

# **PTHSS Guidelines, Expectations, and Rules of Conduct**

## **Guiding Principles**

The guiding principle of PTHSS is to honor Jesus Christ in all we say and do. PTHSS and its member families and player participants will conduct themselves in such a way that those who cross our path can't help but notice a difference in our lives.

As such, Romans 12:2 will be another guiding principle:

*Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.*

Also, the name “Warriors” was selected for our teams, because, as Ephesians 6:10-12 says:

*Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. Put on the full armour of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.*

## **Eligibility**

PTHSS is currently structured to provide an athletic program for Middle School and High School home schooled students. Middle School is defined as grades 6 through 8. High School is defined as grades 9 through 12. The following paragraphs define the specific eligibility requirements for PTHSS participation.

1. A player shall become ineligible to play on any PTHSS-sponsored sport team on the next September 1 following that player's 19<sup>th</sup> birthday
2. Normally, High School participation will be limited to eligible players in grades 9 through 12, who are 14 years of age before September 1 of the current school year. If no middle school team is offered, eighth grade students may “play-up” on the High School team (either the Junior Varsity or Varsity). Students in grades 9 through 12 will have first preference over eighth grade students. In addition, to be eligible for PTHSS participation at the high school level, a player must be 13 years old by 1 September of the current school year.

NOTE: Currently PTHSS does not have a maximum limit on the years of varsity participation; however, please be aware that both public and private school sports organizations limit the years of varsity participation to 4 years, including prior competitive experience (this would likely include PTHSS participation).

3. In order to participate in PTHSS Middle School activities a student must be at least 10 years of age before September 1 of the current school year.

4. A player is ineligible to play on any sub-varsity team on the next September 1 following that player's 17<sup>th</sup> birthday. Note: A 12<sup>th</sup> grader is prohibited from playing on a sub-varsity team regardless of his or her age.
5. A player must be living at home with a parent or guardian.
6. A player must be home schooled. "Home schooled" is defined by PTHSS as follows:
  - The player's parents or legal guardians set the date and requirements for high school graduation
  - The player's parents or legal guardians select and approve the course materials and study schedules
  - The player's parents or legal guardians select the curriculum, tutors, correspondence courses, videos, computer courses, or similar resources for their child's education
  - The player is not eligible to play that sport at a public or private school or college
  - The player is taking no more than 8 hours of dual-credit and/or college courses

Please Note: The organizations that sponsor the national home school sports tournament in which the PTHSS Warriors participate each year have varying, and in some cases, more stringent requirements, than PTHSS. Of particular note is the National Christian Home School Basketball Championship. Their eligibility requirements are very specific regarding the percentage of education accomplished in the home, by the parent. For our basketball players we strongly recommend you visit their web site at <http://www.homeschoolbasketball.com/> and ensure you are meeting their more stringent requirements if you wish to participate in that tournament with the Warriors.

7. A player is ineligible if that player has gone through a home school, public school, private school, or Christian school high school graduation ceremony prior to that season's first game.
8. The player must remain in good academic standing and must be completing a course of study as prescribed by their parents.
9. A player cannot play on another home school, public, private, or Christian school team in the same sport at the same time as playing on a PTHSS-sponsored team.
10. If a player started the season on another home school, public, private, or Christian school team, no transfer shall be allowed in the same sport during the season without the approval of the PTHSS Board.
11. Exceptions to any eligibility requirement may be made only by express approval of the PTHSS Board.

## **Competition and Commitment**

The PTHSS athletic program has many objectives; however, the nature of our activities and games will be competitive. This is not a recreational sports program. Most home

school support groups in the Parker and Tarrant County areas offer recreational sports activities. PTHSS's goal *is not* to duplicate these home school support group programs.

