

**PHILADELPHIA  
PUBLIC LEAGUE**



**CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS  
2023**

**INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETIC PROGRAM  
DIVISION OF ATHLETICS**

**PHILADELPHIA PUBLIC LEAGUE**

**CONSTITUTION & BY-LAWS**

**THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF PHILADELPHIA  
PHILADELPHIA, PA**

**2023**

# CONSTITUTION OF THE PHILADELPHIA PUBLIC LEAGUE

## ARTICLE I

### NAME

The association shall be known as the “Philadelphia Public League” (the “League” or “PPL”).

## ARTICLE II

### STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The fundamental purpose of the Philadelphia Public League shall be to promote interscholastic athletics for students in schools of The School District of Philadelphia (the “School District”) and participating Philadelphia charter schools authorized by the Board of Education (the “BOE”), so that participants will enjoy the benefits of the physical fitness, leadership, character, teamwork, sportsmanship and discipline that involvement in athletics can bring. The Philadelphia Public League recognizes athletics as a co-curricular activity and asserts that participation in athletics is a privilege, and not a right, for those student-athletes who take part in the variety of sports offered by the Philadelphia Public League.

The Philadelphia Public League dedicates itself to establishing and maintaining the highest standards of good sportsmanship, leadership, scholarship, fair play and citizenship, so that students’ participation in interscholastic athletic programs enriches their educational experience. The Philadelphia Public League also commits itself to a principle of equal access to its interscholastic programs for all students that takes into consideration factors that affect the ability of students to participate safely in school-sponsored athletic events.

The Philadelphia Public League and its members shall execute fully and faithfully the requirements of this Constitution, and the By-Laws, and shall require and enforce compliance by all student-athletes, coaches, athletic administrators, principals, other school officials and other schools and parties. In addition, the Philadelphia Public League may issue future regulations, which further define and interpret provisions of the Philadelphia Public League Constitution and By-Laws.

The Philadelphia Public League shall also abide by, comply with, and carry out the rules and regulations promulgated by the Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association (“PIAA”). In those instances where the rules of the Philadelphia Public League are stricter than those of the PIAA, the rules of the Philadelphia Public League shall govern.

## **ARTICLE III**

### **MISSION AND OBJECTIVES**

The PPL is our identity. We are a League – a unity – guided by the governance of the School District and its mission to deliver on the civil right of every child in Philadelphia to an excellent public-school education, and to ensure that all children graduate from high school ready to succeed as fully engaged citizens of our world. Therefore, if our League does not produce a better person, it has no reason to exist. The directives below are intended to guide all concerned with making our competition a healthy experience in individual and social growth.

- Providing sound academic education and personal formation.
- Building communities of citizenship and service.
- Encouraging and forming others in roles of leadership and service

Our core values are supported by the following objectives:

- To promote the physical well-being of students by providing the opportunity of interscholastic competition in well-rounded sports programs.
- To promote community among the general student body of each school as well as respect and regard for the student body of each competing school.
- To foster the discipline, work ethic, and cooperation necessary for successful teamwork.
- To promote the natural virtues of honesty and fair play in competition.
- To encourage the acceptance of victory with modesty and of defeat with grace.

## **ARTICLE IV**

### **MEMBERSHIP**

Membership in the Philadelphia Public League shall be limited to high schools under the supervision of the Philadelphia Board of Education of the School District and any charter high schools authorized by the Philadelphia Board of Education, which elect to become members of the League.

1. All Public High Schools in the School District and approved charter high schools located in the City of Philadelphia shall be eligible to apply for membership in the PPL.
2. The following standards shall be required for membership in the PPL:
  - a. Public High Schools in the School District have the privilege of being members of the PPL, subject to compliance with the membership requirements. Eligible

charter high schools located in the City of Philadelphia may become members upon the application and approval of the President and Board of Directors of the League, as provided in this Constitution and the By-Laws.

- b. To be eligible for consideration for membership:
  1. The High School must have a junior class;
  2. Schools with a senior class must have at least five (5) PPL sports, one of which must be either football or basketball; and
  3. High Schools without a senior class must have at least three (3) PPL sports, one of which must be basketball.
  4. Each High School must be a District XII and PIAA member school
3. The President of the League has the responsibility to acquaint prospective members of the League with these requirements.
4. All requests for admission into the PPL shall be referred in writing to the President and Chairperson of the Board of Directors one (1) full year before the date of expected admission.
5. The affirmative vote of two-thirds (2/3<sup>rd</sup>) of the League's Board of Directors shall be required to admit a new school into the League.
6. A member school desiring to enter a varsity team into a particular sport, provided Article IV, Section 2, is adhered to, shall submit a letter of request ("Request") signed by the Principal which shall be presented by the Athletic Director to the President and Chairperson of the Board of Directors not less than thirty (30) days prior to the conclusion of the same sport's season, including playoffs. This letter shall include the identity and contact information for the proposed team coach.
  - a. In compliance with PIAA, District Committee and League policies and procedures, the school must provide, as an attachment to the Request, evidence of its ability to support the program. Such evidence must include the following: Letters of interest from students that equal the requisite number of participants necessary to field a team; permission to use an athletic facility that has been approved by a Sports Chair as being in conformity with NFHS/PIAA/PPL requirements; letters of commitment, or equivalent for equipment and both home and away uniforms (for applicable sports); a letter reflecting school administrative support regarding operational feasibility, and any other documentation required by PIAA, District Committee and League policies and procedures. Member schools that are participating in that varsity sport at the time of the Request shall vote on the Request at the next meeting of the Board of

Directors. Permission for the school to participate in the sport requires a simple majority of those member schools voting.

