

FSD Athletics – Extra Curricular and Inter School Sports

Background

In support of The Foothills School Division's Vision of Engagement, Support and Success for each Learner, FSD Athletics facilitates growth of physical literacy and positive development of the whole student through the possible opportunity to participate in interschool sport.

The Division recognizes participation in extracurricular and interschool athletic activities as an enriching part of the school experience. It enhances students' skills, knowledge, and character development; it encourages healthy lifestyles; and it promotes positive attitudes within and among participating schools. The Division's commitment to providing a safe learning environment for all students extends to students' participation in all forms of interschool athletic activities.

Extra curricular athletics are one of many ways schools provide students with valuable educational lessons in teamwork, sportsmanship, fair play, winning and losing, work ethic, goal setting, self-discipline, building self-esteem and confidence developing skills to handle challenging situations.

Goals

1. To encourage participation in physical activity, introducing students to life-long athletic pursuits aiding the development of physical literacy (please see Appendix 2 below).
2. To encourage and provide leadership in exceptional levels of sportsmanship and co-operation among participants.
3. To provide participatory skills development and/or competitive opportunities that:
 - Foster the pursuit of mastery
 - Allow students to learn resilience and gain confidence
 - Develop problem solving and teamwork skills
 - Create opportunities for goal setting

Procedures

The decision to deliver athletic opportunities for students is the decision of each school. Participation levels are decided at the school level by the principal and teachers/coaching staff.

It is important to understand that many important variables contribute to the possibility of athletics at any given school. Among these are:

- The availability of volunteer staff coaches
- The availability of volunteer community coaches
- The availability of staff team representatives
- The number of students willing to play

The decision to use school facilities for interschool athletics on any given day of the school calendar rests with the school principal in consultation with the Foothills Athletics Council. This decision will include consideration of other school events, rentals of school facilities, and the learning needs of the students in the school.

Supervision

The type and amount of supervision by volunteer teacher or staff representatives/coaches shall vary according to the age, number of students and type of activity the students are involved in. Categories of supervision as set out in the [School Physical Activity, Health & Education Resource for Safety \(SPHEREs\)](#) guidelines include:

- a) Constant visual supervision
- b) On-site supervision; and
- c) Proximity supervision

Most supervision responsibilities of teachers, volunteer coaches and support staff outside of instructional time would be within categories b) & c). Category a) supervision generally applies to specific activities in physical education settings.

Supervision of Change Rooms

Teachers have a duty of care to ensure the safety and wellbeing of students using change rooms. Change rooms should be supervised and teachers should adhere to the following guidelines:

- Give explicit instructions and guidelines for behaviour in change rooms;
- Set a routine for going into change rooms and keep to it;
- Announce to students when a teacher is entering the change room and allow time for students to cover up
- Do not stand in change rooms as students have a right to privacy
- With the exception of emergent situations, 2 adult supervisors will enter the change room if necessary

Safety Guidelines for Secondary Interschool Athletics in Alberta

Teachers and coaches should become familiar with [School Physical Activity, Health & Education Resource for Safety](#) (SPHEREs, 2021).

The intent of this document is to focus attention on safe instructional practices in order to minimize inherent risk. Well-planned interschool athletic activities reduce the frequency and severity of injuries. By implementing safe instructional practices, such as use of logical teaching progressions, as well as the inclusion of age-appropriate activities in practice preparations, planning and regular practices, the teacher/coach guards against foreseeable risks. A guideline alone does not eliminate risk regardless of how well it is written or how effectively it is implemented. Safety awareness, based on up-to-date information, common sense observation, the teacher/coach's ability to maintain a safe environment, action and foresight are keys to safe programming.

All interschool athletic activities, regardless of complexity or simplicity of the action, have an inherent level of risk. Variable factors such as skill level, previous experience of the student athletes and teacher/coach, weather conditions, facilities and equipment, may all affect the level of risk of any activity.

Sporting Behavior and Conduct

In keeping with the FSD Athletics goals of mastery in sportsmanship and cooperation, all participants in FSD interschool athletics are responsible to conduct themselves with respect and courtesy.

There must be a school representative at all competitions (games, meets, bonspiels) to supervise and ensure sporting behavior. Teams may not play without a staff member from each school present. In exceptional circumstances, the school representative from another FSD school can act as supervisor for both school teams given they are an FSD staff member.

