

LANGFORD AREA

2026-2027 Activities Handbook



MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Langford Area School District Activities Department is to enrich academic growth and personal development through extracurricular participation to equip student-athletes with character, integrity, and life skills that extend beyond competition.

Core Standards

- **Growth & Leadership:** We challenge athletes to push past comfort zones, navigate adversity, and represent our school with exemplary sportsmanship and respect.
- **Play Hard:** Unmatched preparation, relentless work ethic, and dedication to excellence in the classroom, on the court, and across our community.
- **Play Smart:** Deep preparation, clear understanding of our goals, and disciplined execution in every detail of the game.
- **Play Together:** Unselfish commitment to the group, embracing individual roles, facing challenges together, and building a true team culture.

EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Program Definition & Educational Value

The Langford Area School District views all extra-curricular activities as integral extensions of the educational experience. These school-sponsored, voluntary programs enhance learning outside the classroom by building character, self-discipline, perseverance, teamwork, leadership, and resilience.

All student activities and athletic programs:

- **Board Approval:** The information in this handbook has been approved by the Board of Education.
- **Supplemental Policy:** This handbook complements but does not replace or supersede any policies of the Board of Education or the South Dakota High School Activities Association (SDHSAA)
- **Must be approved by school administration and supervised by designated faculty or coaching staff.**
- **Do not earn academic credit toward promotion or graduation.**
- **Require thoughtful planning, organization, supervision, and evaluation equal to any other component of the academic curriculum.**

Guiding Principles

All co-curricular and athletic programs shall:

1. Provide Educational Value: Contribute directly to student learning and growth across intellectual, physical, social, civic, ethical, and leadership dimensions.
2. Maintain Academic Balance: Complement and align with the district's primary academic goals.
3. Ensure Safety & Quality: Be administered in a professional, safe, and structured environment.

Governance & Alignment

The Board of Education maintains annual membership in the South Dakota High School Activities Association (SDHSAA). All district activity and athletic programs operate in full accordance with the Constitution, Bylaws, rules, regulations, and eligibility standards established by the SDHSAA and school administration.

Participation, Nondiscrimination & Requirements

Participation opportunities are available to all eligible students without discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, national origin, or disability. The Board of Education reserves the authority to restrict participation if involvement poses a legitimate safety risk to the student or others.

Prior to participating in any athletic or sanctioned activity program, students must fulfill the following:

1. Parental Consent: A signed written permission form from a parent or legal guardian.
2. Physical Examination: Documentation of a current physical exam completed by a licensed healthcare provider, as required by district policy and the SDHSAA.
3. Insurance Coverage: Proof of student insurance purchased through the school or a signed waiver from a parent/guardian certifying that private insurance coverage is maintained.

PARENT EXPECTATIONS

Parents and guardians are essential partners in creating a positive and rewarding experience for all student-athletes. Your support, encouragement, and example help foster sportsmanship, respect, and school pride. As a spectator, please be a role model for your child and model the following expectations:

1. **Be a positive fan.** Encourage all student-athletes with enthusiasm and respect while supporting the values of education-based athletics.
2. **Allow coaches to coach.** Trust coaches to teach, instruct, and make decisions that are in the best interest of the team, student-athletes, and athletic program.
3. **Respect game officials.** Officials perform an important role in athletics. Treat them with courtesy and allow them to officiate the contest without criticism or confrontation.
4. **Show respect to visiting teams and spectators.** As representatives of the Langford Area School District, students and parents are expected to treat visiting teams, officials, and spectators with hospitality, courtesy, and respect. These same expectations apply when attending activities at other schools, where students and parents should demonstrate positive sportsmanship and represent the district with pride
5. **Support our team with positive encouragement.** Cheer for the success of our student-athletes rather than directing negative comments toward opponents, officials, or spectators.

By modeling these behaviors, parents and guardians help create an environment that reflects the values of sportsmanship, integrity, and respect that the Langford Area School District strives to promote.