Because of this competitive nature of our program, we expect a high-level of commitment from our players. We understand that sports are not life. There will be times when important activities will need to take priority over PTHSS involvement. However, because we believe commitment exhibits and grows godly character, PTHSS is seeking a strong level of commitment from the players and from their parents. One thing we desire our athletes to learn is that things worth doing require a level of commitment – as we get older that level of commitment usually increases. Also, as our children get older they must learn that they will have to make choices in this life. How are they going to spend their time? We desire that our players learn that the American dream of “having it all” is a myth. The only real way to “have it all” is through a relationship with Jesus Christ!

Because of the competitive nature of our programs, we will field the best teams possible. We desire that all players learn, grow, and perfect their skills; however, we do not dictate an “equal-time” philosophy. It is expected that players that earn a “starting” position will see more playing time than players who do not. Nevertheless, a “starting” position is always open to competition and those that exhibit a Christ-like attitude, hustle, and teamwork – in addition to skill – will have a great opportunity for earning that “starting” position.

#### **A Special Note Regarding Our Junior Varsity Programs and Games:**

The PTHSS approach and philosophy for our Junior Varsity programs (which could be an entire team or selected games scheduled for our less experienced high school players) is to develop the talents and skills of these less experienced high school players. Although, as an organization we want to be competitive and we want to win at the JV level, developing the abilities of our JV (or less experienced high school) players is a more important objective than it is with our varsity team. In fact, we select our varsity players, *because* they have already developed a certain level of skill and ability.

Our JV players pay the same registration and player fees as our varsity players; they practice just as much and just as hard. They deserve a time to play, a time to experience the game situation, a time to give their all on the field or the court, to try, and maybe sometimes fail, but to be able to come back and try again. They should experience what it means to contribute in a great win AND to be part of a hard loss. Our JV athletes are the PT Warriors varsity players of the future.

In general, we will play our JV (or less experienced players) in the JV games. That being said, there may be selected circumstances where we invite varsity players to play down for any of the following reasons:

- 1) To help the JV team in a particularly weak area against a particularly strong opponent.
- 2) To give our varsity players some selected time (i.e., skill development) in an area they may be struggling in or working on.

- 3) To address a shortage of JV players for a given game or games.

In all cases, the team coaches will be the ones to determine the need for inviting selected varsity players to play down. It is our goal to minimize these circumstances. Each specific sport may also communicate additional guidelines regarding JV play during their respective seasons.

## **Attendance**

Consistent with the expected level of commitment, players are expected to attend all practices and games. In addition, all players are expected to be on time for all practices and games. On-time arrival is defined to be 15 minutes prior to the announced practice start time and 60 minutes before the game start time, unless stated otherwise by the coach.

If a player must miss or be late for a game or practice, the player should *personally* contact the coach, as early as possible, to let him or her know of the situation. While there will be no immediate consequences for excused late or missed attendance, game playing time may be affected at the coach's discretion.

## **Respect for Authority**

Respect for authority is an important character quality taught by Christ himself. As such, PTHSS athletes are to be above reproach in this area. Players will, under no circumstances, talk or behave negatively or with disrespect to officials, opposing players or coaches, their own teammates, their own coaches or any other persons in authority.

Disrespectful actions or attitudes during the course of a game are means for immediate removal by the coach. At the coach's discretion, warnings or reprimands from an official because of a player's conduct will result in that player's immediate removal from the game. Ejection from the game will result in that player being removed not only from that game, but for the next game as well. In addition, if a player is ejected from a game because of their conduct, the player must discuss the incident with a representative from the PTHSS board, explain his or her actions, and propose a plan to correct it in the future. Disrespectful attitudes or actions during practice or other activities will be properly disciplined by the coach or other responsible adult.

1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1 define the character qualities of overseers and elders within the Church. PTHSS will use these same criteria to select and retain coaches and leaders in our organization (Exception: woman may coach our girl's athletic teams). If our athletes are to be above reproach in their respect for authority, our coaches and leaders must be held to an even higher standard. Behavior inconsistent with that defined in 1 Timothy 3 or Titus 1 will not be tolerated and will be dealt with swiftly by the PTHSS board. As a minimum, coaches will be held to the same disciplinary actions as identified for our athletes.

