PROVIDENCE

FIDES

SCIENTIA VIRTUS

ATHLETICS

2026-2027

PROVIDENCE ACADEMY

COACH HANDBOOK

ATHLETIC LEADERSHIP TEAM

Mr. Daren Messmore, Director of Athletics & Activities

Mr. Charlie Kenney, Associate Athletic Director

Mr. Trent Sylvester, Assistant Athletic Director

Mr. Chris Laird, Assistant Athletic Director

FROM THE ATHLETIC LEADERSHIP TEAM

Thank you for making the decision of being a coach within one of our athletic programs at Providence Academy. In order to help you through the process, we have devised this Coaches Handbook which is intended to give you as much information as possible.

As you enter into coaching at Providence Academy, there are several points that we would like to stress. First, it is very important that all of the information needed to coach is submitted to the Athletic Leadership Team before the first contest of your season. This will ensure that you will have completed all of the necessary paperwork from HR and be able to be well informed on who we are as you represent Providence Academy as a coach.

Secondly, if the aims, opportunities and benefits of the total educational curriculum are to be attained, close cooperation must exist between yourself and the school.

Finally, Providence Academy strives to provide the highest quality education, in a culture of teamwork, service and personal responsibility. Our athletic staff is committed to ensuring that all students pursue their athletic goals with confidence, competence and within the principles of the Mission of Providence Academy.

We are pleased that you have chosen to become an integral part of our athletic family. We hope that your experience in our athletic program is a satisfying, fun-filled, exciting time that will leave you with many pleasant memories for years to come.

MSHSL REQUIREMENTS

Any individual who coaches on a MSHSL activity must register with the MSHSL at www.mshsl.org. All coaches must complete the required training modules that are listed on your coaches clipboard. These should be completed prior to your first contest. Coaches who have not completed the required training are subject to not being able to coach during sections playoffs and loss of contracted stipend. Please contact Mr. Messmore with any questions.

ATHLETIC PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY AND OBJECTIVES

Providence Academy Athletics reflect the mission of the school in its desire to instill faith, knowledge and virtue in student athletes. Our goal is to develop excellent Christian athletes who play to their potential, put forth maximum effort, seek their personal best and develop character that serves them well for life. The Providence Academy athlete and coach place academics before athletics, show respect for everyone and approach each contest as though God is the only spectator, accepting victory and defeat with equal grace. It is our belief that the experience of being an athlete at Providence Academy will enhance the character and virtue of all students at the school, and its reward will be lasting and lifelong.

- The athletics program of Providence Academy reflects the mission of the School and is an integral part of the curriculum;
- Providence Academy believes that interscholastic athletic is an essential portion of the education of the "whole student" and that athletic participation should provide a variety of experiences that will prepare

our students for adult life, presenting lessons in sportsmanship, competition, responsibility, teamwork, cooperation, leadership, and winning and losing with grace and dignity;

- The athletics program helps students gain self-confidence, develop discipline and responsibility in team play, improve their skills and experience the enjoyment of athletic competition. Playing time per game may vary at the coach's discretion, depending upon the player's attendance at practice, attitude, effort, skills, and the skill level of the competition;
- The Varsity program is the highest level of interscholastic competition at Providence Academy. Varsity athletes and coaches strive for excellence and a winning spirit in this competitive environment. Game participation by all team members is **not guaranteed**;
- The Junior Varsity and C Squad programs strives for a balance among competitive play, individual participation, and skill development, while fostering a winning spirit;
- While it is recognized that choices regarding starting line-ups and playing time are made by coaches and can sometimes appear very subjective to spectators, especially parents/guardians, it is expected that any decisions by coaches involving "playing time" will be respected and honored as being within the purview of the coach;
- Providence Academy is committed to the safety and physical and emotional health of its athletes;
- Providence Academy expects athletes, **coaches**, parents and fans representing PA to practice good sportsmanship and behave ethically and honorably before, during, and after athletic competitions and practices;
- Providence Academy supports coaches in their understanding of and commitment to its student-athletes. The School will ensure that coaches have appropriate training in coaching and first aid procedures;
- Providence Academy will strive to educate parents about its policies and expectations and encourage effective, constructive communication among parents and coaches;
- Providence Academy complies with the rules and policies of the governing bodies of the sports in which it participates;
- While participating in School-sponsored activities, students must observe all rules of Providence Academy;
- Coaching is a privilege that requires responsibility to the School, to the community, to the students, and to the activity.