To promote respectful and productive communication, our Athletic Department requires a **24-hour cooling-off period** before a parent or caregiver contacts a coach regarding concerns arising from a contest or athletic event. Coaches are not expected to respond to or engage in discussions immediately before, during, or immediately after a competition. This includes communication by text message, phone call, email, social media, or in person.

The Athletic Department's Chain of Command:

- (1) Student Athlete meets with Coach
- (2) If unresolved - Parents and Student Athlete meet with Coach
- (3) If problems persist - Parents, Student Athlete, Coach, and Athletic Director meet
- (4) If conflict is not resolved - Parents, Student Athlete, Coach, Athletic Director, and Superintendent meet
- (5) If the conflict remains unresolved, a formal complaint may be submitted to the superintendent.

ATHLETES CODE OF ETHICS

Participation in interscholastic athletics is a privilege that carries important responsibilities. The Langford Area School District believes athletic competition should reflect the highest standards of sportsmanship, ethics, and character while helping students develop lifelong skills.

Student-athletes are expected to pursue excellence and compete with honor by demonstrating the six core values of **trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring, and citizenship**. These expectations apply at all school-sponsored events and activities, both on and off the field of competition.

Trustworthiness

Student-athletes will:

- Demonstrate honesty, integrity, and ethical behavior in all situations.
- Compete with honor and pursue victory through fair play.
- Keep commitments by being dependable, prepared, and punctual for practices, contests, meetings, and team activities.
- Show loyalty to their teammates, coaches, and school by placing the success of the team above individual recognition.

Respect

Student-athletes will:

- Treat teammates, opponents, coaches, officials, spectators, and school personnel with courtesy and respect.
- Display good sportsmanship by being gracious in victory and respectful in defeat.
- Refrain from profanity, inappropriate language, taunting, bullying, trash-talking, discriminatory remarks, or unsportsmanlike behavior.
- Accept officials' decisions respectfully and avoid arguing or displaying negative reactions during or after contests.

Responsibility

Student-athletes will:

- Remember that they are students first and maintain a commitment to academic success.
- Recognize that participation in athletics is a privilege earned through responsible behavior and good citizenship.
- Represent Langford Area School District with pride by demonstrating positive conduct both in school and within the community.
- Exercise self-control and emotional maturity in all situations.

- Maintain a healthy lifestyle by avoiding the use of alcohol, tobacco, vaping products, illegal drugs, performance-enhancing substances, and other harmful behaviors.
- Compete according to the rules and never participate in gambling or any activity that compromises the integrity of athletics.

Fairness

Student-athletes will:

- Compete honestly and fairly while respecting the rules of the game.
- Treat teammates and opponents with fairness and dignity.
- Be willing to learn, improve, and accept constructive coaching and feedback.

Caring

Student-athletes will:

- Demonstrate compassion, encouragement, and concern for teammates and others.
- Never intentionally place another participant at risk of injury through reckless or dangerous actions.
- Support teammates by promoting positive attitudes and reporting concerns that may affect the health, safety, or well-being of others.

Citizenship

Student-athletes will:

- Follow all school, team, and SDHSAA rules and expectations.
- Respect both the letter and the spirit of the rules by avoiding any form of cheating, gamesmanship, or unsportsmanlike conduct.
- Serve as positive ambassadors for their school through exemplary conduct in competition, the classroom, and the community.

By participating in athletics at Langford Area School District, student-athletes acknowledge that they are representatives of their school and community. They are expected to uphold these standards of character and sportsmanship at all times. Failure to meet these expectations may result in disciplinary action, including suspension or removal from participation, in accordance with school and team policies.

ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY

All students must be passing all subjects to be eligible to participate in any school activity. Grade checks will be determined on a weekly basis each Monday. (Eligibility starts over at the beginning of each semester).

1. Student grades will be checked each week starting the 2nd full week of each quarter.
 - a. If a student is failing a class, he/she will have one week to raise the grade to passing to remain eligible for games. Each student will receive a probationary week, once per semester. This means they will have that week to get grades up to passing before the next grade check.
 - b. If a grade is not brought up to passing after the one week of probation, the student will become ineligible for activities until the following grade check. Students are still required to attend practice.**
2. Failure to pass a minimum of four credits per semester will result in the student being ineligible for SDHSAA activities for the entire following semester. (SDHSAA rules).