The staff member may be any school employee designated by the principal, may be coaching/managing the team, or watching from another part of the gym/field etc.

The school representative should introduce themselves to the visiting team, and if possible, the game officials. Supervision does not end until the school or host facility (including school grounds) is entirely cleared of players.

Supervised spectators at both league and playoff games are permitted at the discretion of the host school. Each school should provide a supervisor(s) other than the coach for its spectators.

In line with the Alberta Schools Athletic Association (2022-2023 ASAA Policy Handbook), FSD Athletics encourages the following sporting behavior:

a. Team Members:

Coaches, players, and bench personnel must demonstrate qualities of courtesy and good sportsmanship. These are evidenced by proper acceptance of officials' judgment, positive encouragement and bench behavior, and respect for opposing players as well as for teammates.

b. Spectators

Spectators, both student and adult, must demonstrate courtesy and good sportsmanship by positive cheers of encouragement for their team, not against the opposing team. This is evidenced by the absence of booing and vulgarities. Spectators must also show proper acceptance of officials' judgment. Please see Appendix 1, Spectator Code of Conduct below.

Scheduling

Full day athletics events will not conflict with FSD professional learning as set out in the yearly professional learning calendar. FSD schools will refrain from participating in out of jurisdiction tournaments if staff would be forced to miss Division or school based learning on that day. In exceptional circumstances, the Superintendent or designate, in consultation with the Principal, may allow staff to miss local or divisional professional learning as long as staff remain responsible for the professional learning that will be missed.

Invitational Tournaments

FSD hosted invitational tournaments should schedule host teams to play no earlier than 2 pm on a school day. This will allow for school based events and learning to take place in a fulsome manner with all staff team members present. In exceptional circumstances, the Superintendent or designate, in consultation with the Principal, may allow staff to miss local or divisional professional learning as long as staff remain responsible for the professional learning that will be missed.

Zone and Provincial Tournaments

Schools will follow the tournament and game schedules as set out by ASAA.

Game Time

FSD interschool league games and playoff games should not begin before 4:00 on school day. Please allow for travel and suitable warm-up time.

Severe Weather – In the case of severe inclement weather, including tornado warnings, the site supervisor will suspend play and direct participants to seek shelter as needed.

Appendix 1 – FSD Spectator Code of Conduct

The Foothills School Division Spectator Code of Conduct will be read aloud before all school or division-operated activities.

Every activity participant, spectator, official, staff, and student at any school or division-operated event or activity is required to:

- Demonstrate ethical behaviors and good sportsmanship at all times and demonstrate respect, courtesy, and consideration in all interactions.
- Ensure his/her conduct contributes to a caring, respectful, and safe environment and respect the professional judgment of teachers, coaches, game officials, volunteers and other adults or students providing support or service to the school or for other students.
- Refrain from comments or behavior which are disrespectful, offensive, racist, discriminatory, disruptive, sexist, intimidating, insulting and/or offensive to the person(s) organizing, attending, officiating, and/or participating in a school activity or event sponsored by the school or Division.
- Subject student-athletes, officials, coaches, or school administrators to behavior and/or language aimed to demean, disrespect or harm.

In the event that any person fails to meet the requirements outlined above, is reported to disrupt verbally or physically, or threatens to disrupt, the operations of a school-related activity, threaten the health and safety or well-being of a student, staff, official, or parent of a student enrolled in a school operated by the Division, this will constitute a breach of this Administrative Procedure.

Any person who fails to meet the abovementioned expectations may be subject to the following outcomes at the discretion of the principal or a person designated under the school or Division's authority, with or without warning:

- Immediate ejection from the event and/or school
- Restricted access to future school or division activities
- Forfeiture of the event or future events
- Resuming the game without fans
- Scheduling future games without fans
- Restrictions/suspensions from future attendance/participation

Appendix 2 – Definitions

Physical Literacy

Physical literacy is the motivation, confidence, physical competence, knowledge and understanding to value and take responsibility for engagement in physical activities for life.

-International Physical Literacy Association, May, 2014

Appendix 3 – Government of Alberta’s Fairness and Safety in Sport Act and Regulation
Athlete Eligibility for Female Only Sports (ages 12 and older)
(September 2025)

A. Definitions

Applicant means a person submitting a Challenge.