SPORTSMANSHIP CODE OF CONDUCT AND EXPECTATIONS

KEYS TO SPORTSMANSHIP

- Know the rules of the game;
- Recognize good play by both teams;
- Respect your opponents and their spectators;
- View the game with your head, not your heart;
- Exhibit respect for officials;
- Show pride through your actions

COACH CODE OF CONDUCT

All cheering must be positive and focused on Providence Academy teams, not our opponent
Never single out a player, coach, or fan from any team or school
Never use derogatory, profane, demeaning, or suggestive language towards a student, opponent, or official.

BE LOUD, BE PROUD, BE POSITIVE, HAVE FUN

SPORTSMANSHIP EXPECTATIONS

Providence Academy is proud of its athletic program and holds its coaches to a high standard of conduct and sportsmanship. In order to portray good sportsmanship, we have the following expectations for our coaches:

Sportsmanship Expectations

- Support School administration in their efforts to emphasize the educational benefits of interscholastic athletics
- Respect the judgment and strategy of other coaches
- Be a positive role model through your own actions by censuring those around you whose behavior is unbecoming
- Remember that you are coaching to support our students, their participation, and effort
- Respect the integrity and judgment of contest officials even if you disagree with them
- Praise student-athletes in their attempts to improve themselves. Participation in interscholastic athletics provides learning experiences for students and mistakes are made
- Recognize and show appreciation for an outstanding play by the other team
- Show respect for opposing players, fans and coaches
- Show respect for property and equipment
- Refrain from all forms of harassment or fighting before, during, or after games
- Win with humility; lose with grace. Do both with dignity.

The Providence Academy Approach to Successful Athletic Participation

A Guide for Parent-Athlete-Coach Communication

The contents of this guide are designed to help establish standards of behavior and provide direction for the student-athletes, coaches, and parents during their athletic experience at Providence Academy. The student-athletes' learning and development will always be the central focus throughout all aspects of their educational based athletic experience. We believe that educational based athletics should provide a variety of experiences that will prepare our students for adult life, presenting lessons in sportsmanship, competition, responsibility, teamwork, cooperation, leadership, and winning and losing with grace and dignity. Athletic participation is a privilege that requires responsibility to the school, to the community, to the student body, to the activity, and to the student themselves.

The Providence Academy tradition has been to win with honor. We desire to field excellence and a winning spirit at the varsity level, but only by maintaining the integrity of our athletes, our school, and our community. At the sub-varsity levels, we strive for a balance among competitive play, individual participation, and skill development, while fostering a winning spirit. Our goal is that this, in conjunction with the lessons of sportsmanship, responsibility, and teamwork, will provide a meaningful, educational based athletic experience

The Coaches' Role

Providence Academy coaches are teachers of their sport. The professional behavior of each coach continues from the classroom to the athletic fields and courts.

Providence Academy coaches strive to:

- Provide a safe, positive environment for all athletes.
- Communicate team goals, schedules, and expectations to players and parents.

- Possess current knowledge and skill to instruct players competently and to assess their progress.
- Treat all athletes consistently and fairly—especially in administering consequences for failure to follow policy.
- Be positive role models on the sidelines as examples for players, parents, and other coaches to follow.
- Assist and counsel athletes and parents in the college recruiting process.

The Athletes' Role

Young people who elect to participate in athletics at Providence Academy are voluntarily making a commitment to be student-athletes. This commitment to a team, coach, school and community assumes great responsibility, yet provides immense personal rewards.

Providence Academy student-athletes strive to:

- Commit to academics while fulfilling their commitment to Providence Academy athletics.
- Represent their team, family, Providence Academy, and community in a positive manner at all times.
- Abide by all Providence Academy, IMAC, and MSHSL guidelines, rules and regulations.
- Practice good sportsmanship at all times.
- Communicate with their coaches regarding any issues of team obligations, guidelines, or rules.

The Parents' Role

Providence Academy parents have an opportunity to observe their children in an athletic setting and be supportive fans of their children, team, sport, and school.

