



Winter Athletics Season

High School Gymnastics

2023-24

Dear Principal and Athletic Director,

Since 1954, high school students in BC have been representing their schools in provincial gymnastics championships. Since 1982 the BC Secondary Schools Gymnastics Association (BCSSGA), a registered non-profit society, has existed to promote and organize student participation in high school gymnastics. The winter athletics season is about to begin and BCSSGA wants to make you aware that opportunities still exist for your students to stay active and represent their school in gymnastics.

Most schools have students that do gymnastics in community programs, similar to swimming. These same students would like the opportunity to represent their school by participating in gymnastics instruction and competitions. With support from the BCSSGA, club coaches will make it easy for schools to support their student gymnasts. Club coaches are willing to make all the necessary arrangements, communicate with an official in the school to keep you informed, and adopt all school procedures for team administrative tasks.

We ask that you support your students who wish to participate and compete in gymnastics.

In order to participate, all student gymnasts must be endorsed by their schools. This entails:

1. The school endorse the gymnastics coach in the same manner that it endorses community coaches for other sports and activities.
2. The school has the gymnast's parents sign the same Waivers or Informed Consent documents that the parents of student athletes in other sports sign.

All students take pride in representing their school in competition. Your student gymnasts are no different. Please consider supporting your students if they wish to participate in high school gymnastics, and please contact me if you have any questions.

Thank you for your consideration,

Terry Mitruk

Teacher and gymnastics coach, Sutherland Secondary School (tmitruk@sd44.ca)

Chair-BC Secondary Schools Gymnastics Association (bcssgymnastics@gmail.com)

High School Gymnastics – FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Why is the Principal's endorsement required?

- Endorsement by the Principal ensures that the coaches and volunteers working with your student gymnasts will be insured under the School Protection Program. The SPP only provides liability coverage for school sanctioned activities that are deemed to support the educational programming offered by the school. In this case, promotion of physical literacy and activity.

Is there a cost to the school?

- No. All fees to compete in competitions are paid by participants and can be managed by the club.

Does a staff member have to be present at competitions?

- That depends on individual school district policies. Some school districts allow the principal to assign the supervision responsibility to the parent or guardian, or to a coach that has passed the screening requirements (such as the C.R.C.). Larger teams do send District Sponsor staff with their teams, and those gymnasts usually pay an athletic fee to the school (consistent with athletes in other sports) to help offset the costs associated with school athletics programs.

Why should the school support gymnasts when they don't train in the school?

- Students that represent their school develop stronger attachments to their school community. This has spin-off benefits in all aspects of the student's life.
- Many girls drop out of sports in their teen years. The opportunity to represent their school in competitions keeps many teens physically active.

Have the club coaches had a Criminal Record Check?

- Yes, but they may need to have one done for your school district to become approved as a community coach, in accordance with your district policies.

What safety training have the club coaches had?

- All club coaches have completed training courses appropriate for the skill levels of their gymnasts, under the National Coaching Certification Program (NCCP). Most coaches also have Emergency First Aid training (or greater).

Do any schools have gymnastics teams that train at school?

- Yes, there are many schools across the province with PHE teachers that teach a unit of gymnastics in their classes. Some of those schools have consistently fielded teams, as well as schools with alumni that are community coaches running school teams.

When and Where are the competitions?

- Zone Championships take place between mid-January and early February. Provincial Championships will be held at Prince George Secondary School, February 25-27, 2024. All events and locations will be published on our website by December 1st.

How do I get more information?

- Check the BCSSGA website (bcssga.ca) for our Competition Rules, Event Calendar, and contact information including the Zone Representative in your region.