Challenge means a procedure by which an individual’s eligibility to participate in a relevant sport may be contested.

Birth registration document means, pursuant to section 1(b) of the FSSR, a birth registration document as defined in the *Vital Statistics Act* or similar document issued outside of Alberta containing an individual’s full name; date and place where the birth of the individual occurred; and the sex of the individual.

Relevant sport means an amateur competitive sport or sport discipline governed, regulated, coordinated, promoted or sponsored by Foothills School Division (the “Division”).

Sex at birth means, pursuant to section 3(1)(b) of the FSSR, the sex of an individual that appears on the individual’s birth registration document

B. Purpose

On December 4, 2024, the *Fairness and Safety in Sport Act* (“FSS Act”) received royal assent. The FSS Act will take effect on September 1, 2025. Pursuant to the *Fairness and Safety in Sport Regulation* (“FSSR”) issued under the FSS Act, the Division has attached within Appendix to Administrative Procedure 224 - Extra Curricular and Inter School Sports.

The purpose of this Appendix 3 is the promotion of fairness and safety in sport, as required by the FSSR. The Division will not tolerate any abuse of the FSS Act or of the FSSR, including but not limited to, Challenges made in bad faith. The Division reiterates its commitment to ensuring that each student enrolled in a school operated by the Division and each staff member employed by the Division is provided with a welcoming, caring, respectful, and safe learning environment that

respects diversity and fosters a sense of belonging, in accordance with section 33(1)(d) of the *Education Act*.

This Appendix 3 applies to the female-only league, class, or division of all relevant sports and where the participating athlete is 12 years of age or older.

This Appendix 3 does not apply to leagues, classes, or divisions other than female-only ones; or to athletes under 12 years of age.

C. Eligibility to Participate in Female-Only Sports Leagues, Classes, or Divisions

To be eligible to participate in a female-only league, class, or division of a relevant sport, an athlete that is 12 years of age or older must be of the female sex at birth.

D. Confirmation of Athlete Eligibility

1. Before an athlete may participate in a female-only league, class, or division of relevant sport, an athlete (or their parent or guardian if the athlete is under 18 years of age) must confirm in writing through the relevant sport registration process with the Division, that they understand and meet the eligibility criteria of female sex at birth as set out in the *Fairness and Safety in Sport Act*, SA 2024, c F-2.5 and the *Fairness and Safety in Sport Regulation*, Alta Reg 124/2025. [Form 224-1](#)
 - 1.1. For clarity, such written confirmation is not required before an athlete participates in a league, class, or division of a relevant sport other than a female-only league, class, or division of a relevant sport.
 - 1.2. Further, such written confirmation is not required before an athlete participates in a female-only league, class or division of a relevant sport if that athlete is under 12 years of age.
 - 1.3. Failure of an athlete (or their parent or guardian if the athlete is under 18 years of age) to confirm their eligibility in writing with the Division will render the athlete ineligible to participate. Subject to the Division's sole discretion, the athlete may be permitted to participate upon subsequent written confirmation of their eligibility.
 - 1.4. For implementation purposes, registration information for affected students on file in the Division's student information system as of September 15, 2025 will be considered:
 - 1.4.1. parental confirmation, for students under 18 years of age; or,
 - 1.4.2. athlete confirmation, for students 18 years of age and older
 - 1.5. Parents and female student athletes will be advised of the requirement under this

legislation confirm in their registration their sex at birth before September 15, 2025 in order to comply with Government of Alberta legislative requirements.