Providence Academy parents strive to:

- Guide their children as these students take on tasks of time management, sport-specific skill development, and responsibility.
- Support the team and coach from the stands.
- Encourage their children to communicate with the coaching staff.
- Encourage their children to commit to a team and program.

"24-Hour Rule"

Athletics can be an emotional endeavor and occasionally conflict will arise. If you have an athletic issue concerning your student-athlete, please consider the "24-hour rule" – that is, please wait 24 hours before contacting the coach. We have found that if all parties involved with an athletic conflict take time to reflect on the situation, the ensuing conversation will be based less on emotions and more on facts. While the "24-hour rule" may not resolve your concern, it might prevent a misunderstanding from escalating into an adversarial situation.

If after 24 hours you still feel that the situation merits attention, please follow the grievance procedures listed below:

1. The student-athlete should communicate concerns or issues first with the coach of that specific team. This meeting should be at a scheduled time and not during practice or a contest. No other outsiders other than the athlete and coach(es) should be present.
2. If not resolved in the first step, then the parent and athlete together should request a meeting with the coach(es) involved at a time outside of practice or a contest.
3. If not resolved in the second step, the parent, athlete, and coach(es) should meet with the Athletic Director at a time outside of practice or a contest.
4. In a rare case the Head of School would become involved.

5. **It is important that the above steps be followed in sequence.**

Of course the safety and well-being of our student athletes is our primary concern. If you ever feel you have an issue that redounds to student safety you should certainly go directly to the student safety hotline at 763-258-5551.

Playing Time

One of the primary sources for conflict in athletics is the issue of playing time. Please keep the following distinctions in mind as you consider your athlete's experience.

- The Upper School athletic programs help students gain self-confidence, develop discipline and responsibility in team play, improve their skills, and experience the enjoyment of athletic competition.
- The Upper School sub-varsity programs strive for a balance among competitive play, individual participation, and skill development, while fostering a winning spirit. Playing time per game may vary at the coach's discretion, depending upon the player's attendance at practice, attitude, effort, skills, and the skill level of the competition.
- The Upper School Varsity program is the highest level of interscholastic competition at Providence Academy. Varsity athletes and coaches strive for excellence and a winning spirit in this competitive environment. Game participation by all team members is not guaranteed.
- One of the most important roles for a coach is to place students into situations where they can be successful.

GOVERNANCE

PROVIDENCE ACADEMY

Specific rules for coaching within the interscholastic athletic program at Providence Academy are included in this Athletic Handbook.

Coaches are responsible for establishing rules and procedures for teams under their jurisdiction. While rules and safety procedures may be reiterated orally on a regular basis, information that is needed by student-athletes on an ongoing basis will be distributed in writing to all athletes.

INDEPENDENT METRO ATHLETIC CONFERENCE

The Independent Metro Athletic Conference consists of six mission-driven, independent, liberal arts college preparatory schools. Its members are committed first and foremost to academic excellence and believe that our athletic programs must always support the school's educational mission.

The Independent Metro Athletic Conference was formed in 2014 and was based upon an agreement among Blake School, Breck School, Minnehaha Academy, Mounds Park Academy, Providence Academy, and St Paul Academy and Summit School. The conference was formed in the interest of creating consistency, cooperation, support and balance among member schools while keeping an appropriate perspective on the role of athletics in secondary education.

The primary mission of the Conference is to provide a broad range of athletic opportunities to our scholar-athletes, ensure competitive balance between member schools, promote optimal recognition of individual scholar-athletes as well as the Conference as a whole, and to deepen professional development of athletic coaches in a manner consistent with the commitment to academic excellence and shared philosophies of the member schools.

Coaches can learn more about the IMAC on their website at www.imacmn.com

THE MINNESOTA STATE HIGH SCHOOL LEAGUE

All schools are voluntary members of the Minnesota State High School League (MSHSL). As a school member, Providence Academy agrees to abide by all rules and regulations endorsed by this league.

The primary role of the State High School League is to maintain rules and regulations that ensure equity in competition for the student athletes and a balance with other educational programs. The association solicits input and is responsive to requests for rule modification from member schools, appointed committees and coaches' associations.

