

Barre Town Middle and Elementary School Athletic Digest

Home of the Bobcats

The BTMES athletic program is a fundamental part of Barre Town's educational process. Its mission is to teach students the important qualities of dedication, hard work, sportsmanship, personal development, and important life skills. Athletic practice and competition play an essential role in teaching young people these values.

The athletic program is committed to providing well-organized programs that are properly supervised, have timely practices, knowledgeable coaches/advisors, and appropriate recognition for student achievements.

The goals of our program are to help all students have age-appropriate opportunities for...

- Developing skills and knowledge of game strategies and rules.
- Developing positive attitudes towards themselves, others, and their school.
- Physical, mental, and emotional growth and development.
- Developing commitments such as loyalty, cooperation, fair play, and other desirable social traits.

The following topics help to define many of our goals for our athletic program and the roles and responsibilities of the staff, parents, and participants.

VPA Eligibility

Barre Town Middle and Elementary school adheres to all of the guidelines, policies, and rules established by Vermont Principals Association. Waiver requests regarding undue hardships must be submitted through the school principal. The following are VPA eligibility rules:

1. Contestants or participants must be bona fide students in their school. Students may only compete on school teams sponsored by their own school during the season.
2. Barre Town residents, who are certified by the State of Vermont as home-school students, will have as equal access to Barre Town School activities as their fellow residents who are enrolled in school.

Physicals, Permission, Insurance

In order for a student to begin participation in any athletic activity BTMES requires all athletes to have:

1. A completed a Barre Town Participation Form, which includes permission to participate, proof of insurance, and emergency contact information.
2. All athletes must also complete a Well Exam Sports Participation Clearance Form. Well Exam forms are valid for one year.
3. Proof of health insurance is **mandatory**. According to VPA policy, see below, no student shall participate in any activity before proof of insurance is submitted to the athletic department. Low-cost health insurance coverage may be obtained through the school.

“No student may participate in any VPA-sanctioned activity without providing evidence to the student’s school administration or designee prior to participation in an activity showing that the participant is covered under some private or public health insurance program for the medical care for injuries that may be suffered on account of participation in an activity.”

(Vermont Principals’ Association Policies, Article 4: RULES FOR ORGANIZED GIRLS AND BOYS SPORTS: Section 1. General Rules.)

Inherent Risk

Involvement in athletics is voluntary and optional, and carries with it certain risks that must be accepted by students and their families. Injuries can and probably will occur during practices, games, and interacting with fellow student athletes. All costs associated with medical care, emergency medical transportation, medication, rehabilitation or therapeutic treatment must be paid through the student athlete’s health and accident insurance carrier. Barre Town Middle and Elementary School will not accept responsibility.

Injuries

Students must notify their coach in the event an injury occurs. All student athletes are expected to comply with recommendations of their coach, trainer, and/or physician regarding following and/or seeking medical advice, diagnosis, rehabilitation, therapeutic

care or treatment. Following an injury, a student athlete may be required to receive medical clearance from a physician in order to resume active participation with his/her team.

Act 58 Concussions

Act 58 requires that students, parents, and coaches receive important information regarding the signs and symptoms, treatment, and prevention of concussions. This information can be found on our school's web site. According to Vermont Law Act 58, a coach shall immediately remove an athlete from any game or practice if the athlete displays any signs or symptoms of a concussion. A coach shall not permit any athlete to train or compete with a school athletic team if the athlete has been removed or prohibited from participation in a practice or game due to symptoms of a concussion until the athlete has written permission from a physician.

Practice and Game Eligibility

Attendance at all practices and games is required. Being part of a team, even those sports that are highly individual in nature, is part of the essence of athletics. Failure to attend practices or lateness conveys the unspoken message that your team and your teammates are not important. Late arrivals to practice or missed practice, in most cases, will result in a loss of playing time.

