

BENTONVILLE PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT

DEPARTMENT OF ATHLETICS

BENTONVILLE HIGH SCHOOL TIGERS LINCOLN JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL LEOPARDS WASHINGTON JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL WILDCATS

TO: The parents of any student that is or will be participating or trying out for a Bentonville Public School (BPS) 2009-2010 athletic team

FROM: Lauren West, Director of Athletics

DATE: February 23, 2009

SUBJECT: Physical Examination for Athletic Participation

As the 2008-2009 athletic seasons at Bentonville High School, Lincoln Junior High School and Washington Junior High School begin to wind down and we start to prepare for the 2009-2010 athletic seasons, I need to make you aware of the Arkansas Activities Association physical examination requirement.

Article III Eligibility, Section 1 Athletic Competitive Activities, Rule 14 Physical Examination in the 2008-2009 Arkansas Activities Association Handbook (page 31) states: In any year that a student engages in interscholastic competition, the student must present to the coach verification of a physical examination prior to beginning practice. ***Rationale** - The coaches and school administration must be assured that the athletes are physically fit prior to beginning practice as well as competition.*

During the past seven years, the Bentonville Public Schools athletic department facilitated free physicals with two local clinics. During this time period the two participating clinics - that provided this free service - have done a tremendous job managing the growing number of student-athletes that participated – around 1700 last year. However, at this time our participation numbers have grown past a manageable point to continue to request this free service from the two participating clinics.

Due to the growth of the athletic programs, the physician's time constraints with each participant causes these exams to be of a limited nature, potentially adversely affecting the quality of the examinations. In addition, the lack of involvement from the student-athletes' primary care physician disconnects the athletes' medical history from the medical decision making process regarding the student-athletes' medical clearance to participate in athletics.

Therefore, BPS will no longer facilitate free physicals. Nor will the two clinics that have offered the free physicals in the past continue to provide this service. Each student-athlete will be responsible for obtaining his/her own physical examination and medical clearance. Each student-athlete must have a valid physical on file with the BPS sports medicine staff prior to being allowed to participate.

Please note physical examinations must be performed by a licensed medical physician. Physical exams are valid for one calendar year (365 days). Information regarding current student-athlete physical examinations may be obtained from the BPS Athletic Department by contacting us at 479.254.5170.

The recommended physical examination form may be downloaded from the Bentonville Public Schools website at www.bentonville.k12.ar.us under the Students Quick Link tab.

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