



General Information for Coaches

2024–2025

Following is general information for MCPS coaches regarding the 2024–2025 school year.

1. Resources for Coaches – coaches shall be familiar with contents in the following resources:

- [MCPS High School Athletics Handbook](#) (general sections and applicable sport standards section)
- [MPSSAA Handbook](#)
- Applicable [MPSSAA tournament bulletin](#)
- Applicable rules book (refer to the 2024–25 rules book)
- [MCPS Athletics web page](#) – [General Information for Coaches](#); [General Information for Parents and Students](#); [Health & Safety Information & Resources](#);
- [Equity Initiatives Unit Resources](#)

2. MCPS Athletics Changes and Initiatives for 2024–2025

Changes for MCPS Athletics:

- As part of school building modernization and construction, Northwood High School is occupying the new Charles Woodward High School building through the 2026–2027 school year. All schools and programs have been charged to support Northwood through this time of transition.
- A new team application/website platform will debut for the 2024–2025 school year.
- Payment for officials will be made centrally through the MCPS Department of Athletics.
- Mental health training is required for coaches, per Maryland House Bill 204. Information on training will be provided when confirmed.
- Enhanced Emergency Action Plan creation, preparation, posting, and rehearsal complies with Maryland House Bill 1219.

Initiatives for MCPS Athletics:

- The primary theme for MCPS Athletics for 2024–2025 is the Year of the Coach. The coaching profession will be highlighted and celebrated at schools and across the systemwide program.
- The Coach Evaluation Form will be updated and reviewed.
- Pickleball is now the fall corollary sport offering for MCPS Athletics. A partnership with DC Pickleball Team and JOOLA will guide the expansion of the pilot program from 11 schools in 2023–2024 to full implementation in 2024–2025.
- Girls' flag football will be piloted as a new sport, through a partnership with the Baltimore Ravens and Under Armour.
- Dual sport participation in the same season will be piloted for female student-athletes participating in girls' flag football.

- Extracurricular activities program enhancements, including stipends, will be included as a request in the FY 26 budget cycle.
- A framework for securing partnerships and sponsorships for MCPS Athletics will be created, to allow for a revenue stream for program-wide initiatives.

3. Health & Safety

Health and safety expectations for coaches are included on a memorandum titled [MCPS Coach Health and Safety Expectations](#), and on documents located on the MCPS Athletics web page. These are reviewed in the “Health and Safety” portion of the systemwide and local school preseason meetings. Health and safety protocols and procedures are evaluated on an ongoing basis by the Student-Athlete Medical Advisory Committee for MCPS Athletics.

4. Coach & Athletic Department Personnel Certification & Compliance

- Coaches and athletic department personnel must maintain required certification and compliance as outlined in the [MCPS High School Athletics Handbook](#). Coaches are responsible for ensuring that they meet all certification requirements prior to the start of each season.
- Athletics specialists will submit a *Coach Certification Verification Report* prior to each season.

5. Volunteer Coaches – must complete the following:

- Be hired and approved by the school – must sign contract with principal/athletics specialist
- Be fingerprinted and clear a criminal background check, which is kept on file with Human Resources
- Annually complete the online module: [Recognizing and Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect](#)
- Annually complete the [Volunteer Coach Application and Contract](#) (on the MCPS athletics web page)

6. Schedules / Cancellations / Weather

- For most sports, 2024–2025 is the second year of a 2-year schedule
- Schedules, scores and results posted on County Sports Zone
- No schedule changes unless AD obtains approval of the MCPS Department of Athletics
- Reschedule postponed games on the earliest possible available date
- Review Postponed/Cancelled Events section in *MCPS High School Athletics Handbook*
- Review *Non-School Day Inclement Weather Policy*
- Review Weather and Heat Guidelines in *MCPS High School Athletics Handbook*

7. Sportsmanship

- MCPS Sportsmanship Award Program
- Spirited Sportsmanship & Spectator Safety Week

8. Online Registration for Athletics

The forms required to participate in athletics are completed electronically through online registration. Coaches must ensure that all parents/guardians and student-athletes have completed the registration process PRIOR to participating. Required forms and resources are available on the MCPS Athletics web page, if needed.

9. Electronic Rosters & Eligibility

Expectations for coaches and athletics specialists are included in a memorandum titled *ParentVue Online Registration and Roster Program*.

- All rosters are completed electronically through Synergy and must be approved by both the coach and athletics specialist.
- Roster Days:
 - The fall roster day is August 28, 2024.
 - The winter roster day is November 27, 2024.
 - The spring roster day is March 12, 2025.
- There are many factors that affect eligibility other than academics that must be researched and confirmed, including age, residency, years of participation, etc.
- [Team Roster Template](#) – coaches are expected to use this form, for consistency

10. Technology Platforms

- GoFan – the digital ticketing platform for MCPS Athletics and the MPSSAA.
- NFHS Network – all stadium and gymnasium events will be broadcasted on the NFHS Network. The NFHS Network is also available to stream other events.
- Video Editing Software – all schools have access to video editing software, coaches should contact their athletics specialist for more information.

11. Protocol for Questions

If coaches have questions or concerns, they should consult their athletics specialist or the appropriate sport director first, depending on the nature of the question/concern. The sport director or athletics specialist will consult appropriate staff in the Department of Athletics, as necessary.

12. Out-of-Area/Overnight Travel

Coaches should see their athletics specialist regarding travel parameters, restrictions, and procedures for trips over 100 miles (one way) from the Carver Educational Services Center (CESC) or all overnight trips.

13. Purchases/Bid List

Coaches should see their athletics specialist regarding purchases and ordering. Equipment must be provided to safely administer each sport and be purchased on an equitable basis, by gender and sport. Coaches and athletics specialists shall ensure that all equipment complies with all safety guidelines, rules, and standards, as established by the NFHS, MPSSAA, NOCSAE, and/or the appropriate governing body for that sport. Coaches are asked to provide feedback regarding items on the MCPS bid list, including the quality of current items on the list as well as potential new items.