- b. Once approved, all programs will enter the League at the Junior Varsity level. If the League does not have a JV level in that sport, the team will be classified as an Independent Team and will be given the opportunity to participate in an independent schedule. A new program can also be brought in as an Independent Team if the board feels that their petition is lacking in one or more areas but sufficient enough to warrant an opportunity to compete.
  - c. All new programs are expected to compete at the JV level, or Intramural Club Team if no JV level exists, for a period of two (2) years. After the first year of JV or Intramural Club Team play however, the program shall have the opportunity to appeal to the Board of Directors for 1) admittance into the Varsity League, or 2) moving to JV level if it is an Intramural Club Team. An Intramural Club Team may only appeal to be a Varsity Team if no JV level league exists for that sport. If the program is in a School District school, then the program must seek and have received the formal approval of the School District's Division of Athletics prior to the program's appeal to the League Board of Directors and the coach must have passed the Written Coaching Exam. Prior to the meeting of the Board of Directors, the Member School must obtain approvals in conformity with subsection IV.6.d., below. Member Schools must make all appeals in writing, signed by the school Principal, and presented by the member school's Athletic Director to the League Board of Directors at a regularly scheduled meeting. No appeal shall be granted unless and until the team coach provides evidence of completed NFHS Level 1 (AIC) certification.
  - d. Final approval into the League and appeals to move up levels of competition, will be decided by a vote of the PPL Board of Directors, with recommendation by the Sport Chairperson, and approval of the PPL President. If the program is still not viable after two (2) seasons, it may be dropped and can reapply after a period of one (1) year has passed.
7. For a member school to withdraw from varsity competition in a particular sport, the school should submit a letter of intent, signed by the Principal and presented by the Athletic Director, to the President and Chairperson of the League Board of Directors thirty (30) days prior to the conclusion of the same sport's season, including playoffs. The President will then inform the Board of Directors, District XII and the PIAA at their next meeting.
  8. PPL member schools that sponsor PPL sports must participate in the PPL for those sports.
  9. a. PPL member schools may not, at any time, participate in PPL sports in any other league and may not, at any time, participate in PPL sports via an independent schedule. This clause shall not preclude programs from competing in games against teams that are

outside the PPL League so long as such games are held during the official PIAA schedule for that sport and provided those games do not interfere or conflict with scheduled League play, including League, District XII and PIAA postseason.

b. If the Board of Directors approves a schedule that does not coincide with the traditional PIAA schedule, subsection 9.a. is automatically suspended. Any Member Team who participates in non-League games outside of the approved League schedule during said suspension shall not also participate in PPL competitions for those sports in which such play occurred. This shall not be considered by the PPL of a voluntary withdrawal.

In the event of a School District of Philadelphia weather-related cancellation of athletic activities, a Member School that is a charter school may hold previously scheduled athletic activities in conformity with Applicable Laws, so long as it is open that day and that it can provide requisite staffing and oversight. The School District of Philadelphia assumes no responsibility for transportation or liability related to a charter school's decision to exercise this option. Such a decision will be taken solely at the Member School's risk. *[When weather-related cancellations impact a member school's schedule, courtesy will be given to prioritize the health and safety of all participants].*

10. A school may withdraw from a PPL sport and still retain membership in the PPL. In the case of an involuntary withdrawal from a PPL sport occasioned by circumstances beyond the school's control, *i.e.*, reasons such as a voluntary decision to withdraw from a sport; the school may reapply to participate in that sport in the following season. A school that involuntarily withdraws from a PPL sport, *i.e.*, for reasons other than those beyond the school's control, may not participate in that sport for two (2) successive seasons.

## ARTICLE V

### ORGANIZATION AND STRUCTURE

1. The League shall conduct its organization, legislation and administration through a President, Vice President(s), and a Board of Directors, under the jurisdiction of the Division of Athletics for the School District and in accordance with District XII and the PIAA
2. The President of the League shall be the then-current Executive Director of Athletics for the School District, and final decision authority and oversight of the League shall rest with the Superintendent or their designee.
3. The President shall invite the Principals of prospective member schools to attend all meetings of the Board of Directors to acquaint themselves with the policies and procedures of the PPL.
4. The **President** shall have the authority and duty:

- a. To oversee interscholastic activities in and among the PPL member schools.
- b. To interpret the provisions of this Constitution of the PPL and the By-Laws, and such rules, regulations and amendments as the League may adopt.
- c. To hear appeals, and to decide matters in dispute as submitted by the PPL Infractions Committee and not covered by PIAA rules.
- d. To set and enforce penalties for any violation of the Constitution, By-Laws, and Code of Conduct, and to review sanctions levied by the PPL Infractions Committee.
- e. To send a report of the minutes of all league meetings to each member of the Board of Directors.
- f. To appoint one (1) **Sport Chairperson** for each League sport who shall:
  - 1) Appoint appropriate certified health and safety personnel for all post-season contests held at neutral sites.
  - 2) Act as liaison between the Board of Directors and the coaches, conducting meetings and submitting the recommendations of the coaches for action by the Board of Directors and the President. The Coaches' Association shall serve in an advisory capacity only.
  - 3) Update the Bluebooks, *i.e.*, the document defining rules and procedures for each sport offered by the League, for a designated sport at the conclusion of the regular season and promptly distribute these Bluebooks to the members of the Board of Directors.
  - 4) Be responsible for the League schedule for the next school year.
  - 5) To supervise post-season and championship competition in the designated sport.
    - a) Responsible for submitting a financial report containing ticket reconciliation, and income and expenses after each post-season contest for which an admission charge is required.
  - 6) To resolve problems involving individual sports by providing for voting, restricted to Athletic Directors of the schools participating in that sport.
  - 7) To decide all issues by majority vote of those voting.
  - 8) To send a report of the minutes of all meetings to the President, and members of the Board of Directors.



5. The Vice President(s) of the League shall be the then-current staff member(s) of the Division of Athletics, which will be a non-voting position(s) within the leadership of the Philadelphia Public League
6. The **Vice President(s)** shall have the authority and duty:
  - a. To assist the President in the execution of the President's duties as directed by the President.
  - b. To faithfully execute the duties and responsibilities of the position(s) created by the President.
7. The Board of Directors shall consist of the Athletic Directors of the member schools in the League. The Board of Directors, through its officers, will make recommendations to the President for any changes to the organization, legislation and administration, of the Philadelphia Public League
8. The **Board of Directors** has the authority and duty:
  - a. To apply and enforce the Constitution as well as the Rules of Play, League Policies, and the League Codes of Conduct.
  - b. To oversee operations of all athletic contests among member schools.
  - c. To vote to approve schedules, adopt NFHS and PIAA playing rules, appoint assignors to select officials, and arrange for other practical details, such as post-season formats and divisional alignment, for the efficient administration of all League sports.
  - d. To vote to confirm, by a simple majority, one (1) Sport Chairperson for each League sport that is hired by the President who shall:
    - i. Act as liaison between the Board of Directors and the coaches including conducting Coaches Association meetings and submitting the recommendations of the coaches for action by the Board of Directors and the President [not otherwise delegated elsewhere herein]. When making communications pursuant to this subsection, the Sports Chairs shall provide these communications to both coaches and athletic directors, to the extent practicable. The Coaches' Association shall serve in an advisory capacity only.
9. The officers of the Board of Directors and appointed members shall make up the **PPL Leadership Committee**. The officers of the Board shall be (1) Chairperson; (2) Vice Chairperson; (3) Secretary; (4) Treasurer; (5) Senior Woman Administrator and; (6) Charter School Representative. In addition, the appointed members shall be; (7) Sport Leadership Coordinator; (8) Sport Chairpersons Representative; (9) Athletic Directors

Representative; (10) Middle School Representative and; (11) Officials' Representative. The PPL Leadership Committee shall also have non-voting members including (12) Principal Representative and; (13) School District Representative. In addition, the Immediate Past-Chairman shall serve in the role for a period of two (2) years, to support the duties of the Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson during their respective terms.

10. The duties of the **Chairperson** of the Board of Directors shall be:

- a. To chair all League Athletic Director ("AD") meetings
- b. To act as liaison between the Board of Directors and the President.
- c. To supervise annually the updating of the Philadelphia Public League Bluebooks and Constitution & By-Laws.
- d. To call special meetings when necessary
- e. To receive all alleged violations of the Code of Conduct and schedule appropriate meetings according to this PPL Constitution.
- f. To provide for consistent interpretation of all areas of the Constitution and By-Laws.

11. The duties of the **Vice-Chairperson** of the Board of Directors shall be:

- a. To preside at meetings in the absence of the Chairperson.
- b. To assist the Chairperson in the duties of the oversight of the PPL.
- c. To assist in supervising annually the updating of the League Bluebooks and the Constitution and By-Laws.
- d. To provide consistent interpretation of all areas of the Constitution and By-laws.

12. The duties of the **Secretary** of the Board of Directors shall be:

- a. To record the minutes of all regular and special meetings.
- b. To submit the minutes of each meeting to the Board of Directors for approval at their next meeting. The Secretary shall deliver these minutes to each member of the Board of Directors and the President prior to the next meeting. The Secretary shall also send a copy of the minutes to the School District's Division of Athletics.
- c. To prepare an annual directory of the Board of Directors and to distribute a copy of this directory to the President, to each member of the Board of Directors, to each Principal, and to each Assistant Superintendent.