E. Confidential Challenge

- 2 A confidential Challenge can only be submitted by the coach of the opposing team that has competed in a female-only league, class, or division of a relevant sport that includes athletes who are 12 years and older in the same school year the competition took place.
- 3 The Applicant must provide the Challenge confidentially in writing to the Assistant Superintendent, Corporate Services. The written Challenge must contain the following:
 - 3.1 The name of the Applicant;
 - 3.2 The Applicant's age;
 - 3.3 The Applicant's position coaching credentials;
 - 3.4 Confirmation of the Applicant's coaching involvement on an opposing team that has competed in a female-only league, class, or division of a relevant sport that includes athletes who are 12 years and older in the same school year the competition took place;
 - 3.5 The name of the athlete, their club/team, and relevant sport;
 - 3.6 Reasonable grounds to believe that an athlete is ineligible pursuant to this Appendix 3; and
 - 3.7 Information or documentation that supports those reasonable grounds.
- 4 Following receipt of a confidential Challenge, the Division will notify the Minister of Tourism and Sport of the Challenge, without personal identifying information, within 3 business days of the Challenge being made. The Division will also confirm receipt of the Challenge to the Applicant within 3 business days of the Challenge being made.
- 5 If the Division determines that the Challenge is missing any of the foregoing mandatory content, the Division will request that the Applicant provide the missing information within a reasonable designated time period. Such time period will be determined at the Division's sole discretion.
- 6 Within 3 business days of receiving the written Challenge, the Division will notify the athlete whose eligibility is the subject of the Challenge (or their parent/guardian if the athlete is under the age of 18 years) of the Challenge and the confidentiality expected from the Applicant. The Division will also provide the athlete or their parent/guardian with a copy of this Appendix 3.
- 7 The Division may, following the receipt of a completed confidential Challenge, direct the athlete, or if the athlete is under the age of 18 years, the athlete's parent or guardian, to submit a copy of the athlete's birth registration document to the Assistant Superintendent, Corporate Services
 - 7.1 In deciding whether to issue such direction for the provision of the athlete's birth registration document, the Division will assess whether reasonable grounds exist for the challenge, and any other relevant factors and circumstances, such that a review of the birth

registration document is required to determine the athlete's eligibility.

- 8 To protect the privacy rights of the alleged ineligible athlete, the Applicant must, at all times, maintain confidentiality of the Challenge, including, but not limited to, the alleged ineligible athlete's personal information, such as their name and gender. An Applicant's failure to maintain confidentiality will render the Challenge bad faith and may be subject to reasonable sanction as determined in the sole discretion of the Division, as authorized by section 3(2)(c)(ii)(G) by the FSSR.

F. Decision on Confidential Challenge

- 9 The Division may, at any time, dismiss a Challenge if, in the opinion of the Division, reasonable grounds do not exist for the Challenge.

9.1 The Division may determine that no reasonable grounds exist for a Challenge, in the following non-exhaustive circumstances:

9.1.1 the Applicant has failed to meet the Challenge criteria in a timely manner pursuant to this Appendix 3;

9.1.2 the Applicant has made the Challenge solely or primarily on the basis that the athlete does not appear sufficiently female in the Applicant's subjective opinion;

9.1.3 the Applicant has made the Challenge solely or primarily on the basis that the athlete exhibits excellent performance in the sport;

9.1.4 the Division has previously determined the same athlete to be permanently eligible;

9.1.5 the Division determines that the Challenge has been made recklessly without any basis and/or in bad faith;

9.1.6 the Division determines that the Challenge has been made in a frivolous or vexatious manner.

9.2 Subject to reconsideration of the dismissal in accordance with this Appendix 3, where a Challenge is dismissed, the athlete will remain eligible for participation in a female-only league, class, or division of a relevant sport.

- 10 If the Division directs the athlete or their parent/guardian to provide a copy of the athlete's birth registration document, within a reasonable time of the athlete's birth registration document being filed with the Assistant Superintendent, Corporate Services, the Division must determine whether that athlete:

10.1 Meets the eligibility requirement to participate in the female-only league, class, or

division for the relevant sport, if the birth registration document indicates that the athlete's sex at birth is female; or

10.2 Does not meet the eligibility requirement to participate in the female-only league, class, or division for the relevant sport, if the birth registration document indicates that the athlete's sex at birth is not female.

11 If the Assistant Superintendent, Corporate Services determines the athlete to be **ineligible**,

11.1 the Division will provide written notification to the Applicant and the ineligible athlete;

11.2 The athlete will be permanently ineligible for participation in a female-only league, class, or division of any relevant sport. However, this decision will not affect the athlete's eligibility in participating in non-female only leagues, classes, or divisions of a relevant sport.