All instructors in grades 6-12 will use the following grading scale:

The numerical scores for grades are as follows:

A = 100 - 93
B = 92 - 84
C = 83 - 75
D = 74 - 66
F = 65 and below

ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION PARTICIPATION

Students that are enrolled in alternative education are allowed to participate in any of the activities provided by the district. Students will be required to follow all standards and participation rules adopted by the district and SDHSAA.

ABSENCE ON DAY OF ACTIVITY (after school or evening):

Students must be **in attendance by noon on the day of the activity** to be eligible to participate in or attend any after-school or evening activity.

Doctor, dentist, and other pre-approved appointments may be excused at the discretion of the administration. However, if a student is sent home due to illness at any time during the school day, the student **will not be permitted to participate in or attend an activity that evening.**

SUBSTANCE ABUSE POLICY

The School Activity Policies are intended to promote positive student behaviors in all school activities. Student participation in school activities is a privilege, not a right. Students who

choose to participate in school activities are expected to positively represent their school and community by demonstrating appropriate behavior all year round. Specifically, the purposes of school activities and policies are:

1. To encourage growth and responsible citizenship.
2. To emphasize the schools' concerns for the health of students in areas of safety while participating in activities and the long-term physical and emotional effects of chemical use on their health.
3. To promote equity and a sense of order and discipline among students.
4. To confirm and support existing state laws that restrict the use of mood-altering chemicals.
5. To establish standards of conduct for those students who are leaders and standard-bearers among their peers.
6. To assist students who desire to resist peer pressure that directs them toward the use of mood-altering chemicals.
7. To provide consistency among all student activities in student behavioral expectations.

Any middle school or high school student wishing to participate in school activities shall not possess, use, sell, or distribute tobacco, alcohol, or any other controlled, mind-altering, or illegal substance or commit any crime against a person or against property.

These activity policies will be enforced starting August 1, 2026 to July 31, 2027 regardless of whether or not the student is participating in an activity at the time of a violation. A student who violates these policies shall be ineligible to participate in activities according to the policy.

The following activity policies apply to all students participating in activities, whether at a school function or not.

Each student and his/her parents/guardians will be required to sign one set of School Activity Policies per year instead of one per activity, since policy revisions include all activities in the policies; this will provide unity among all activities in the District.

TRANSPORTATION

Head coaches will communicate with the Athletic Director to determine leave time for activities for JV and Varsity events. Middle School activities will require parents to drive student athletes to/from events. All students riding activity buses are expected to act in a responsible manner. You not only represent yourselves, but you also represent our school and community.

1. It is preferred that students ride the activity bus to school sponsored activities. Traveling together promotes team unity, encourages a positive team culture, and provides an opportunity for students to support and connect with one another.
 - a. In the event of specific circumstances, a parent may check their son/daughter off the bus by signing a check off sheet after the event.
A parent must **personally** sign their child out at the activity. Parents

may request that another parent take their child home from an activity. This request must be approved by the administration.

2. Students will be picked up at the school and returned to the school following the activity.
 - a. Parents may request their son/daughter to be picked up or dropped off at a designated point when the bus is traveling their direction. A drop off form will be available at the beginning of the year where parents will give their permission for school designated drop off points other than the school.
3. Drop off/ Pick-up points for Langford Area events include: Pierpont Park, Dead Animal Corner, 9-mile corner west of Langford, Hot Spot in Bristol, Perebooms in Webster, Dairy Queen in Groton, Co-op in Roslyn, and the Post Office in Eden. Upon returning from an activity, coaches will remain at the school until all students have left the facility.
4. Penalty for violating this policy:
 - a. 1st Offense: Student will not be permitted to ride the bus or participate in the next activity.
 - b. 2nd Offense: Student may not be permitted to ride the activity bus for the remainder of the school year.

MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETES PARTICIPATING IN HIGH SCHOOL SPORTS

Athletic Participation for Middle School Students – Policy J-LA

It is the policy of the Langford Area School District to provide athletic opportunities for students in grades 6, 7, and 8 that are appropriate for their grade level.