- d. To aid the Chairperson and all the other officers in all of the normal functions of the office of Secretary.

13. The duties of the League **Treasurer** shall be:

- a. To maintain on a current and ongoing basis all of the financial books, records and accounts of the League, under and subject to the supervision and requirements of the School District, including all accounting and fiscal requirements set forth in the Public School Code applicable to school districts of the first class.
- b. To report periodically to the Board, Officers and Members of the League on the revenues and expenses of the League, its budgets, proposed and approved and the conformity of revenues and expenditures to approved budgets.
- c. To report as required to the School District regarding the finances of the League.
- d. To facilitate and cooperate fully with all public audits of the finances of the League by any public auditor having jurisdiction over the League or the School District.
- e. The Treasurer shall be an employee of the School District.

14. The duties of the League **Senior Woman Administrator** shall be:

- a. To serve as an officer of the Board of Directors, representing female athletic administrators.
- b. To assist the chairperson in the duties of the oversight of the PPL.
- c. To communicate, educate and enforce the compliance guidelines under the Title IX Amendments Act of 1972 to the Board of Directors.
- d. To report periodically to the Board, Officers and Members of the League on Title IX concerns that affect League operations and Title IX compliance.
- e. To support and promote the annual Girls and Women in Sport Day.

15. The duties of the League **Charter School Representative** shall be:

- a. To serve as an officer of the Board of Directors, representing the Charter school athletic administrators.
- b. To assist the chairperson in the duties of the oversight of the PPL.
- c. To represent charter schools in developing new policies and procedures of the PPL.

- d. To serve as liaison to the Charter Schools Office of the Board of Education.
- 16. Members who wish to submit a proposal for consideration at a monthly meeting, must submit the proposal in writing to the President and Chairperson at least ten (10) days prior to the date of the meeting. In addition, each member of the Board should receive a detailed written copy of the proposal prior to the day of the meeting.
- 17. The President shall hold meetings for the Board of Directors on a monthly schedule during the scholastic year (August – June). Other meetings may be called at the discretion of the President and Chairperson, if the immediate urgency arises.
- 18. All Board of Directors meetings will be held in person at rotating locations throughout the league membership, unless otherwise restricted. In the event a meeting cannot be held in person, a virtual format will take place.
- 19. The Officers of the Board of Directors shall be elected at the last meeting of the alternating scholastic year for at least a two (2) year term.

**ARTICLE V (a)**

**LEAGUE PRESIDENTS**

2016 – Present Dr. James Patrick Lynch, Ed.D.

**BOARD CHAIRPERSONS**

2017 – 2019 Mr. Kenneth Geiser (George Washington High School)

2019 – Present Mr. Barry Strube (West Philadelphia High School)

**ARTICLE VI**

**FINANCES**

- 1. There shall be membership dues for the schools in the League for the PPL. The membership dues are as follows:
  - a. Philadelphia Public League: \$1,500 per member school;
  - b. The League Board by majority vote may alter and increase these dues from time to time.
- 2. The League shall establish, under the supervision of the School District and the Philadelphia Board of Education, one or more League accounts, into which the League

shall deposit all membership dues, gate receipts and other League income, including, *e.g.*, grants, sponsorships, *etc.*, and the proceeds of all League-sponsored postseason events.

3. The President and Board of Directors shall use PPL accounts for approved expenses incurred by the League.
4. At the monthly meeting of the Board of Directors, the League Treasurer shall submit a complete report of receipts and disbursements. The League Treasurer shall send copies of this report to the President and the School District's Division of Athletics.
5. The League Leadership Committee shall determine the price scale for admission tickets for all League games and Championship events, subject to the approval of the President.
6. Each financial section of the Bluebook must indicate admission charges for regular season contests and for League sponsored postseason games, where applicable.
7. Annually at the same time as the School District develops, considers and approves its annual operating budget, the League shall develop, consider and approve an annual budget, which shall govern the operations of the League for the fiscal year commencing on the following July 1. The fiscal year of the League shall commence July 1 of each calendar year and end on the following June 30. The fiscal year of the League shall be co-terminus with the fiscal year of the School District and if the School District hereafter alters its fiscal year, the League shall modify its fiscal year to conform to the School District's fiscal year. The League's annual budget must balance; *i.e.*, the League shall not operate at a deficit.

## **ARTICLE VII**

### **AMENDMENTS AND INTERPRETATION**

1. This Constitution may be amended by approval of the President with a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the entire voting membership of the Board of Directors. Members shall submit proposed amendments to this Constitution in writing to the President at least seven (7) days in advance of a meeting of the Board of Directors, with copies to the Chairperson and Secretary.
2. The final decision concerning the interpretation of the Constitution and By-Laws shall rest with the President.
3. All matters of policy and procedure shall be subject at all times to the approval of the Philadelphia Board of Education, the School District's Superintendent or their designee, and the School District's Division of Athletics.

