and that they can feel good about themselves, win or lose.
- Take time to talk with coaches in an appropriate manner, including proper time and place, if you have a concern. Be sure to follow the designated chain of command.
- Please reinforce our alcohol, tobacco and other drug-free policies by refraining from the use of any such substances before and during athletic contests or any event associated with student athletes including post season banquets, celebrations etc.
- Remember that a ticket to a school athletic event is a privilege to observe the contest.

Coaches Code Of Conduct

We understand that the Athletic Director and Coaches are leaders, and are dedicated to more than the X's and O's of competition. As a professional educator, leader and role model for students, the high school Coach or Athletic Director will:

- exemplify the highest moral character as a role model for young people
- recognize the individual worth and reinforce the self-image of each team member
- establish a realistic team goal or vision for each season and communicate that to the athletes and parents
- encourage and assist team members to set personal goals to achieve their highest academic potential
- create a set of training rules for athletes that reflect the positive values of abstaining from the use of alcohol, tobacco and other drugs (performance degrading substances)
- strive to develop the qualities of competence, character, civility and citizenship in each team member
- provide a safe, challenging and encouraging environment for practice and competition
- gain an awareness of the importance of prevention, care and treatment of athletic injuries
- respect the integrity and judgment of the game officials
- teach and abide by the rules of the game in letter and in spirit
- build and maintain ethical relationships with coaches and administrators
- strive for excellence in coaching skills and techniques through professional improvement
- promote personal fitness and good nutrition
- be modest in victory and gracious in defeat
- reinforce our alcohol, tobacco and other drug-free policies

These elements are included in the year-end coach evaluation completed by the Activities Director and/or administration.

Priorities

It is imperative that administrators, teachers, coaches, sponsors, students, and parents know and understand the priority system the Activities Department will be operating under when it is time to make decisions involving questions that arise. It is critical that we all understand and adhere to this system in order for our decision making to have continuity in each and every situation that confronts us.

So there is never a misunderstanding as to the importance of one element within the Activities Department to another, the following are our priorities in the order of their impact and importance to the system:

Coaches and Sponsors-Students
Programs
Parents/Patrons

So there is never a misunderstanding as to the importance of one element over another when making decisions concerning students - and when students make decisions concerning activities, the following are our priorities in the order of their impact and importance to our programs and teams:

Family
Education
Team

Parents and Sportsmanship

The following are just a few reminders of the important role parents play in modeling behaviors when involved in activities:

1. You are a fan and a spectator.
2. Please respect coaching decisions. These decisions relate to the team.
3. Officials are seldom perfect. Please be respectful of the job they do.
4. You are the host for all visiting teams – treat them with respect.
5. Cheer for our team – not against the opponent.

Common vs Personal Agendas

Cody Public Schools Activities offers many opportunities to grow and develop in ways that are beneficial to the group as a whole and as individuals. It is important to understand that for success to be achieved and growth to take place, everyone needs to be on the same page – which means to have a *common agenda*.

Teams that work together to reach common goals are the most successful. Teams that are unsuccessful – even though they may be winning – are those that have *personal agendas* prioritized ahead of the team agendas.

Every student should have personal goals and aspirations. However, they must be secondary to the *common agendas* set for the team. If you are more worried about your points, statistics, place, or playing time than the team score – we no longer have a team. What we have is a group of individuals seeking personal ambitions – no one ever wins for long under those circumstances, no matter how good they are as individuals.

Common agendas lead to team success. *Personal agendas* lead to failure no matter what the outcome of the contest.

The Activities Department's Chain of Command

Board of Education
Superintendent
Principals
Activities Director
Head Coaches and Sponsors
Assistant Coaches

The Activities Code

Interscholastic activities have been established in the Cody School District for the purpose of supplementing and contributing to the total educational program of this institution.

In order for the Activities Department of Cody Public Schools to reach its goals, there are certain objectives which must be met by the activity participant.

