

**PLHS Boys Hockey
Team Handbook
2025- 2026**



Prior Lake High School hockey players & parents,

Welcome to the Prior Lake High School Boys hockey team!

On behalf of the Blue Line Club (BLC), we look forward to meeting and getting to know you. We also want to strongly encourage all the parents to participate and support our hockey program. The success of our organization will be dependent upon how many of you that are actively involved.

The Blue Line Club’s primary responsibilities are to coordinate the program’s fundraising activities and to coordinate off-ice activities. Among those key events are:

- Fall Captain's Practice
- Fundraisers:
 - Wreath sale
 - Golf tournament
 - Pizza-N-Pucks
 - Warm Up Jerseys
- Blue-Gold "Laker Pride" scrimmage and food drive
- Team pasta dinners
- Food for away/home games
- Parent “gatherings”

The hockey season arrives with a significant amount of optimism. We are a part of the South Suburban Conference, of which most of these players have competed against throughout their youth hockey. An integral part of the success of our program will be the positive support of an active parent group.

Our team handbook helps to support that plan and becomes your guide for the HS hockey season. Active participation by the incoming players & parents, as outlined in the handbook, is especially important as it ensures our hockey program and volunteer organization remains strong, vibrant, and moving forward.

We could not have achieved what we have without the support and efforts of many volunteers and I wish to thank those who have given their support in the past. I now want to encourage everyone to continue to positively support our hockey team and coaching staff, and to freely volunteer your time, energy, and experience.

Sincerely,
Blue Line Club Staff

Player Expectations

1. A 100% commitment is expected. Attend all practices, games, and team functions. Be early to everything and prepared. If you are injured, ill and can't participate, notify any of the coaches immediately. If you are not able to participate in a practice or a game due to an injury, you are still expected to attend the event.
2. If you inexcusably miss a practice or game, you will miss all or part of a game and possibly your current spot in the lineup. Excusable: Illness or family emergency; Inexcusable: Vacation, homework, make-up work. If you miss because of illness, there is no guarantee you will have your same spot in the lineup when you return.
3. You represent the Prior Lake High School Hockey team at all times. Be respectful to others, including your teachers. Speak appropriately. Keep it "G" rated and stay away from trouble. Just do what is right at all times.
4. Get good grades. Failing grades will affect your eligibility as is standard with all PLHS athletes.
5. **Get to school and class on time.** If you're tardy or have an unexcused absence, you are ineligible for practice and games that day. If you are on the ineligible list for any reason, you are responsible for clearing your name if there has been a mistake.
6. Live a healthy lifestyle for peak performance. This includes not using drugs, alcohol, or tobacco, as well as getting a good night of sleep, eating healthy and drinking lots of water to stay hydrated.
7. Players, if you have a concern, question, or a frustration, please talk to a coach at an appropriate time. Our door is always open.
8. We will all dress the same on game days- no exceptions. On Home game days, players will always wear dress slacks, shirt, and tie. Away game dress code will always be team warm-ups and winter caps. Captains will set the dress code at school on game days.
9. Keep athletic clothing and shoes in your hockey locker for weight training at the rink. No cell phone use, except for music purposes, at the rink before games or on the bus. Get focused on the game.
10. Be respectful of the referees; the coaches will talk to them as needed.
11. Follow team rules, PLHS rules, and MSHSL rules.

Failure to meet team expectations will result in consequences that may include a loss of playing time and/or placement (see next page). Warnings are not required. Each situation is different and will be dealt with accordingly by the coaching staff. If problems persist, players can be permanently removed from the team.

Team Placement

Initially, your placement is determined by your tryout evaluation. As the season moves along, your placement is also based on:

- What is best for the team and program
- Performance in practice and in games
- Effort, attitude, and behavior
- Ability to be a team player
- Hockey sense and executing what is taught
- Follow rules established by the MSHSL, PLHS, and coaches

Playing time is earned and will not be equal. Our goal to develop all players in practice, but having success on the ice during games is important for our program. The players who give us the best chance for success will play more often in all situations and these decisions are collectively determined by the coaching staff.

Playing Time Additional:

- Select players will play in both JV and Varsity on a given night
 - Players are allowed to play 4 non-consecutive periods.
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- Tryouts

The Boys Program makes cuts every year.

Players are evaluated on hockey skills, skating, shooting, passing, hockey IQ, and position.

Goalies are evaluated on footwork, positioning, and overall fluency.

We select the players who will best help the team succeed.

Parent Expectations- Conflict Resolution

When a conflict arises, empower your child to be and advocate for himself and talk with a coach.

Parent/Coach Communication Regarding Hockey Related Issues – Call the coach; emails will not be returned or responded to.

Communication with a parent regarding the mental health, family, life, or overall well-being of a student-athlete is always encouraged. We want the best for all our athletes and will always be available for parent contact and communication.

If the conflict persists, we can agree to meet with the player, coaches, and parent(s).