## **ARTICLE VIII**

## MEETINGS

1. The League's Board of Directors shall meet no less often than quarterly to consider the business of the League, including finances, budgets, risk matters, discipline of coaches and athletes, and all other pending business of the League.
2. A quorum necessary for the consideration and transaction of the business and affairs of the League and to take action on any matter, unless these rules impose a different requirement regarding the specific subject matter, shall consist of no less than ten (10) duly appointed representatives of member schools.
3. The President of the League and the Chairperson of the League shall each have the right to schedule and call special meetings of the League's Board of Directors, by notice to the duly appointed members of the Board.
4. The Members of the League shall conduct all meetings of the League's Board of Directors under and in conformity with Robert's Rules of Order, unless and until such time as the Board may adopt its own rule or rules regarding its operations and business generally or in regard to one or more specific issues or matters, *e.g.*, procedures meeting legal requirements concerning discipline of individuals and schools, which may, in the judgment and discretion of the Board, merit other procedural standards or protections.
5. The Board of Directors shall hold at least one quarterly publicly announced meeting during each school year for the specific purpose of soliciting student-athlete input on athletics issues. Student-athlete voice is an important part of our league's foundation, and we are committed to providing opportunities for our student-athletes to develop as leaders among their peers. The League will begin developing a framework and structure for a school-level and League-level Student-Athlete Advisory Council (SAAC).

# **BY-LAWS OF THE PHILADELPHIA PUBLIC LEAGUE**

## **ARTICLE I**

### **ELIGIBILITY FOR ATHLETIC COMPETITION**

#### **1. LEAGUE SCHOOL**

- A senior high school that is a member of the Philadelphia Public League.

#### **2. NON-LEAGUE SCHOOL**

- A senior high school that is not a member of the Philadelphia Public League.

#### **3. RESIDENCE**

- The address which has been accepted by the School District of Philadelphia as the place where the student presently resides.

#### **4. MOVE**

- A change of residence.

#### **5. ELIGIBILITY REVIEW**

- The League shall upon request review eligibility questions in conformity with the By-Laws of the PIAA.

#### **6. AGE**

- a. As PIAA states: a student who reaches his or her NINETEENTH (19) birthday on or after the first day of JULY is eligible for the entire scholastic year.
- b. As PIAA states: a student who reaches his or her NINETEENTH (19) birthday prior to the first day of JULY is ineligible for the entire scholastic year.

#### **6. TRANSFER**

- a. Transfers, upon request, shall occur in compliance with the By-Laws of the PIAA.
- b. The receiving school shall send the PIAA Transfer Waiver form via the portal to the Principal of the sending school for his or her signature and send confirmation of completion of this task to the transferring student-athlete and the student-athlete's parent or guardian. The Principal of the sending school shall return the signed PIAA Transfer Waiver form via the portal to the receiving school within seven (7) days and send confirmation of completion of this task to the transferring

student-athlete and the student-athlete's parent or guardian. The transferring student shall not participate in any team competition until after the PIAA Transfer Waiver form has been returned to the receiving school.

## **8. STUDENT-ATHLETE ELIGIBILITY**

- a. A student who is not a citizen of the United States but who is lawfully residing in this country, is enrolled as a full-time student in a League school, and meets all other eligibility criteria, is eligible to participate in varsity sports. The student shall provide a copy of his or her visa to the Principal of the school he or she attends prior to participation in any varsity sports following the PIAA District Committee review.
- b. A foreign-exchange student who is enrolled in a bona fide foreign exchange program approved by the Council on Standards for International Educational Travel prior to entering the United States, is enrolled as a full-time student in a League school, and meets all other eligibility criteria, is eligible to participate in varsity sports for the period of one (1) academic year during which he or she is enrolled as a foreign-exchange student in a League school following approval of the PIAA District Committee. The student shall provide a copy of his or her visa to the Principal of the school he or she attends, to accompany the request to the PIAA District Committee.
- c. The eligibility of a student with a record of extended absences because of illness, injury, or homebound tutoring shall be decided by review of the District Committee in accordance with the PIAA.
- d. A student shall become INELIGIBLE AT THE END OF EIGHT (8) SUCCESSIVE SEMESTERS BEYOND THE DATE OF HIS OR HER ENTRANCE INTO NINTH GRADE. Eight (8) successive semesters means eight (8) successive semesters whether the student attends school or not. Exceptional cases may be reviewed by the PIAA District Committee.
- e. A student shall become INELIGIBLE IF THE STUDENT LOSES HIS OR HER AMATUER STANDING. This ineligibility applies only to the sport in which the student has lost his or her standing.
- f. Those students eligible to play in the last-scheduled League contests of the season shall be eligible to participate in any postseason League contest, except in the case of suspension during the last scheduled League contest, or if the student becomes ineligible otherwise during the post-season.
- g. One (1) week prior to the League season for each sport, the Athletic Director of each school shall have on file the PIAA Certificate of Eligibility for each sport, consisting of their eligibility lists entered into the PIAA Online Portal.