Parents should be role models for their children. Parents and other spectators are vital representatives of PTHSS and witnesses for Jesus Christ. Parents and PTHSS fans are

expected to cheer and comment in a positive manner, encouraging and supporting all players, coaches, and officials. When the players are on the field, the coach is the responsible authority figure for that team. Parents and PTHSS fans are expected to leave the coaching to the coaches. Players become confused and frustrated when instructions are shouted from many directions. The coaches have a purpose behind their methods, and correction should be done through them. Parents are encouraged to come to as many games as possible, because support and enthusiasm add excitement to the game. Parents and other spectators should refrain from openly criticizing coaches, officials, and players. Parents should demonstrate trust and respect to those in authority at all times.

## **Anger, Speech, and Demeanor**

Like-wise, our words and speech should be “seasoned with salt.” As described in scripture our “Yes” should be “Yes” and our “No” should be “No.” Cursing, using the Lord’s name in vain, or fits of anger will not be tolerated. Any of these actions will result in immediate removal from games or administration of proper discipline at practice.

As discussed above, our coaches and leaders will be held to the standard defined in 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1. Behavior inconsistent with that defined by these scriptures will not be tolerated and will be dealt with swiftly by PTHSS board. Again, in this area, we expect parents to be exemplary role models for their children.

## **Discipline**

As PTHSS strives to honor Jesus Christ and be salt and light to the world, it is imperative that we maintain a disciplined organization. Proper discipline to single incidents of inappropriate behavior has been addressed above. With the Christian young people and adults that are expected to be a part of PTHSS, we would never expect to have to deal with recurring incidences of this type; however, if an athlete or coach continues to display unwillingness to change, blatant disrespect for authority, or attitudes and actions that are contrary to the PTHSS Christian philosophy, that athlete or coach will be removed from the team at that time.

An athlete may be dismissed from a team due to: 1) an uncoachable or uncooperative attitude, or 2) an act or deed that harms the Christian testimony of the team and / or PTHSS.

A single incident involving a coach or other PTHSS leader displaying inappropriate behavior (as defined above) during a PTHSS event will require that person meet with a representative from the PTHSS board or, depending on the specific incident, with the entire Board and: 1) Explain their behavior, 2) Seek forgiveness and reconciliation from the organization and any offended party, and 3) repent and present a concrete plan for ensuring the behavior is not repeated. A second similar incident involving the same coach or leader will be cause for removal from their PTHSS position.

As stated several times, it is the goal of PTHSS to accurately reflect the character of Christ in our attitudes and sportsmanship in an ever-increasing way. Coaches will model,

look for, and encourage this character. Any athlete who desires not to pursue godly character will not play for PTHSS.

## **Conflict Resolution**

PTHSS will use the process provided for us in Matthew 18 to deal with conflict. In the event that a player has a question or complaint, he/she first must go to the person (coach or other player) in a spirit of reconciliation and love to work out any differences. This needs to take place before a parent confronts the coach! If the problem is not resolved, the player may request a meeting with the person of conflict and the coach. If the issue is not resolved between players and coach, then a meeting with a representative of the board may be requested. If the coach is the person in conflict with a player, the player may request a meeting with his/her parents and the coach after the player has talked to the coach personally. If the athlete, coach, and parent still have issues to be resolved, then they may request a meeting with a board representative.