The Activities Department Specific Objectives

1. To educate the student body regarding the appreciation of sports and other activities and the best way to enjoy them from the point of view of good sportsmanship and conduct.
2. To serve as a focal point for the moral development, school spirit, and loyalty among students by providing a common meeting ground and enthusiasm shared by all.
3. To encourage a state required program for professional preparation of coaches/sponsors.
4. To insure employment of competent coaches and sponsors who are, first of all, very capable classroom teachers.
5. To conduct an activity program which will be highly competitive for both boys and girls and provide for maximum participation by Cody students.
6. To provide the best facilities possible and to properly maintain the facilities.
7. To encourage an effective communication system to the activity sponsors and coaches through the Activities Director, Superintendent, and the Board of Trustees.
8. To consider the activity program as an integral part of the curriculum.
9. To promote discipline and development of self-discipline among activity participants.
10. To be successful and to achieve the peace of mind which is a direct result of satisfaction in knowing you did your best to become the best that you are capable of becoming.

Pre-Participation Eligibility Requirements

Before any student can participate in any practice session for any activity offered through the Cody Public Schools, the following must be on file:

1. Physical form for sports
2. Activity Fee for sports
3. Activities Clearance Form

Activity Participation Fee

A non-refundable fee must be paid by the first practice. The fee schedule consists of:

Middle School Students	\$35.00 per sport
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Team Structures and Goals

In the great majority of our activity offerings, we will have six-team levels, each with its own structure and goals. The following system, or segments of it, will be used throughout the Activities Department:

1. Sixth/Seventh Grade- this is the entry level to all our programs. The emphasis here is on introduction of the activity, learning the basic fundamentals needed to be your best at the activity, and a healthy balance between competition and participation. We are not about winning at this level; we are about learning in an atmosphere that is dominated by having fun, learning the activity, and playing in competitive situations that meet the student's skill level.
2. Eighth Grade- this is step two in the six year process. The emphasis here is on building upon the basics and further developing the student's skills to match their personal maturation level. We need to continue the balance between competition and participation that is introduced in the seventh grade program.
3. Ninth Grade- this is a key level to the success of our program. The emphasis here is to hone and continue the development of the basic skills in the activity and introduce the more complex elements this level requires. The emphasis is still on a good balance between competition and participation. This is the first level of competition in which the number of participants on the team may be limited.
4. Sophomore- this is the first real intensely demanding level within our programs. The emphasis here is to further hone the basic skills and the complex elements of the activity within a regular conference schedule and atmosphere. The number of participants on the team may be limited.
5. Junior Varsity- this is the varsity preparatory level. Basic skills will still be a key concern and the complex elements are really emphasized in preparation for the varsity level. The number of participants on the team may be limited.
6. Varsity- basic skill development and complex systems are continually developed within the rigors of the intensely competitive demands of the conference and state competition. The number of participants on the team may be limited.

Participation, Recruitment, and Retention

Factors such as time, facilities, equipment, staffing, budgetary considerations, and tradition limit the ability of the Cody Public School System on providing participatory opportunities. However, our goal is to provide as many students with as many programs as possible. Athletically speaking, variety is the spice of life. We will do our best to keep as many students in our programs for as long as possible.

Students are encouraged to participate in activities throughout the entire school year. We need to make it clear that multi-activity participation has the most benefits. *The key benefit in competition may be the fact that activities in general are the best measuring tool of success as an adult.* Generally speaking, the most successful adults are those who were involved as students in activities because they learn the skills needed for future success: leadership, self-discipline, cooperation, work ethic, decision making, perseverance, etc....

Participation Selection

Certain teams at certain levels have limitations on the number of participants. These limitations are the result of factors including time, facilities, equipment, staffing, budgets, and tradition. We do not want to limit participation on any team. In fact, it is the most difficult decision any coach has to make, but in some instances it may have to be made.

You should know that many factors are considered before limitation decisions are made by the coaching staff. Perhaps the most important element may be the roles to be played on the team and how each part fits into the entire puzzle.

We will make the necessary decisions about limiting teams to certain numbers in as fair and professional manner as possible. Questions concerning such decisions should be directed to the Activities Director.