- h. Eligibility issues are decided by the PIAA District Committee at their regular monthly meetings. All requests for an eligibility hearing must be submitted to the Chairperson of the PIAA District Committee one (1) week prior to their regular monthly meeting.
- i. Academic standards for participation in interscholastic sports shall be determined by the Principal of each school in accordance with minimum requirements set by the PIAA.

## 9. TEAM MANAGEMENT

- a. The utilization of the team management platform selected by the governing body of the Member School is required for all member schools for use of student-athlete attendance tracking, practice and game scheduling, messaging, and alerts. This is to align accountability and integrity across the entire league.

## ARTICLE II

### LEAGUE ALIGNMENT

1. Member schools' varsity teams shall be organized into no more than six (6) divisions as determined by the respective Sport Chairperson with a vote of the Board of Directors, and approval of the President.
2. Divisional alignment of teams will be determined by the caliber of a varsity team's skill and level of competition. Varsity teams may change divisions in accordance with their team's competitiveness from one year to the next through the league's promotion and relegation system.
3. Divisions will be ranked from competitive to developmental skill level. The divisions will be ranked as follows: (a) Independence; (b) Liberty; (c) National; (d) American; (e) Colonial; (f) Patriot
4. The League shall also establish a **Unified Sports Division** within the Philadelphia Public League, which shall include promotion, branding, and awards and medals for three (3) Unified Championship events per year (Bocce, Track, Soccer). The League shall incur the costs of the awards & medals for those championship events.

## ARTICLE III

### CHAMPIONSHIP

1. The method of deciding the championship of all sports shall be determined by the respective Sport Chairperson with a vote of the Board of Directors, and approval of the President.

2. Awards shall be made annually, and presented by the League for all sports teams, including individual championships, if applicable.
3. Whenever a rental fee is charged for a facility used in a PPL playoff or championship contest, the Sport Chairperson in that sport must receive the majority vote from the Board of Directors prior to contracting for the facility.
4. The League, with a vote of approval by the Board of Directors, may approve a **Philadelphia Public League Invitational Tournament** (The “PIT”) for team-level sports, to offer additional postseason opportunities for league member school teams that do not qualify for the league playoff system or whom are not eligible for the PIAA postseason. Selection of participating teams shall be made at the postseason coaches’ meeting.

## ARTICLE IV

### CODE OF CONDUCT VIOLATIONS

1. **Infractions Committee** – The Infractions Committee shall consist of the Sport Chairperson for the team, coach(es) and/or player(s) involved in the incident, the Leadership Committee, and the President. The Infractions Committee shall review cases of alleged violations of the Codes of Conduct.
2. **Code of Conduct** - The following penalties may be imposed by the PPL Infractions Committee for a violation of the Rules of Play or the Philadelphia Public League Code of Conduct, attached as Appendix A to these By-Laws and hereby incorporated herein:
  - a. **PROBATION:** The League may place a school, team, coach, parent, or individual on probation for a specified period, during which the school, team, or individual must prove adequate improvement. A subsequent vote by the Board of Directors at the end of this period will determine reinstatement.
  - b. **FORFEIT:** The League has the authority to require a team to forfeit a contest, season, or Championship, or any of them, for violation of the rules.
  - c. **SUSPENSION:** The League has the authority to suspend from League participation a sport, a school, a coach, a parent, a student or another individual for a specified period, either completing the balance of its schedule(s) as exhibition games, or not being permitted to compete in the League in any sport thereafter.
  - d. **CENSURE:** The League has the authority to censure publicly a school or individual(s) responsible for a violation, in lieu of, or in addition to, other penalties imposed by the Board of Directors.

- e. Announcements to the communications media concerning the forfeit of League games shall be made **ONLY BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE PHILADELPHIA PUBLIC LEAGUE OR BY HIS OR HER APPOINTED REPRESENTATIVE**, as soon as possible after the forfeit occurs.

## **ARTICLE V**

### **SPORT LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

1. In accordance with the policy set by the Board of Education, every coach in the League will be required to complete the following courses on the National Federation for State High School Associations (NFHS Learn) portal on an annual basis:
  - a. Concussion Awareness
  - b. Sudden Cardiac Arrest Awareness
  - c. Sportsmanship
  - d. Bullying, Hazing & Inappropriate Behaviors
2. All member school coaches must complete their Level 1 Accredited Interscholastic Coach national certification through the NFHS Learn portal, within two (2) years of their date of hire. ***\*This requirement satisfies the PIAA Coaching Education By-Laws passed on July 1, 2016.***
3. Coaches who wish to continue towards their Level 2 Certified Interscholastic Coach national certification through the NFHS Learn portal are encouraged to do so, but it is not a requirement of employment as a member school coach.
4. Athletic Directors and Sport Chairpersons will complete annual education, training and coursework toward their national certifications through the National Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association (NIAAA).

## **ARTICLE VI**

### **PROCEDURES DURING STRIKES**

It is the philosophy of the PIAA Board of Directors, and PIAA member schools, that interscholastic athletics should not be used as a pawn during contract negotiations between School Boards and Education Associations.

While interscholastic athletics should not be considered to be different than any other co-curricular activities, it is a simple fact of life that interscholastic athletics fan the emotions of a community to a higher and greater degree than any other school function.