12 If the Assistant Superintendent, Corporate Services determines the athlete to be **eligible after review of the birth registration document**:

12.1 The Assistant Superintendent, Corporate Services will provide written notification to the Applicant and the athlete, advising that:

12.1.1 The Challenge has been dismissed;

12.1.2 The athlete will be permanently eligible for participation in a female-only league, class, or division of any relevant sport;

12.1.3 Any subsequent Challenges with respect to the athlete will be automatically dismissed;

12.1.4 The Applicant may request a reconsideration of the Challenge dismissal in accordance with this Appendix. During this time, and unless and until the Superintendent of Schools overturns the Challenge dismissal, the athlete remains eligible to participate in female-only leagues, classes, or divisions;

12.1.5 The Applicant shall continue maintaining confidentiality of the Challenge.

13 The Division will notify the Minister of Tourism and Sport of its decision on the Challenge, without personal identifying information, within 30 business days of the Challenge being made.

G. Prohibition on Challenges made in Bad Faith

14 The Division will not tolerate any abuse of the FSS Act or of the FSSR, including but not limited to, Challenges made in bad faith. Where the Division determines that an Applicant has made a Challenge in bad faith, the Division may impose reasonable sanctions against that Applicant, pursuant to section 3(2)(c)(ii)(G) of the FSSR.

15 Factors relevant to determining whether a Challenge was made in bad faith include, but are not limited to:

- 15.1 The Applicant's prior history, including any pattern of inappropriate behaviour or numerous unfounded Challenges;
 - 15.2 Whether the Challenge had been made solely or primarily on the basis of the Applicant's subjective opinion about the athlete's appearance;
 - 15.3 Whether the Challenge had been made with the sole or primary intention of removing a high-performing participant from another team;
 - 15.4 Whether the Applicant has failed to maintain confidentiality of the Challenge;
 - 15.5 Whether the Challenge attempts to mislead or deceive the Division into finding that an athlete is ineligible for malicious purposes;
 - 15.6 Whether the Challenge had been made recklessly or carelessly without regard to any factual basis;
 - 15.7 Whether the Challenge had been made with the knowledge that the athlete's eligibility had already been confirmed; or
 - 15.8 Whether the Challenge had been made in a vexatious or frivolous manner, being clearly devoid of substance and/or lacking an air of reality.
- 16 In determining if sanctions are warranted, as well as what sanctions to impose on an Applicant who has submitted a Challenge in bad faith, the Division may consider the following:
- 16.1 The nature and severity of the Applicant's conduct;
 - 16.2 The effect of the Applicant's conduct on others, including the athlete, their family, and the broader school community;
 - 16.3 The Division's obligations to ensure a welcoming, caring, safe, and respectful learning environment that respects diversity and fosters a sense of belonging;
 - 16.4 Any applicable Codes of Conduct and anti-harassment policies;
- 17 Sanctions for an Applicant may, without limitation, include any or all of the following:
- 17.1 A written warning;
 - 17.2 A temporary prohibition in participating in or coaching sport activities sanctioned by the Division;
 - 17.3 A permanent prohibition in participating in or coaching sport activities sanctioned by the

Division; or

17.4 A Ban or Trespass Notice

The foregoing list contains examples of potential sanctions and does not represent an exhaustive list of sanctions that the Division may reasonably impose.

H. Reconsideration of Dismissed Challenges

- 18 The Applicant may request the Division's Superintendent of Schools to reconsider a dismissal of the Challenge they made.
- 19 The request for reconsideration must be submitted in writing to the Superintendent of Schools within 10 calendar days of the dismissal decision was made. No request for reconsideration will be accepted if not submitted within this time period, and the Division's decision to dismiss the Challenge will be deemed to be final.
- 20 Following the receipt of a timely request for reconsideration, the Superintendent of Schools shall confirm such receipt of the same to the Applicant and the athlete (or their parent/guardian if the athlete is younger than 18 years of age) in writing within 3 business days.
- 21 The Superintendent of Schools will confirm their decision in writing to the Applicant and the athlete (or their parent/guardian if the athlete is younger than 18 years of age), along with written reasons for the decision.
- 22 The Superintendent of Schools' decision regarding the reconsideration is final.
- 23 At all times, the Applicant shall maintain confidentiality of the Challenge and the request for reconsideration, failing which the Applicant may be subject to reasonable sanctions for having acted in bad faith.

I. Protection of Privacy

- 24 All identifying information related to the athlete will be treated as sensitive personal information and will be processed as such in accordance with applicable data protection and privacy laws. Such information will not be used for any purpose other than to determine athlete eligibility in accordance with the FSS Act and the FSSR.