## **Uniforms, Appearance, & Dress**

Uniform fees for PTHSS will be coordinated and advertised at the beginning of each sports season. These fees may be assessed as a part of the overall registration fee or as a separate fee. The major uniform items will normally be purchased by the organization and distributed to the players to ensure consistency in our appearance as well as to take advantage of team discounts. Players may be required to purchase some smaller uniform items (e.g., socks, shoes, etc.) on their own. PTHSS will coordinate these other required uniform items with the players and parents; however, purchase of these items will be the responsibility of the players or their parents prior to the season. In order to exhibit team unity and a professional appearance, it is important that all players wear all required uniform items to all games. Uniforms should be freshly laundered for all games. At the coach's discretion, shirts may be required to be tucked in.

All our athletes should maintain a neat, groomed appearance and should dress appropriately for the specific sporting activity. Any rules applicable for game play in a given sport also apply to the PTHSS practice sessions (e.g.; no jewelry allowed). The obvious exception here is that game uniforms are not required for practice sessions. The following are the PTHSS general guidelines for dress; however, the specific implementation of these guidelines is at the discretion of the Director and/or head coach for each sport. Likewise, each sport may choose to distribute additional specific guidelines at the start of each season.

The PTHSS male athletes should maintain a neat, groomed appearance. Hair will be neat and maintained in a short cut. Facial hair, unnatural hair color, and extreme hair styles will not be allowed for the PTHSS players. Styles above the ears, the collar, and out of the eyes are strongly encouraged. Practice dress should be appropriate for the activity and weather and should not focus attention on the player, but should demonstrate a humble spirit.

For the PTHSS female athletes we will place a strong emphasis on modest dress, both for game uniforms and practice dress. We desire our young ladies to be noticed, not for their dress or appearance, but for their godly and pure character. *“Your beauty should not come from outward adornment, ... Instead, it should be that of your inner self, the unfading beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is of great worth in God’s sight.” (1 Peter 3:3a, 4).* Shirts should be loose and not low cut. Mid-riffs should be covered. Shorts should also be loose and long. Shorts should normally be worn at the waist and should extend to at least the players fingertips.

## **Medical Release Agreement**

Each PTHSS member family will read, fill-out, and sign a Medical Release Agreement form. Parents will include at least two valid phone numbers for contacting them in their absence, should their son or daughter need immediate medical attention. The parents will also provide their physician’s name and contact information.

PTHSS does carry limited insurance coverage; however, please know that although rare, serious medical injury can occur from sporting activities. The limited coverage we carry is only intended to supplement a primary medical policy. For your family’s own well being, please ensure that your son or daughter is covered with adequate medical insurance.

## **Guidelines, Expectations, and Rules of Conduct Agreement**

Each player and their parents, along with coaches and any PTHSS leaders, will sign an agreement form signifying that they have read, understand, and agree to abide by these guidelines, expectations, and rules of conduct.

## **Payment of Fees**

PTHSS is a not-for-profit organization. Competitive sports are expensive. Facility maintenance, facility rental, equipment, uniforms, and officials’ fees are only part of the expenses incurred by a competitive athletic team. PTHSS will do everything in our power to keep player fees as low as possible. Fund-raisers, sponsorships, and concession sales will all be used to partially offset PTHSS costs. Player registration and PTHSS family membership fees will be publicized each summer in preparation for the upcoming school year. In order to participate in PTHSS, fees must be paid on time. In addition, PTHSS member families are expected to participate in fund-raisers.

Special financial circumstances can be discussed with the director of the specific sport or can be brought before the PTHSS board. It is our goal to not turn any young athlete away due to financial issues.

## **Transportation**

Transportation to and from games and practices is the sole responsibility of the athletes and the parents.

## **Facilities**

Birchman Baptist Church and several other local churches have shown great Christian charity in graciously allowing us to use their athletic facilities. PTHSS will periodically conduct maintenance and clean-up of the facilities we use. We need all PTHSS members to pitch in and help with this work. In addition, we have established a good reputation with the organizations whose facilities we use. We want to maintain this reputation. Please be good stewards of what the Lord has blessed us with. PTHSS members will demonstrate the utmost in respect and care for the facilities we use. We will do all we can to keep the facilities clean and in good working order.