1. Pursuant to ARTICLE XII, ATHLETIC RELATIONS, Section 6, Temporary Closure of School, of the PIAA By-Laws, the League may exercise one or more of several options during the period in which a member school is affected by a professional labor dispute:

- a. A member school may practice and compete in any scheduled contests during the period of the work stoppage. If the member school elects this option, a team may practice or compete only the length of time, each day, that it would have practiced or competed had school been in session.
  - b. A member school may opt to practice, but not play any contests during the period of the work stoppage. If the member school elects this option, a team may practice only the length of time, each day that it would have practiced had school been in session.
2. A team (varsity, junior varsity, freshman, or junior high/middle school) **MUST** have completed the minimum length of preseason practice as specified for the sport in ARTICLE XVI, SEASON AND OUT-OF-SEASON RULES AND REGULATIONS, of the PIAA By-Laws, **BEFORE** the first contest of each season.
3. If a member school's practice schedule has been interrupted by a strike for more than three (3) consecutive days after the minimum length of preseason practice has been completed, that school must have had three (3) days of practice prior to resuming its interscholastic athletic schedule.
4. If there are **ANY** questions as to the required practice rule, a member school should contact the Office of the President.
5. The decision as to whether to practice or play rests solely with a member school's School Board.
6. If due to a professional labor dispute a school postpones a contest, the two member schools may, by mutual agreement reschedule the contest. Decisions on cancellations or postponements must be made no less than three (3) days prior to the scheduled contest. Where extenuating circumstances exist, the contest shall result in a no contest for the schools involved.

**APPENDIX A: STUDENT-ATHLETE  
CODE OF CONDUCT**

# **PHILADELPHIA PUBLIC LEAGUE**

## **STUDENT-ATHLETE CODE OF CONDUCT**

The PPL is our identity. We are a League – a unity – guided by the governance of The School District of Philadelphia and its mission to deliver on the civil right of every child in Philadelphia to an excellent public school education, and to ensure all children graduate from high school ready to succeed, fully engaged as citizens of our world. Therefore, if our League does not produce a better person, it has no reason to exist. The directives set forth below provide guidance to all concerned, in order to ensure that we make our competitions a healthy experience in individual and social growth.

Student participation in any athletic activity is a privilege, not a right, which may be revoked or suspended when for a violation of the established rules or regulations. Students who desire to participate in athletic activities shall conduct themselves properly at all times. Each program may establish additional rules, which apply specifically to that program. The rules and regulations set forth in this Code shall apply to any on- and off-school premises violation. The following misconduct shall constitute grounds for immediate suspension and potential exclusion from participation in interscholastic practices and competition, and participation in activities.

### **ARTICLE I**

#### **STUDENT-ATHLETE CODE**

Philadelphia Public League student-athletes must and shall adhere to the following Code.

1. Represent the Philadelphia Public League in a positive manner at all times.
2. Demonstrate respect for teachers, coaches and fellow students.
3. Arrive on time to class and practice.
4. Strive to improve.
5. Have a positive attitude.
6. Be responsible.
7. Be a team player.
8. Be coachable.
9. Be honest and ethical.
10. Be a credit to your team in the classroom and in competition.

## ARTICLE II

### **POLICY REGARDING THREATS, BULLYING AND/OR HAZING**

The Philadelphia Public League intensely believes that students must be protected from threats, bullying, intimidation, hazing and initiation ceremonies. The League will not tolerate any form of verbal, written, or physical conduct that harasses, humiliates, or persecutes students, or disrupts or interferes with any student's curricular or extracurricular experiences.

No coach, sponsor, volunteer or school employee shall plan, permit, direct, assist or engage, condone or tolerate any of the above stated activities.

Any coach or student found, after investigation, to have engaged in any form of this misconduct shall be subject to disciplinary actions as defined by the member schools and additional penalties by the PPL Infractions Committee. The Philadelphia Board of Education (BOE) and the School District's Superintendent or their designee also have the right to impose additional penalties.

Any coach or student who witnesses or has knowledge of such misconduct activities and fails to report such actions shall also be subject to appropriate disciplinary actions as defined by the member schools and the PPL Infractions Committee. The Philadelphia Board of Education (BOE) and the School District's Superintendent or their designee also have the right to impose additional penalties.

# **PHILADELPHIA PUBLIC LEAGUE**

## **POLICY REGARDING UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT**

A team member or coach who, immediately prior to, during, or immediately after a Contest, recklessly or with ill will or an intent to harm, punches, *i.e.*, strikes with a closed fist, or otherwise trikes, bites, or kicks a contestant, Coach, official, or any other person attending the Contest; shall be suspended and may be disqualified in that sport by the Philadelphia Public League Infractions Committee.