Parental/Booster Club Relations

The Activities Department encourages the participation of all parents in the Booster Club. This is a very important support system for the entire program. The ideal booster club is one that is made up of parents, fans, and coaches. We need this group to really promote activities and assist the department in providing our students with equipment, facilities, and opportunities they otherwise would not enjoy.

Positive relationships between all the interested parties is necessary for the overall success of each activity and the entire program. Each element, coach, sponsor, student, parent, booster, and fan has an important impact upon the outcome of the experience of the students involved in our activity program.

The key elements in establishing and maintaining positive relations between the coaches, sponsors, parents, boosters, and fans are as follows:

- everyone has to know and accept their role in the total scheme
- everyone has to know what is proper and improper behavior
- everyone has to understand and accept the realities of competition

When we have a system that really supports activities and students, the roles played by the coach, sponsor, parents, boosters, and fans should be as follows:

- Coach/Sponsor - are totally in charge of the program and the students. They decide team make-up, starting positions, strategies, playing time, and any other questions involving the welfare of their activity.
- Parents - support the program, the individual team members, and their child in a positive and constructive manner.
- Boosters - support the entire program, the coaches/sponsors, students, and work to improve facilities, equipment, and opportunities for every student in every activity.
- Fans - support the programs, coaches/sponsors, students, and parents.

Proper behavior by coaches, sponsors, parents, boosters, and fans is very important to the overall success of any activity or sport. The best way to know what is proper and improper is to know the role each element plays in the system and not overstepping the limitations of that role.

The realities that accompany competition are often what lead to poor relationships between coaches, parents, athletes, students, boosters, and fans. There are some real facts that everyone needs to understand and accept to avoid the pitfalls that can really hurt the experience students have in our program. Here are some areas that need to be taken into account when we begin our activity seasons:

- we will not win every contest
- you will not agree with every decision coaches/sponsors make
- your child is *a* key part of the program- but not necessarily *the* key part
- sometimes we will lose when we should win- and vice versa
- some athletes play more than others- that's the coaches decision
- everyone in the activity has a role to play-coaches/sponsors decide and define these roles
- don't live vicariously through your child –it's their turn, let them enjoy it
- just because you think it's right or wrong, doesn't necessarily mean it is
- officials make judgment calls- they have the authority to do so, you don't
- we are not in the business of providing students with college scholarships

Coach or Sponsor/Student/Parent Communications

It is vital for the success of the activity to have an open line of communication between the coaches/sponsors, students, and parents. However, there are certain topics that need to be avoided because they are detrimental to the welfare of the program as a whole. These topics are:

- 1. Participation time** - is entirely in the hands of the coach/sponsor and no one else
- 2. Game strategies** - are entirely in the hands of coaches/sponsors and no one else
- 3. Other students** - it's unprofessional to discuss other participants' talents

If parents have concerns in these areas, the Activities Director is your contact point. Coaches/sponsors are directed not to discuss these topics with anyone.

There are many things that are acceptable points of discussion between coaches/sponsors and parents – examples are:

1. What role will my child play in this activity and why?
2. What does my child have to do in order to be better?
3. What can we as parents do to help our child fulfill their expectations?

Inventory and Care of Equipment

Every student will be given equipment and/or uniforms that are provided by the District. Students are responsible for these items. Lost or damaged items will result in a fine being levied upon the student for replacement cost of the lost item. All uniforms and equipment must be returned after the season and before starting another activity or sport.

Weight Room

The weight room is one of the most important facilities in our entire department. It is in the weight room that our athletes get bigger, stronger, and faster. Parents need to encourage the use of this facility.

Sunday Participation

Under WHSAA rules, there will be no interscholastic activity scheduled on Sunday. There also shall be no practices on Sunday.

Wednesday Evening Practices

All school activities for students will be dismissed/showered and out of the building by 7:00 pm on Wednesday evenings.

Inclement Weather Situations

When school is dismissed early due to inclement weather, no practice or open gym will be conducted. All students will go home. When school start time is delayed due to inclement weather, no morning practices will be held. When school is cancelled, no practice or open gym will be held.