The State High School League attempts to enforce such rules that assure the greatest good for the greatest number and to ensure the competition is conducted in an appropriate manner.

Some information regarding MSHSL Rules and Regulations is included in this manual. Coaches can access the entire MSHSL Handbook on their website at www.mshsl.org.

Please Contact Mr. Daren E. Messmore at daren.messmore@providenceacademy.org with questions.

CHEMICAL USE & VIOLATION AS A RESULT:

Providence Academy prohibits the use, possession, sale, or transfer of any medically unauthorized drugs, tobacco, e-cigarettes or alcohol while on school premises. Further, in union with expectations of the Minnesota State High School League, coaches are expected to remain free of possession or use of any legally unauthorized drugs, tobacco, e-cigarettes or alcohol at any time during the calendar year, at any place on school property while performing their tasks as a coach. Coaches found to be in violation of these expectations are subject to school discipline.

BASIC ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT POLICIES

ATHLETIC AWARDS

Varsity letter requirements:

Students must be on the section playoff roster to obtain a varsity letter for the activity. Head Coaches may seek approval from the Athletic Director if they feel as though another student should be issued a varsity letter.

In order to receive an award, a student-athlete must finish their season in good standing, including competition in the required number of contests as established by the coach, regular attendance at practice sessions, commitment to training, exhibiting good sportsmanship, and adhering to the provisions of the Behavior Covenant and the principles of the Parent/Student Handbook.

Any player who ceases to be a member of the team by reason of dismissal by the coach or school, or who voluntarily quits the squad of his own accord, forfeits their rights to receive any awards. Any player who has been ill or injured and has failed to meet all of the requirements, may, upon recommendation of the coach and/or Athletic Director receive a letter.

Coaches, with the approval of the Athletic Director, will establish the specific criteria for awards for student-athletes participating in a particular sport.

Any questions regarding lettering requirements should be directed to the head varsity coach of that sport.

CAPTAINS PRACTICES

The following should be used as a guideline at Providence Academy captains' practices:

- Captains practices are optional
- Captains practices will be limited to the two weeks prior to the start of the season and will be scheduled on a space available basis. Adult supervision will be required.
- Captains practices must be initiated, organized and administered by captains only.
- Coaches may not be involved in any capacity.
- Captains' practice is primarily for the purpose of physical conditioning.
- Attendance is voluntary and is not limited.
- Gym and field space may be scheduled through Assistant AD Will Bean will.bean@providenceacademy.org

COMMUNICATION

The following are vehicles used to communicate athletic information to parents:

- Providence Academy Athletics Website
- Athletics Calendar
- E-bulletins is an electronic newsletter that is sent on Monday evenings to parents via email. Please read the newsletter as it often contains important information about upcoming events.
- Students receive announcements from teachers, coaches, and school administrators every day via email. Students should check these email announcements for upcoming events and notifications.

CUT/TEAM PLACEMENT POLICY

Providence Academy Athletics strongly believes in encouraging student-athletes to step outside of their comfort zones and experience new challenges. This is instrumental in learning to deal with adversity, becoming a well-rounded contributor to society; athletics is no exception. While we welcome all potential student-athletes to try out for our athletic teams, we must also field the most competitive team possible. Most sports have multiple levels and not all sports can accommodate all student-athletes that would like to participate.

Many of our teams have a tryout process allowing student-athletes to earn a spot on a team. The tryout period also allows the coaching staff to evaluate student-athlete skill and ability for proper level placement. The length of tryouts is specific to each sport but will usually be 2-3 days. At the end of the process, the coaching staff will make their final decisions and communicate this with the student-athletes. In some sports it is necessary to make cuts. When it is necessary to make cuts, the coach has the sole responsibility of selecting the team. If an athlete is cut from a team, the athlete may join another sport that does not make cuts. There are sports during all three seasons that do not make cuts.

Team Placement:

- Upper School teams will be selected based on a student's abilities, potential, sportsmanship, character, and commitment through fair and objective tryouts prior to the start of the season.
- The PA third Upper School team will be referred to as a "C" team, not a "freshmen" team.
- "C" team will consist of 9th and 10th graders, no juniors or seniors will be rostered.
- 7th and 8th grade students may try out for varsity teams.
- Middle School students who show an ability to play regularly and contribute at varsity level competitions will be allowed to join the varsity team with permission from the school and their parents.