There are times when a missed practice or a late arrival is justified (make-up work, extra academic help, a doctor's appointment, funerals, family emergencies, school-related activity, etc.). Excused absences of this nature will have a minimal impact on a student's participation.

Missing practice without a valid excuse and missing practice to attend a non-school related event or activity are examples of unexcused absences. Absences of this nature will result in a significant loss of playing time. Any student with three unexcused absences will be removed from the team. Unexcused absences will be determined by the coach, athletic director, and/or the administration.

Students and families recognize that absence from practices and/or games as a result of vacations equate to a logical reduction in playing time upon their return. The amount of reduction will be at the discretion of the athletic director.

An athlete that is late to school on the day of a game or practice must be in school for half a day and have a valid excuse on file to participate.

An athlete is not eligible for practice or to compete if he/she is absent because of illness, discipline, or suspension.

Tryouts/Cuts

While it is our intent to provide athletic opportunities for any student who wishes to participate, the school recognizes that, from time to time, we will need to cut prospective athletes from a given team. The objective of athletic tryouts and cuts is to fashion a team that can work well together and is consistent with the nature of the sport. A team where every member has a meaningful role to play assures a high level of instruction and participation. To achieve this goal, the number of athletes selected to participate on any given team will be based on the following criteria:

1. The participation rules of the given sport, e.g., the number of athletes that can actually play at one time.
2. The coach/athlete ratio relative to safety and the ability to provide each athlete with meaningful instruction.
3. The resources available to provide each athlete with meaningful instruction.
4. The ability to ensure that each athlete will have a meaningful role to play on the team.

When cuts are necessary to form a team, the exact nature of the tryout process will be explained to the prospective athletes prior to cuts being made.

Academic Eligibility

At Barre Town Middle and Elementary School academics come first. We recognize that being a student athlete can be a challenge. It is vitally important that our student athletes are able to find a balance between academics and athletics. All student athletes are held to an academic standard. This standard is measured at progress reports, quarter grades, and at the time of basketball tryouts. In order to remain eligible no athlete shall receive 2 D's or 1 E for **any** of their classes.

1. All students begin the year with a fresh start meaning their quarter 4 grades from the previous year do not impact fall eligibility.

2. If a student doesn't meet the standard of 2 D's or 1 E at progress reports or at the time of tryouts they will become academically ineligible.
 - Students that are ineligible at progress report time will not be allowed to attend any practices or games for three days.
 - After three days the student athlete may return to practice, but will remain ineligible for games, scrimmages, or meets until their grades meet the academic standard. Ineligible students will not dress in uniform for games.
 - When an ineligible student does meet the academic standard, their reinstatement (including a reduction of playing time for missed games and practices) will be at the discretion of the coach and athletic director.
3. Eligibility for basketball will be determined by a student's grades at the time of tryouts.
4. The length of the ineligibility period for students who fail to meet the academic standard at the end of the 2nd quarter will be at the discretion of the athletic director and/or Principal

"Extenuating circumstances" will be defined by the Principal, but typically will include a hardship on behalf of the student. The Principal, or designee, will provide a final determination on a case-by-case basis.

Hazing and Harassment

It is the policy of BTMES that all school activities are conducted in a safe, orderly, civil, and positive learning environment. Harassment, hazing, and bullying do not have a place and will not be tolerated. No student should feel threatened or be discriminated against. Hazing means any act committed by a person, whether individually or with another, against a student being initiated into, or maintaining membership on, a team that has the effect of humiliating, intimidating, or demeaning the student or endangering the mental or physical health of the student.

Harassment means verbal or physical conduct based on a person's disability, marital status, national origin, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, or appearance which has the purpose of substantially interfering with a person's performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment. Students engaging in these behaviors will be subject to the discipline policies and procedures of BTMES.