Cancellation of a Scheduled Event

In the event any scheduled activity has to be cancelled or postponed, the Activities Office will inform the news media in the community as soon as possible. Listen to the radio station or call the Activities Office at 587-6110.

Warning and Safety Equipment

WARNING: Although participation in supervised activities may be one of the least hazardous activities any student can engage in, **BY ITS NATURE, ACTIVITIES, ESPECIALLY ATHLETICS, INCLUDES A RISK OF INJURY THAT CAN RANGE IN SEVERITY FROM MILD TO CATASTROPHIC – INCLUDING TEMPORARY AND/OR PERMANENT DISABILITY, OR EVEN DEATH.** Serious injuries are not common; however, it is possible only to minimize the risk – not eliminate entirely.

STUDENTS MUST OBEY ALL SAFETY RULES, REPORT ALL PHYSICAL PROBLEMS TO THEIR COACHES, FOLLOW THE DIRECTED CONDITIONING PROGRAM, AND PERSONALLY INSPECT THEIR EQUIPMENT DAILY.

By signing the permission sheet, the family and student acknowledge that they are aware of risks involved.

Traveling with the Team

The philosophy of the Activities Department is that all students will travel with their team to and from all events. Exceptions to this are permissible, however, it must be for a very good reason. Parents can take a student from an activity – in cases where there is a definite need – but only after they have signed a release form which each coach will have. In cases where a student must travel to the activity with a parent, a travel release form must be completed in the Activities Office prior to departure and be approved by the Activities Office or administration. Any student traveling to or from an activity with someone other than their parent, must have a parent complete a travel release form prior to the trip and have it approved by the Activities Office or high school administration. Students eighteen years of age or older are not exempt from this policy.

Hazing

Hazing is defined as any activity that recklessly or intentionally endangers the mental health, physical health or safety of a student for the purpose of initiation or membership in or affiliation with any athletic team. Any hazing activity, whether by an individual or a group, shall be presumed to be a forced activity, even if a student willingly participates.

The athletic program does not permit any form of initiation or harassment, known as hazing, as part of any school sponsored activity. No student, coach, volunteer or district employee shall plan, direct, encourage, assist or engage in any hazing activity.

Suspected acts of hazing should be reported to the coach, activities director, principal or other school administrator.

Nondiscrimination

Park County School District No. 6, State of Wyoming, is committed to a policy of nondiscrimination in relation to race, color, national origin, sex, age, handicap and religion. This policy should prevail in all matters concerning staff, students, education programs, amend services and individuals with whom the school district does business.

The school staff should establish and maintain an atmosphere in which students can develop attitudes and skills for effective, cooperative living, including:

- a. respect for the individual regardless of economic status, intellectual ability, race, color, national origin, sex, age, handicap, or religion;
- b. respect for cultural differences;
- c. respect for economic, political, and social rights of others;
- d. respect for the rights of others to seek and maintain their own identities.

The school district, in keeping with the requirements of state and federal law, will strive to remove any vestige of prejudice and discrimination, in employment, assignment and promotion of personnel; in location and use of facilities; in educational offerings and instructional materials.

No person shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, be treated differently from another person or otherwise be discriminated against in any interscholastic, club or intramural activities offered by Park County School District # 6 of federal funds.

Rules of Conduct/Training Rules

Activity participants must always remember that participation in activities is a privilege, not a right. Students who participate in the activities program must observe regulations that are more restrictive than those relating to the general student community. Participation is both an honor and a responsibility. Activity participants earn recognition for the achievements as representatives of their school and its ideals. Those students who are selected for the privilege of membership on teams should conduct themselves at all times in such a manner as to be a credit to their parents or guardians, the school, and their community. Exemplary conduct is expected throughout the year, in or out of season, in or out of uniform, whether on campus or off.

Use or possession of alcohol, tobacco or illegal drugs/substances is expressly forbidden. This may include misuse of over the counter drugs as well.

Parties/Cyber Images

We expect our students to be healthy, safe and obey the law. If an activity participant attends a party where alcohol or drugs are being illegally dispensed, the student-athlete must leave the party and encourage teammates to leave with them.