Throughout the course of a season certain areas can often trigger conflict and frustration:

- Playing time
- Positions
- Lines
- Rewards/ Consequences

As parents, you can help your child when any frustrations arise by encouraging your son to speak with a coach. In a very short time, your son will be done with school and into college or a career. It will be valuable experience for your son to learn how to advocate for himself and speak to adults to resolve conflict.

When helping your child, please respect coaching decisions even though you may not totally agree. As much as coaches want to help each individual player, our overall responsibility is to the team. As coaches, we will put team needs above player desires when making decisions in these areas. Please understand that different perspectives motivate these decisions.

Please seek first to understand the situation before reacting; your son will know why decisions are made, please ask them. Allow at least a 48 hour period of time to cool down before trying to resolve the issue. There are always two perspectives- from that of the player (or parent) and from that of the coach. Be sure you and your son have all the facts before reacting.

Take the opportunity to teach your child how to present their concern to the coach. Coaches are always available before and after practice, on the bus, and at school. Conflict and frustration can affect an athlete's performance on the ice as well as team performance. The coaches want conflicts or frustrations to be addressed so the individual and the team can perform at the highest level. Players don't hesitate to ask a coach to meet if you have any concerns that may be affecting your performance or playing time.

Team, communication, & scheduling information

PLHS Hockey Roster
Communication Information
Scrimmage – Game Schedules

Blue Line Club information

Blue Line Club (overview)

Volunteer & required parent information

Parent Volunteer opportunities*

- Sign up for various volunteer opportunities listed – a minimum of 4 activities per player required

Required family activities**

- Blue/Gold ‘Laker Pride’ scrimmage
- Senior Day

Parent Gatherings ***

- TBD

* Volunteer opportunities – sign up information circulated during meeting

** Required activities - no sign up required

*** Optional, but attendance encouraged

Coach Contact Information

Coaches:

Name	Position	Phone	E-mail
Joe Pankratz	Head Coach	952-693-3035	joe@propelhockeycamps.com
Matt Crist	Head Coach	612-558-0663	matcrist12@gmail.com
Matt Denman	Assistant Coach	952-356-6006	mattdenman98@gmail.com
Austin Hill	JV Coach	952-212-3809	austinhill01@me.com
Brent Whiteside	JV Coach	612-718-9415	BWhiteside@plsas.org
Glenn Walker	Goalie Coach	608-512-3484	
Joe Kanz	JV Assistant	507-459-5936	

Prior Lake Boys Varsity/JV Hockey Schedule

(Updates will be provided as additional information is obtained)

Scheduling Notes

- ⇒ On select practice days, players will have dryland training and/or meetings after on-ice practice.
- ⇒ JV Games begin 2 hours before the start of Varsity game
- ⇒ For away games, players are expected to load the bus 15 minutes prior to the departure time. The bus will leave at the exact scheduled departure time from Dakotah Arena unless otherwise noted.
- ⇒ *Team Dinners will be held on listed days.
- ⇒ Any schedule changes will be sent via e-mail, updates to our website schedules, and players will be notified at school or practice.
- ⇒ All Practice, game, lifting, important date schedules will always be posted for the boys in the locker room.
- ⇒ Use the “notify me” feature on the PLHS Activities website. Click on **SCHEDULE OF EVENTS** and then “notify me” to get automatic reminders and/or changes to Varsity and JV game schedules.
- ⇒ For Home games, Varsity players are expected to arrive at the rink 1.5 hours prior to game time.
- ⇒ For Home games, JV players are expected to arrive at the rink at 4pm (1 hour before game time).
- ⇒ On Home game days, players will always wear dress slacks, shirt, and tie.
- ⇒ Away game dress code will always be team warm-ups.

Parent Volunteer Opportunities

The Blue Line Club requires parents to volunteer for at least four activities per player listed below. Activities may require participating one time, multiple times, or once at the end of the year. Parents will be responsible for finding a replacement anytime they're unable to fulfill an activity.

Sign-up forms for the following activities can be found at the volunteer table after the meeting. **The BLC will assign any remaining activities as fairly as possible.**

