

**ATHLETIC COACHES**

The term “athletic coach” means any person who has been properly authorized, pursuant to this policy, to provide skill instruction for a sport season to students in Ledyard Public Schools who are participating in intramural or interscholastic athletics in elementary, middle or high school.

The Ledyard Board of Education requires that each athletic coach, regardless of coaching assignment (i.e., head coach or assistant coach), shall: (1) hold a current coaching permit issued by the State Board of Education; (2) hold a current certification in both First Aid and Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR), including use of an Automated External Defibrillator (AED), obtained through a course approved by either the American Red Cross or the American Heart Association; and (3) have completed training on concussions and sudden cardiac arrest awareness as follows:

- Every athletic coach shall complete an initial training course regarding concussions, which are a type of brain injury, approved by the State Board of Education prior to commencing the coaching assignment for the applicable sports season;
- For each school year after having completed the initial training course, each athletic coach shall review updated information regarding concussions provided by the State Board of Education prior to commencing the coaching assignment for the applicable sports season. This annual review shall not be required in any year when the athletic coach is required to complete the refresher course for reissuance of his or her coaching permit;
- For the school year commencing July 1, 2015, and each year thereafter, each athletic coach shall complete a refresher course approved by the State Board of Education not later than five (5) years after completion of the initial training course as a condition of the reissuance of a coaching permit to such coach. Such coach shall thereafter retake the refresher course at least once every five (5) years as a condition of the reissuance of a coaching permit; and
- For the school year commencing July 1, 2015, and each year thereafter, each athletic coach, prior to commencing the coaching assignment for the applicable sports season, shall review the concussion and sudden cardiac arrest awareness education plan approved for use in Ledyard Public Schools.

Proof of meeting the above certification and training requirements shall be retained for each athletic coach, whether they are a paid employee or a volunteer, upon initial assignment and for each year thereafter. The Athletic Director shall verify that each athletic coach has met the above listed requirements prior to the start of the applicable sports season.

Athletic coaches serving in Ledyard Public Schools shall:

- Adhere to all Board policies and District/school administrative regulations;
- Adhere to Connecticut Association of Schools (CAS)/Connecticut Interscholastic Athletic Conference (CIAC) rules and regulations, as applicable;
- Conduct herself/himself in a professional manner;
- Serve as a role model for students; and
- Demonstrate competence & proficiency in her/his role as an athletic coach of a particular sport.

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All athletic coaches in Ledyard Public Schools shall strictly adhere to the requirements of Policy 5141.7, *Student Sports – Concussions and Sudden Cardiac Arrest*, and any associated regulations and procedures. Coaches shall err on the side of caution with regard to taking actions for a student athlete who might have a concussion. Prior to the start of each sport season, each athletic coach shall: (1) provide student athletes and their parents/guardians with training on concussions and sudden cardiac arrest awareness using the education plan approved for use in Ledyard Public Schools; (2) provide each student athlete and her/his parent or legal guardian with a copy of the informed consent form; and (3) retain a copy of the informed consent form signed by both the student athlete and her/his parent or legal guardian

**Employment**

Athletic coaches serve at the discretion of the Superintendent. An athletic coach's service may be terminated or non-renewed at any time, subject to the requirements of this policy. Athletic coaching contracts shall only be for the length of one sport season. An athletic coach's service may be renewed after completion of the evaluation process delineated in this policy and only with the approval of the Superintendent and school administration.

Athletic coaches will normally be paid according to the coaching position and sport as delineated in the Board's current contract with the Ledyard Educators' Association (LEA). However, in cases where the Board is unable to fund an athletic coaching position, for whatever reason, a person who meets the certification requirements delineated above may be authorized to serve as a volunteer athletic coach subject to the other requirements of this policy and other Board policies regarding volunteers in Ledyard Public Schools.

**Evaluation**

Every athletic coach, whether paid or serving as a volunteer, shall be evaluated at least annually by his/her immediate supervisor or the Athletic Director. The coach shall receive a copy of the written evaluation, and the original shall be maintained at the Ledyard Board of Education personnel office. Personnel who coach multiple sports shall be evaluated individually for each sport.