In accordance with District XII, PIAA, and NFHS Rules of Play, the Philadelphia Public League in such situations will assess the following minimum penalties:

1. Any team member who is involved in fighting will be assessed a minimum three (3) game suspension.
2. Any team member or assistant coach who leaves their bench area and steps onto the field of play during an incident, for any reason, will be ejected and suspended for their next contest. The head coach of the team is the only staff member permitted to enter the field of play during an incident.
3. If an entire team leaves their bench area and steps onto the field of play during an incident, the entire team will be ejected from the game, and will serve a one (1) game suspension for their next contest. The ejected team will be assessed a forfeit for the current contest, and will forfeit their next contest.
4. In the event that both teams leave their bench areas and step onto the field of play during an incident, both teams will be ejected from the game, and will serve a one (1) game suspension. The current contest will be assessed a double forfeit, and both teams will forfeit their next contest.
5. In any situation where spectators are involved in an on-floor incident, the League shall review and impose against the host school appropriate additional sanctions regarding their Spectator Policy.
6. Additionally, all incidents will be reviewed by the Philadelphia Public League Infractions Committee for assessment and imposition of any appropriate additional penalties according to Article XIII of the PIAA Constitution.
7. Any student-athlete or coach ejected from a game for unsportsmanlike conduct, as determined by the Sport Chairperson and the game officials, must complete the Sportsmanship Course on NFHS Learn before the player or coach returns from their suspension.



**APPENDIX B: COACHES**  
**CODE OF CONDUCT**

# **PHILADELPHIA PUBLIC LEAGUE**

## **COACHING CODE OF CONDUCT**

The PPL is our identity. We are a league – a unity – guided by the governance of The School District of Philadelphia and its mission to deliver on the civil right of every child in Philadelphia to an excellent public school education, and ensure all children graduate from high school ready to succeed, fully engaged as a citizen of our world. Therefore, if our League does not produce a better person, it has no reason to exist. The directives below are intended to guide all concerned with making our competition a healthy experience in individual and social growth.

### **ARTICLE I**

#### **ATHLETIC COURTESY**

Athletics must and shall foster sportsmanship. It is the privilege of each one of us associated with athletics to bear witness to our principles in our own actions.

1. Visiting teams and spectators are guests of the home team and should be treated as we would like to be treated ourselves.
2. The rules of the game are to be regarded as mutual agreements, the letter of which no honorable person would break.
3. Take no action, and do not pursue any course of conduct, which may appear unsportsmanlike or dishonorable if known to one's opponent, or the public.
4. All coaches should refrain from making contact with their respective assignors or officials for at least twenty-four (24) hours after the conclusion of the contest. All questions and issues should be communicated through their respective Athletic Director and Sport Chair before contacting the officials or assignors.

### **ARTICLE II**

#### **ETHICS PERTAINING TO HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETICS**

This Code of Ethics is to be regarded not simply as a compilation of recommendations, but as a set of rules governing the conduct of students, spectators, student-athletes, coaches and Athletic Directors.

SECTION I: Student-spectators must adhere to the following Code of Ethics:

1. Student-spectators must realize that they represent their school just as athletes do.
2. Student-spectators must appreciate and give suitable recognition to the good in others.
3. Only positive cheering is permitted by spectators for a PPL event. Spectators must avoid “booing”, abusive language, vulgarity, or derogatory comments, as these acts clearly show a lack of charity that breeds the same in opponents.

4. All signs and posters must be pre-approved by the Principal or Athletic Director of the local school.
5. Inappropriate dress or conduct will not be permitted during a PPL event.
6. Student-spectators must refrain from using musical instruments and noisemakers, except in an approved School band, as these are annoying to some and inflammatory to others.
7. Student-spectators must regard officials and opponents as honest; all must respect and abide by the officials' decisions, even when a decision may seem unfair.
8. Student-spectators must understand that continued evidence of poor sportsmanship can result in loss of the privilege of attending future contests.
9. If any of the above-mentioned violations occur during a PPL event, the officials have the authority to penalize the individual team, and the school's administration has the authority to stop the game and remove all spectators from the event, if the spectators do not comply with the administration's request.
10. Student-spectators must realize that a contest ends with the final whistle or other signal; post-game injury to others, or damage to property, will not be tolerated.

### **ARTICLE III**

#### **POLICY FOR COACHES INTERACTION WITH THE MEDIA**

The PPL, through the principles outlined in the Code of Conduct, demands that all members of the League, administrators, coaches, players, and fans, should in all circumstances demonstrate their character through sportsmanship and mutual respect.

The adults in charge must address problems that arise in the course of competition. These adults must show leadership and maturity to defuse the situation and allow a sensible and honorable solution to occur. Where the adults in charge are unable to resolve the situation, and the controversy lingers, the parties involved must present the matter to the PPL Leadership Committee.

It is important to understand that all parties involved, especially coaches, at all times represent their team, school, and the League. At all times, coaches shall refrain from making derogatory, damaging, and offensive remarks to the media. The Principal and Athletic Director of the school are to be informed of any emotional or potentially scandalous media situations. Coaches shall not enflame a situation by giving emotional or personal remarks to the media. Coaches also shall not address personal comments to the media regarding League-wide policies and procedures. Penalties for such behavior may include censure, suspension, or dismissal of the coach by the PPL Infractions Committee.