DOUBLE PARTICIPATION

No student may participate on more than one athletic team during any one sport season. There may be special circumstances in which a coach may request the services of an athlete currently out for another sport during that season. For example, the football coach may request the services of a soccer player to kick at football games. In these circumstances, permission must be granted by the parent/guardian as well as by the head coaches of both sports and the Athletic Director. If event or practice conflicts arise, the priority rests with the primary sport of the athlete during that season.

EARLY DISMISSAL

In the event that a team needs to be excused early from school, the Athletic Director sets a release time that has the least negative effect on academic class time and allows for a safe warm-up period.

PLAYING TIME POLICIES

One of the primary sources for conflict in athletics is the issue of playing time. Please keep the following distinctions in mind as you consider your athlete's experience.

Our athletic program helps students gain self-confidence, develop discipline and responsibility in team play, improve their skills and experience the enjoyment of athletic competition.

While it is recognized that choices regarding starting line-ups and playing time are made by coaches and can sometimes appear very subjective to spectators, especially parents/guardians, it is expected that any decisions by coaches involving "playing time" will be respected and honored as being within the purview of the coach.

Playing time per game will vary at the coach's discretion, depending upon the player's attendance at practice, attitude, effort, skills, and the skill level of the competition. Playing time for all members is not guaranteed at any level.

Upper School sub-varsity programs strive for a balance among competitive play, individual participation, and skill development, while fostering a winning spirit. Playing time per game may vary at the coach's discretion, depending upon the player's attendance at practice, attitude, effort, skills, and the skill level of the competition.

The Upper School Varsity program is the highest level of interscholastic competition at Providence Academy. Varsity athletes and coaches strive for excellence and a winning spirit in this highly competitive environment. <u>Game participation by all team members is not guaranteed.</u>

LOCKER ROOMS

Only coaches and players are allowed in the locker room. Friends and family members are not allowed

in the locker room before, during, or after practices and games. In the case of unusual extenuating circumstances, permission should be secured from the coach and athletic administrator prior to entering the locker room.

Athletes are expected to keep their lockers and the surrounding locker room areas clean. Litter receptacles are provided for this purpose.

Loitering is not prohibited at any time in the locker room.

Coaches are required to be the last individuals to leave the facility. A coach is required to sweep the locker room after everyone has left the locker room.

PRACTICE

Upper School athletic teams often practice during school vacation times. The amount of involvement varies with each sport, but is often essential to maintain the team's ability to compete. An athlete must communicate with the coach of his sport to understand expectations and training required. This is the athlete's responsibility!

Please confer with your coach before planning "College Trips" during MEA, President's Day, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Breaks.

Providence Academy supports the need for athletes and their families to take vacations at various times of the year, but practices and contests should be considered when making vacation arrangements. A student who misses practice during an official school vacation will be less prepared than his teammates and could thus lose playing time and a starting position. We expect all students whose teams reach the state tournament level to participate.

As families make Easter/Spring Break plans please bear in mind that mandatory practices may be held during Break for students interested in playing on varsity teams during the spring season.

Throughout the year, varying with each sport, there are Saturday practices and Saturday games/meets. Holiday practices or meetings are discouraged, but on rare occasions will take place. Sunday practices are prohibited by the MSHSL.

PROSPECTIVE COLLEGE ATHLETES

Some student-athletes have a goal to participate in athletics at the collegiate level. The Providence Academy Athletic Department, College Counselors, and coaching staff are very willing to help student-athletes pursue this goal. To this end, we offer the following advice for our student-athletes:

● Communication with your PA coach(es) is essential. Student-athletes who have a strong desire to compete at the collegiate level should consult with their coach prior to their junior sport season; ● The driving force behind college selection should be the academic fit. Athletes should identify their desire to compete at the next level and work in conjunction with their College Counselor to develop their list of potential college choices;

● As an athlete pursuing collegiate sports, you should create a resume and cover letter that represents your overall high school experience and highlights your athletic accomplishments. Your college counselor should review the resume before submission to coaches/college personnel;