When necessary, middle school student athletes may be invited to participate with the high school programs.

Revised July 2026.

The Langford Area School District recognizes that a middle school student may be given the opportunity to participate in a high school athletic program. Such decisions are made on an individual basis and are intended to serve the best interests of both the student and the athletic program.

The first consideration in any decision to move a middle school student to the high school level is the student's **emotional, social, physical, and academic readiness** to assume the increased expectations and responsibilities associated with high school competition.

The district's philosophy for athletic participation is as follows:

- **Middle School Athletics:** Emphasize skill development, participation, teamwork, and age-appropriate competition while building a strong foundation for future athletic success.
- **High School Athletics:** Focus on maximizing team performance by fostering advanced skill development, promoting competitive excellence, and strengthening teamwork.

The district will take appropriate precautions to ensure that middle school student-athletes are not overextended physically, emotionally, or academically when participating on multiple teams.

Approval Process

The Head Varsity Coach may recommend that a middle school student participate at the high school level. The recommendation will be reviewed by the Activities Director and school administration. If approved, the student's parent(s) or guardian(s) will be consulted, and parental approval must be obtained before the student may participate at the high school level.

Criteria for Participation

A middle school student may be considered for high school participation under one of the following circumstances:

1. Exceptional Ability

- A student demonstrates the skill, maturity, and readiness to compete safely and successfully at the high school level.
- Students who are moved up based on ability may participate at **no more than two levels of competition**, as determined by the coaching staff and administration.

2. Team Numbers or Positional Need

A student may be moved to the high school level when:

- Team participation numbers are too low to safely or effectively conduct practices or competitions in accordance with SDHSAA requirements;
- Injuries or other circumstances create a roster shortage; or
- The high school team has a specific positional need, and the middle school student is determined by the coaching staff to be the most qualified available participant.

Participation Limits

When a middle school student participates in both middle school and high school contests, the coaching staff will carefully manage the student's workload to protect their health and well-being.

If middle school and high school contests occur on the same day, the student-athlete's participation will be limited to the maximum number of contests, quarters, innings, matches, events, or other participation limits established by the South Dakota High School Activities Association (SDHSAA). Coaches and administrators will determine the student's level of participation with the student's best interests as the primary consideration.

INJURY

The health and safety of student participants is a top priority. Any student who suffers an injury or becomes ill while participating in a school-sponsored activity must notify the coach or activity sponsor immediately. The coach or sponsor will assess the situation and, when appropriate, contact the student's parent(s) or guardian(s) and arrange for or recommend appropriate medical care.

If a licensed healthcare provider removes a student-athlete from participation due to an illness or injury, the student may not return to practice or competition until written medical clearance has been provided. This documentation must be submitted to the coach or activity sponsor before the student resumes participation. A separate release is not required if the original medical documentation clearly identifies the duration of the student's participation restriction and authorizes return after that period has ended.

Student-athletes who are temporarily unable to participate because of an injury or illness are expected to remain active members of the team whenever possible. Unless excused by the coach or school administration, injured participants are expected to attend practices, contests, meetings, and other required team functions. Team attendance expectations, conduct standards, and all other team rules remain in effect during the recovery period.

CONCUSSION AWARENESS AND PREVENTION - Policy JJID

The Langford Area School District is committed to providing a safe environment for all students. Recognizing the serious risks associated with concussions and other head injuries, the district supports education, prevention, proper evaluation, and safe return-to-play procedures for all student-athletes.

Concussion Education

The district will provide concussion education consistent with the guidelines of the South Dakota High School Activities Association (SDHSAA) and the South Dakota Department of Education.

Each year, all student-athletes and their parent(s) or guardian(s) will receive concussion information outlining the signs, symptoms, risks, and proper management of concussions.

Before participating in any school-sponsored athletic practice or competition, each student-athlete and their parent(s) or guardian(s) must sign and return the required concussion acknowledgment form indicating they have reviewed and understand the provided information.