- **Photographers** – Action photos taken of scrimmages, tournaments, games, team functions, parent and senior nights. Photos will be used for end-of-season memory books, web site, etc. Photographers will work with volunteer coordinators of the Dakotah photo case, parent night, senior night, memory book and team video to provide photography/photos as needed. Take pictures for photo case at team photos session.
- **Hockey Memory Book**– all players who purchase a hockey memory book will receive one at the end of year (hockey banquet). Volunteer parents will organize, design, and assemble the books. Memory book will include photos and news articles regarding the season. (senior parent responsibility regarding son's page).
- **Dakotah! photo case** – The parent volunteer has the responsibility to organize & decorate the photo case with player/team photos. Photo case photos are to be taken on the same day as team photos. Work with the photographers to coordinate the picture taking.
- **Hockey Banquet** – Volunteers will create/distribute invitations, collect payment, decorate, coordinate food responsibilities, senior & coaches gifts, etc. Determine banquet place and time. Work with coaches and captains to determine banquet program. Elicit input from senior parents on special senior recognition. Coordinate banquet cleanup.
- **Fundraising – Wreath Sale** – Wreath sales were completed in October and will be delivered soon. Separate volunteer sign-up was completed for this opportunity. Kristin Burggraaff and Jean Krueger graciously volunteered to play this role for this season.
- **Fundraising – Pizza-N-Pucks** – Players will be scheduled to work shifts at this event and some parent supervisors will be needed. This will include set up, supervision, and clean up.
- **Blue Gold Game** – The introductory intra-squad game of combined Varsity and JV players. The game is open to community and sponsors a food shelf drive by requesting canned goods and a \$1 admittance to view the game. Volunteers are needed to collect and take canned goods to the local food shelf.
- **Monthly Parent Gathering**- Host monthly (December, January and February) parent gathering at home. Send invitations to all hockey parents regarding event. Provide place, plates, napkins and utensils for gathering. Parents are asked to bring an appetizer/dessert and their beverage of choice.
- **PLHS Alumni Hockey Game** – the Alumni game is an annual event that allows former players to reunite. Need two parent volunteers to coordinate alumni game, food, & beverages after the game.

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- **Bus food/drink coordination** - research food (sandwiches, etc) choices, prices and logistics for the bus ride to/from out-of-town games. Coordinate/obtain drinks (purchase in bulk and provide to coach or assign to parents (via sign-up sheet) for each game. Determine price for food/drinks for full-season and collect from parents at parent meeting

- **Senior Night** – Reserve conference room at Dakotah for the after the game gathering. Create Senior Player Posters for posting during game and post-game event. Provide names of senior and parents to announcer prior to the game, line up players/parents. Parents to receive a flower. Provide player names for display on screen. Define and communicate parent food and drink assignments one week prior to the event. Set up food and drink before the JV/Varsity games (as dropped off) and after the game

- **Fourth Official** - Timekeeper
For the JV games, on the dates where the Girls Varsity is playing before the Varsity team. This involves running the clock and keeping JV game stats in the old rink while

- **Penalty Box/Check Stamps**
For both the JV and Varsity games, two volunteers will be needed for both managing the penalty boxes and for checking stamps (indicating paid to enter) at the lower and upper arena entry doors.

PLHS Player Mentoring Program

The Mentoring Program is intended to establish a connection between PLSHA youth players and high school players. The most successful high school programs have a strong bond between association and high school teams.

All PLHS players will be responsible for attending a minimum of 3 PLSHA practices and 1 game during the year. A key component of the PLHS hockey lettering policy is the Mentoring Program; players must complete their mentoring responsibilities to be eligible for a letter.

Required Family Activities

In addition to the various volunteer opportunities, each family will be asked to participate in ‘team’ related functions including – supporting navy/gold ‘Laker Pride’ scrimmage/fundraiser, funding food/drinks for bus rides and supporting parent & senior player recognition day(s).

- **Blue-Gold ‘Laker Pride’ Scrimmage** – one of the important traditions being continued this season is the Navy-Gold ‘Laker Pride’ scrimmage & fundraiser.
- **Bus Ride Food/Drinks** – Away scrimmages, games, and tournaments will require meals and drinks for the bus ride home. Parents will provide funds for meals and drinks that will be provided.
- **Senior Night** – all senior players, cheerleaders, managers, and their parents will be introduced and recognized before the varsity game. Drinks & food will be served before or after the game. Sophomore/Junior parents clean up after event.

Parent Social Gatherings

Get to Know Your Fellow PLHS Boys Hockey Parents!

There will be three casual social gatherings for parents during the season. They will be held following Varsity games.

The gatherings will be held at the home of a player's parents, who will provide the location, plates, napkins and utensils for the gathering. All other parents will be asked to provide an appetizer/dessert and their beverage of choice.

The gatherings will be held on:

- December TBD
- January TBD
- February TBD

The time and location of the event will be emailed to parents prior to the event.

**These gatherings are great opportunities to get to know the other hockey parents.
Plan to attend and enjoy a bit of social time together!**

PLHS

Boys Hockey Lettering Guidelines

- ❖ Varsity Playing Time- Significant contribution to Varsity team or addition to Section
- ❖ A Minimum of 3 Varsity Games dressed
- ❖ Youth Hockey Mentorship – Varsity players must attend a minimum of 3 practices for their assigned team and 1 game.

Note: The coaching staff has final discretion on determining letter-winners.



End of the Year Awards

- Laker Award (character)
- Daggit Sportsmanship Award
- Points Leader
- Most Improved
- Most Dedicated
- All Conference
- All Conference Honorable Mention
- Rookie of the Year
- Youth Hockey Mentor Award