Behavior and Conduct

Student athletes shall represent Barre Town and Middle Elementary School in a responsible and appropriate manner at all times. Examples of inappropriate behavior and/or conduct include, but are not limited to, inappropriate language and/or appearance, derogatory remarks to an official, coach, or teammate, or any acts that are (perceived by the coach or administration) detrimental to the best interest of the team or school.

A student may face disciplinary action, which could include suspension or dismissal from the team/group based upon the severity of the offense.

Code of Conduct- Sportsmanship

The essential elements of character-building and ethics in sports are embodied in the concept of sportsmanship and six core principles: trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring and good citizenship. The highest potential of sports is achieved when competition reflects these six pillars of character.

A student athlete will:

A. be a positive role model and encourage sportsmanship by showing respect and courtesy, and by demonstrating positive support for all players, coaches, officials and spectators at every game, practice, or other sporting event.

B. not engage in any kind of unsportsmanlike conduct (taunting, refusing to shake hands, using profane language or gestures) with any official, coach, player, or parent.

C. respect the officials and their authority during games.

D. inform the coach of any physical disability or ailment that may affect their health, safety, or the safety of others.

E. play by the rules and resolve conflicts without resorting to hostility or violence.

F. treat other players, coaches, officials, and spectators with respect regardless of race, creed, color, sex or sexual orientation.

G. understand that doing one's best is important regardless of the outcome.

H. agree that if they fail to abide by rules/guidelines of the Barre Town Middle and Elementary School Athletic program they will be subject to disciplinary action.

We expect our parents to be good sports. This means respecting all coaches, officials, players, and parents. Any behavior that demeans or disrespects any of these individuals will not be tolerated. Acts of disrespect (trash talk, intimidation, arguing about a call) are not part of BTMES athletics. Immediate removal from the premises may be requested by a school representative or game official should the need arise. Parents that display poor sportsmanship or acts of disrespect may be subjected to disciplinary action at the discretion of the athletic director and/or principal.

Training Rules

An athlete is expected to abstain from the use of tobacco (including chewing tobacco), alcohol, and all non-prescription drugs. Any tobacco, alcohol, or drug related incident that occurs on school premises or at a school sponsored function and/or includes the purchase, use, prior ingestion, possession, being under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs, and the possession of devices specifically or reasonably associated with alcohol or drugs will be subject to the procedures outlined in BTMES policy.

Transportation

BTMES does not provide transportation to any athletic event. Students that are being transported by someone other than a parent from school must have written permission on file with the main office.

Uniforms

Athletes are responsible for all uniforms and equipment issued to them, are responsible for keeping uniforms and equipment clean and in good repair, will be charged for lost or damaged uniforms and equipment and must return or pay for uniforms before they are eligible to participate in another activity.

Communication

Parenting and coaching are both extremely difficult vocations. By establishing an understanding of each position we are better able to accept the actions of the other and provide a greater benefit to children. This begins with clear communication from the coach of each sport. Communication that coaches expect from athletes and parents:

Concerns are expressed directly to the coach; notification of any schedule conflicts in advance; and notification of illness or injury as soon as possible.

Your child will experience some of the most rewarding moments of their lives. It is important to understand that there may also be times when things do not go the way you and/or your child wish. At these times, discussion with the coach is encouraged. It is the first and most integral step to understanding and resolution. While there are subjects a parent ought to discuss with a coach, the following should be left to the discretion of the coach; playing time and positioning, team strategies, tactics, play calling, and any discussion about other student athletes.

Should a discussion be necessary, please follow these rules of thumb; call the coach to schedule an appointment. If the coach cannot be reached, call the school and ask for the athletic director. He/she will schedule a meeting for you. Please do not attempt to confront a coach before, during, or after a contest or practice. These can be emotional times for both the parent and the coach. Meetings of this nature usually do not promote positive resolutions.

Cancellations/Directions

The main office will be immediately notified as soon as there is a cancellation. Students will then be notified and given the opportunity to call parents. Directions to opponents' venues are posted on the school's web site www.btmes.org.