The purposes of the evaluation are:

- To provide a systematic process whereby athletic coaches increase the effectiveness of their services to the athletic program and to Ledyard Public Schools.
- To provide an opportunity for athletic coaches to analyze their strengths and weaknesses, and to discuss objectively the contributions they have made to the athletic program and to Ledyard Public Schools.
- To provide an opportunity for the administrative staff to analyze the strengths and weaknesses of individual athletic coaches, and to utilize this knowledge to develop supervisory service to assist individuals in developing their competence.
- To provide an effective means by which administrators may make recommendations concerning the continued employment of personnel, and/or other recommendations to the Superintendent or his/her designee on behalf of the Ledyard Board of Education.

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It is the responsibility of all administrators, athletic coaches and other professional staff members to recognize that Ledyard Public Schools intend to seek and maintain the best-qualified staff to provide quality coaching for student athletes. In keeping with this goal, all personnel are expected to participate fully in the evaluation process.

An integral part of this evaluation process is self-appraisal by the athletic coach. Both the individual's self-appraisal and the immediate supervisor's evaluation shall cover, at a minimum: knowledge of the sport; coaching skills and techniques; and attitudes, behavior patterns, values, and ethics.

**Termination of an Athletic Coaching Contract**

The Superintendent or his/her designee, on behalf of the Board, may terminate the contract of any athletic coach at any time (1) for reasons of moral misconduct, insubordination or a violation of the rules of the Board, or (2) because the sport has been cancelled by the Board. The contract of any athletic coach whose coaching permit is revoked by the State Board of Education shall be immediately terminated.

If a decision to terminate an athletic coach's contract is made during the sport season, the Superintendent shall remove the athletic coach from duty during the pendency of any hearing conducted pursuant to this policy.

When the Superintendent or his/her designee, on behalf of the Board, terminates or declines to renew the coaching contract of an athletic coach, such athletic coach shall be informed of the decision to terminate or not renew no later than ninety (90) days after the completion of the sport season covered by the contract.

**Appeal and Hearing Procedure**

An athletic coach who has served in the same coaching position for three (3) or more consecutive school years shall have the opportunity to appeal any such non-renewal or termination decision (except if such decision was due to cancellation of the sport or removal of funding for the coaching position) to the Board in accordance with the following procedures:

1. The athletic coach must submit a written appeal to the Board, via the Superintendent, within ten (10) calendar days of the date of the Superintendent's written notification of termination or non-renewal. Such appeal shall set forth the basis on which the athletic coach seeks review of that decision. Failure to submit a timely written appeal shall constitute a waiver of said appeal opportunity.
2. Within a reasonable period of time of the receipt of a written appeal of the Superintendent's decision, the Board, or a committee of the Board as designated by the Board Chairperson, shall conduct a hearing to consider such appeal. Reasonable notice of the time and place for such hearing shall be issued to the athletic coach prior to the commencement of the hearing.

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3. At the hearing, the athletic coach shall have an opportunity to present facts and evidence in support of renewal and/or reinstatement; the Superintendent shall have the opportunity, but shall not be obligated, to present facts and evidence in support of the decision for non-renewal or termination. For good cause shown, the athletic coach may call a limited number of witnesses to present factual information (rather than simply expressing an opinion on the skill or competence of the athletic coach). In any event, cumulative or redundant testimony shall not be allowed.
4. The decision of non-renewal or termination shall be affirmed unless the Board determines that the Superintendent's decision is arbitrary and capricious. The athletic coach shall bear the burden of proof on this point.
5. Within a reasonable period of time following the hearing, the Board shall determine whether the Superintendent acted in an arbitrary and capricious manner in making his/her decision not to renew and/or to terminate and shall provide a written decision to the athletic coach. The decision of the Board shall be final.

**Legal References:**

Connecticut General Statutes

10-149. Qualifications for coaches of intramural and interscholastic athletics.

10-149b. Training courses for coaches re concussions and head injuries. Development or approval by State Board of Education. Revocation of coaching permit. (as amended by Public Act 14-66)

10-149c. Student athletes and concussions. Removal from athletic activities. Revocation of coaching permit. (as amended by Public Act 14-66)

10-222e. Policy on evaluation and termination of athletic coaches.

Public Act 14-66 – *An Act Concerning Youth Athletics and Concussions*

Public Act 14-93 – *An Act Concerning Sudden Cardiac Arrest Prevention*

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