- Be proactive in marketing yourself to college coaches by creating a highlight video, forwarding game schedules, completing the online recruitment questionnaire on the college's athletic department website, etc.;
- PA videotapes games for coaching purposes and not all games are documented. Coaches will help secure copies of any game videos when they are available. If a family wants additional games documented, they may do so at their own expense;
- If you are considering NCAA Division I or II institutions meet with your College Counselor to discuss the process of registering with the NCAA Clearinghouse;
- NCAA Division I, II, and III institutions all have separate academic requirements;
- Review all NCAA Academic Eligibility Requirements with your College Counselor and visit the NCAA website at eligibilitycenter.org.
- Student athletes will benefit from taking the ACT or SAT for college entrance by February of their junior year;
- If you wish to compete in NCAA DI or DII in your first year of college you must register with the NCAA Eligibility Center and be certified academically and as an amateur. Student athletes completing the PA curriculum as outlined in the Academic Program Guide will exceed minimum NCAA course requirements;
- Once you have registered with the NCAA ClearingHouse, you must request through your College Counselor that your high school transcript be sent to the NCAA Eligibility Center at the end of your junior year.

REMOVAL

Although infrequent, if a coach does not regularly attend practice, is not an active participant, does not make a reasonable effort at skill development, and/or does not display a cooperative, supportive attitude, the coach may be removed from their coaching duties. Stipend would reflect for number of days worked up to the removal date.

TOURNAMENT ATTENDANCE

When a Providence Academy team is involved in a state playoff, administration will determine who may attend.

TRYOUTS

- Evaluation for team placement are held during the first week of the season
- Work and communicate tryout schedules with other sport coaches to ensure that tryouts do not overlap when possible.
- Check facility availability and submit facility use form to the athletic department.
- Submit the following tryout information to the athletic department prior to your tryouts: date, times the tryouts begin and end, location, what the student is to wear, what equipment the student is to bring, and when and how tryout results will be posted.
- Do not allow a student to tryout if he/she does not have an updated physical on file.
- Do not allow a student to tryout if he/she is not enrolled in Union Public Schools (i.e.- live in the district and have a schedule for the following year).
- Make arrangements for students to tryout who might miss the original tryout date due to being in another in-season sport.

- Give plenty of notice (ex: 2 weeks) of tryouts dates to ensure proper notification and ample time to get a physical if needed.
- NEVER charge a fee for tryouts.
- Communicate tryout information to each school site and request for it to be posted/announced where possible.
- Clearly communicate with student athletes and/or parents what the expectations are for an individual to make the athletic team.

UNSPORTSMANSHIP CONDUCT/FLAGRANT FOULS

A coach disqualified from any contest by an official for unsportsmanlike conduct will be suspended for at least the next scheduled contest and must meet with the Athletic Director.

UNIFORMS/EQUIPMENT

The head coach will coordinate sideline apparel for their coaches. Each coach is responsible to keep it clean and in good condition and have a professional appearance when representing Providence Academy. Loss of any uniform or equipment is the coach's financial obligation.

WHO'S WHO OF PROVIDENCE ACADEMY

- Dr. Todd Flanders – Headmaster
- Mr. Kurt Jaeger – Director of Upper School
- Mrs. Teresa Claypool – Director of Middle School
- Mr. Daren E. Messmore, CMAA – Director of Athletics & Activities

SPORTS MEDICINE

ATHLETIC TRAINER

Athletic Trainers are contracted by the school to serve our student-athletes and are available for consultation each day after school from 3:15 to 5:15 PM or until the last practice has concluded. Athletes who need to see the Trainer should advise their coaches that they may be absent from a portion of practice. Parents desiring specific information regarding a student-athlete's injuries or rehabilitation are encouraged to call the Athletic Trainer at 651-270-4218.

BASIC RETURN TO PLAY

If an athlete is seen by a physician for an injury or illness that keeps them out of practices/games, they MUST have a signed doctor's note or "Return to Play" form before they are allowed to resume participation. The paperwork can be faxed to the athletic office at (763) 258-2501 or given directly to the athletic trainer.

CONCUSSION GRADUATED "RETURN TO PLAY" PROTOCOL

Please review "Concussion Graduated "Return to Play" Protocol." It may be downloaded at providenceacademy.org/Concussion-Return-to-Play-Protocol