Coach Training

All athletic coaches, including volunteer coaches, are required to complete annual concussion education and training as required by state law and district policy. Coaches may not supervise or participate in any district athletic activity until documentation of the required training has been submitted and approved.

Recognition and Removal from Play

Any student-athlete who is suspected of sustaining a concussion or other head injury during practice or competition shall be removed from participation immediately.

A student-athlete who has been removed from participation due to a suspected concussion may not return to practice or competition on the same day and shall not resume participation until:

- The student no longer exhibits signs, symptoms, or behaviors consistent with a concussion; and
- Written clearance has been provided by a licensed healthcare provider who is trained and experienced in the evaluation and management of concussions.

For purposes of this policy, a licensed healthcare provider is an individual who is licensed as a medical doctor, nurse practitioner, or physician's assistant and authorized under South Dakota law to provide medical care and who has appropriate training and experience in concussion evaluation and management.

SWAY Concussion Management Program

The Langford Area School District utilizes the **SWAY Medical Concussion Management Program** as part of its concussion protocol.

All student-athletes are required to complete baseline SWAY testing as determined by the district prior to participating in practices or athletic contests. Additional post-injury assessments may be administered when a concussion is suspected or diagnosed to assist healthcare providers in evaluating recovery.

The district works in partnership with qualified medical professionals to administer the SWAY program. Return-to-play decisions are made solely by the student's licensed healthcare provider in accordance with accepted medical standards. School personnel, including coaches and administrators, will not authorize a student-athlete to return to participation without the required medical clearance.

LANGFORD AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT

2026–2027 ACTIVITIES HANDBOOK

Parent/Guardian & Student-Athlete Acknowledgment

We acknowledge that we have received, read, and reviewed the **Langford Area School District 2026–2027 Activities Handbook**.

We understand that participation in school activities is a **privilege and not a right** and that participation carries responsibilities for both the student-athlete and the parent/guardian.

By signing below, we acknowledge and agree that:

- We have reviewed the expectations, rules, policies, procedures, and standards contained in the Activities Handbook.
- We understand and agree to support the **Mission Statement** and the Core Standards of **Growth & Leadership, Play Hard, Play Smart, and Play Together**.
- The student-athlete agrees to follow the **Athletes Code of Ethics**, including expectations regarding trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring, and citizenship.
- The parent/guardian agrees to follow the **Parent Expectations**, including demonstrating positive sportsmanship, respecting coaches and officials, supporting student-athletes appropriately, and following the Athletic Department's communication and chain-of-command procedures.
- We understand the **academic eligibility requirements** and recognize that academic performance is an essential part of participation.
- We understand and agree to comply with the **Substance Abuse Policy**, including the prohibition of tobacco, alcohol, vaping products, controlled substances, illegal substances, and other prohibited conduct.
- We understand the **transportation expectations and procedures**, including requirements for activity buses, parent check-out, and designated drop-off/pick-up locations.
- We understand the policies concerning **injury, concussion awareness, removal from participation, medical clearance, and return-to-play procedures**.
- We understand that all participants must comply with applicable **Langford Area School District policies, school rules, team/activity rules, and South Dakota High School Activities Association (SDHSAA) rules and regulations**.

- We understand that failure to comply with these expectations and policies may result in disciplinary action, suspension, loss of eligibility, or removal from participation, consistent with applicable district and SDHSAA policies.

We understand that this acknowledgment applies to the **2026–2027 school year** and covers participation in Langford Area School District activities as outlined in the Activities Handbook.

Student-Athlete Information

Student-Athlete Name (Print): _____

Grade: _____

Parent/Guardian Acknowledgment

I have read and reviewed the Langford Area School District 2026–2027 Activities Handbook. I understand my responsibilities as a parent/guardian and agree to support my student-athlete in following the expectations and policies outlined in the handbook.

Parent/Guardian Name (Print): _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Date: _____

Student-Athlete Acknowledgment

I have read and reviewed the Langford Area School District 2026–2027 Activities Handbook. I understand the responsibilities and expectations of being a Langford Area student-athlete and agree to follow the policies, rules, and standards outlined in the handbook.

Student-Athlete Name (Print): _____

Student-Athlete Signature: _____