Any identifiable image, photo or video which implicates a student to have been in possession or presence of drugs or portrays actual use, or out of character behavior or crime, shall be confirmation of a violation of the code. Since there is no way to establish a timeframe for when or location of where the image was taken, it shall be a responsibility that the student must assume. It must also be noted that there may be persons, who would attempt to implicate a student, by taking such images, to place them in a situation where they might be in violation of this code standard. This is our rationale for demanding that our students not place themselves in such environments.

Any participant involved in any of these illegal practices will be disciplined as follows:

- ◇ These rules are in effect for a student's entire middle school career, including summer. These rules begin the first day of the student's practice at Cody Middle School and end the last day of their eighth grade year. Offenses are cumulative.
 - ◇ Students are expected to be honest and forthcoming during the investigation of any infraction/violation of the training rules. If a student is not truthful during the administration's investigation, the suspension will be doubled.
 - ◇ All suspensions will carry over to the next sport, if the suspension has not been fulfilled.
 - ◇ If a student is involved in another activity during the suspension, the student will not be allowed to represent Cody Middle School until the suspension is completed.
1. **First Offense:** Two week suspension. Offender must be counseled by the resource counselor for one session before they are eligible to participate in a scheduled game or contest. *A parent or guardian must attend the session.*
 2. **Second Offense:** Four week suspension. Offender must be counseled by the resource counselor for a minimum of three sessions before they are eligible to participate in a scheduled game or contest. *A parent or guardian must attend the first session.*
 3. **Third Offense:** Offender is out of all activities for the remainder of their middle school career.
 - a. After one year suspension the student may appeal for reinstatement.
 - i. An appeals committee will evaluate the student for reinstatement.
- ◇ A student may not go out for another activity just to serve the penalty unless the student successfully begins and completes the entire season for that sport/activity.
 - ◇ If any student, while on a school sponsored activity, violates the law, he/she will be reported to the proper authorities.
 - ◇ Failure to demonstrate good citizenship including, but not limited to, violation of any student conduct rules, harassment or bullying conduct or violation of any laws, may result in suspension or removal from activities as deemed appropriate, in the discretion of the principal/activities director.
 - ◇ No Cody student shall have in his/her possession any school-owned equipment, from this school or any other school, other than that which is to be worn for practice or competition.
 - ◇ Students who miss school to participate in an activity shall be responsible for coordinating all make-up work with their teachers.
 - ◇ Students representing the school will dress and appear in a manner which is a credit to the school. Dress and appearance will be prescribed by coaches/sponsors. **BE A CLASS ACT!**
 - ◇ Conflicts between activity programs and the attendance of a student at one or the other should be handled by the student and the respective coaches/sponsors well in advance with no penalty to the student.

CMS Rules of Eligibility

In order to compete for and/or represent Cody Middle School in any activity, the student must satisfy the following eligibility requirements:

- a. The student must be passing all classes at the time of representation. This will be monitored on a weekly basis.

- b. Each activity coach/sponsor must provide a handbook of rules unique to the activity for each parent and student in the program. Rules may be more restrictive than those in the the Activities handbook. Parents/guardians and the student athlete will be required to sign an acknowledgement that they have read and understand the rules for a particular activity and the activities handbook. Rules that are more restrictive must be reviewed and approved by the Activities Director.

Suspensions and Absence Guidelines

Students who are serving an in-school or out-of school suspension may **not** practice and/or compete on the day(s) they are suspended from regular classroom participation.

In order to practice on any given day, the student must be in school for at least one half of the school day. In order to compete or travel to an event on any given day, the student must be in school the entire day. Exceptions to this rule would be scheduled medical appointments, death or serious illness in their family, or special circumstances beyond the control of the student. All such cases must be approved through the Activities Office or the Cody Middle School Administration. Common sense must prevail in all cases. In a situation where this policy warrants further investigation, administration reserves the right to delay the suspension until the next scheduled contest. Our objective is to get the students to school the day of competition. Coaches/sponsors need to explain the importance of students participating in activities adhering to the same standards as any other student in relation to absences from school.