

Bristol Public Schools

Athletic Department



Middle School

Scholar-Athlete Handbook

Regulations and Guidelines

for Athletic Participation

Bristol Public Schools Interscholastic Athletic Program



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Purpose of Handbook

This handbook was designed to inform the parents and students of the many rules, regulations, and important details, which govern the interscholastic athletic programs at Bristol's Public Schools. Its purpose is to clearly spell out the program's goals and expectations of the participants. Each student-athlete and his/her parents should thoroughly review this handbook. If you have any additional questions they should be directed to the individual team coach or Director of Athletics. If during the season you have specific questions regarding the team or your son or daughter, you should first approach the coach.

It is hoped that by presenting you with this information, good understanding and cooperation will be fostered among the student-athletes, their parents, and the school staff. Bristol parents have always been a tremendous asset to our program, and I am looking forward to working with you to maintain this level of excellence, cooperation, and support.

BPS Athletics Department Philosophy

A comprehensive and balanced interscholastic athletic program is an integral part of the total educational process. While the middle school athletic program serves as an arena for the student-athlete to display his/her talents, student-athletes must, in turn, be willing to accept the responsibility to self, to team, and to school. Athletics, as an educational tool, provides opportunities for mastery of established learning outcomes and exciting skills. The student-athlete will demonstrate self discipline, emotional control, and the ideals of good sportsmanship. The student-athlete will be given opportunities and experiences to develop a healthy self esteem. Through group participation, the student-athlete will develop appreciation for fitness, fun, and wellness. The student-athlete will demonstrate ethical qualities and be capable of taking his/her place in modern society.

The athlete serves as an ambassador of their athletic program, as well as their school and community and should take pride in representing them. Good conduct is a large part of being a positive representative of your team and school. All student-athletes are expected to follow all school rules at all times. Team rules are also to be strictly followed. The student-athlete shall show respect for his/her teammates and coaching staff, as well as the opposing team, coaches, and officials. On a personal level, the athlete shall respect himself/herself by not becoming involved with any controlled and illegal substances.

Participation in interscholastic athletics is a privilege. Students who demonstrate unacceptable behavior or who are continuously being reported academically deficient may lose the privilege to participate in interscholastic athletes.

Athletic Program Objectives

BPS athletics provide opportunities for scholar-athletes:

1. **To work with others**, a scholar-athlete must develop self-discipline, respect for authority, the spirit of hard work, and self sacrifice. The team and its objectives must be placed higher than personal desires;
2. **To compete**, a scholar-athlete accepts that although they may not always win, they should always strive for excellence;
3. **To develop sportsmanship**, a scholar-athlete will accept the outcome of every contest in a sportsmanlike manner;
4. **To develop personal health habits**, a scholar-athlete will obtain a high degree of physical fitness through exercise and habits of good health including maintaining this level of physical fitness after formal competition has been completed;
5. **To enjoy athletics**, scholar-athletes recognize athletic participation increases personal satisfaction and achievement.

Respect

Individual rights and individual differences are valued at BPS. Scholars are expected to observe common sense standards of behavior; all directions from staff members in all matters of conduct must be obeyed. All scholars, staff, and teachers are responsible for ensuring and protecting the rights of others to attend school without harassment, whether racist, ethnic, sexist, or religious in nature. Any person who experiences these or other forms of harassment is urged to ask a counselor, teacher, or administrator for help in eliminating the harassment in accordance with school procedures. Abusive language or behavior results in disciplinary measures as specified in the Code of Conduct.

Athletics Offered in Middle School

| Fall | | Winter | | Spring | |
|---------------|------------|------------|------------|----------|----------|
| Boys | Girls | Boys | Girls | Boys | Girls |
| Soccer | Soccer | Basketball | Basketball | Baseball | Softball |
| Cross Country | | | | | |
| | Volleyball | | | | |

**These sports are dependent on the middle school numbers for participation.*

Requirements for Participation

Scholastic Eligibility

Middle School Co-curricular/Extra-curricular eligibility is determined by a student's overall performance in all subjects. Students are issued an academic and conduct grade for each subject. Incomplete grades constitute a failing grade of below 65 until incomplete grades are made up.

At the start of each school year, all students attending middle school, who were promoted to the next grade, are eligible for participation in co-curricular/extra-curricular activities for the first trimester. Students who were retained are not eligible for participation in co-curricular/extra-curricular activities for the first trimester. Student eligibility will be reviewed at the conclusion of the first and second trimesters.

All co-curricular/extra-curricular activities occurring outside of the school day are included in these eligibility guidelines (such as sports, cheerleading, dances, school organized club and/or events, etc). Band and chorus activities occurring outside of the school day are considered co-curricular activities.

Full Co-Curricular/Extra Curricular Eligibility

In order to be eligible to participate in all aspects of a co-curricular/extra-curricular activity, a student must meet the following criteria:

1. Scholarship

- At the end of the first and second trimester, the student must pass all subjects with a grade of 65 or higher.

2. Conduct

- At the end of the first and second trimesters, a student must have no more than one grade of X (64) in conduct.

Academic Restriction for Co-Curricular/Extra-Curricular Activities

A student placed on academic restriction will not participate in co-curricular/extra-curricular activities; a student on academic restriction will not be able to represent the school in any type of competition, performance, etc. (for example, sports, a school play, a school concert, parades, adjudications.)

A student will be placed on academic restriction for the second and/or third trimester when the following occur:

1. Scholarship

- A student fails one or more subjects (grade of 64 or lower) in the first and/or second trimester.

2. Conduct

- A student has more than one grade of X (64) in conduct.

A student on academic restriction may not remain in school after the school day ends unless the student is under teacher supervision for make-up work, extra help, or detention.

Academic restriction will be removed upon successful completion of the second and/or third trimester, defined as the student meeting the requirements for full co-curricular/extra-curricular eligibility.

Medical/Physical Eligibility

All medical and physical eligibility forms are completed through FamilyID. All forms must be submitted, reviewed, and approved prior to the first practice of the season. Athletic physicals are valid for 13 months.

Physical's

1. All scholar-athletes must have an up-to-date physical from a doctor on file at the school.
2. The physical must be either dropped off in-person, faxed, or a copy sent via email to the nurse at each school PRIOR to participation and the start of the season.
3. The school nurse will review, approve, and file the scholar-athletes' physical.

4. Any expired physicals, or an athlete without a physical, will NOT be allowed to participate in athletics until given updated permission by the school nurse.

FamilyID

All parents/guardians and scholar-athletes are required to register for their athletic season through FamilyID. Please visit the links below for your respective schools for registration as well as view important information regarding the forms you will be asked to complete.

**Registrations include the signature of BOTH parent AND athlete for ALL forms on FamilyID- please read carefully.*

1. The completed and current [Health Assessment Record Form](#) is returned to the school nurse's office.
2. The athletic registration is completed online through FamilyID at:
[Bristol Middle School Athletics Registration](#)
3. Registrations include the following forms:
 - a. [Sudden Cardiac Arrest Awareness Student and Parent Informed Consent 2023-24 Agreement](#)
 - b. [Student and Parent Concussion Education Plan and Consent Form 2023-24](#)
 - c. [Exertional Heat Illness Informed Consent Form](#)
 - d. The Bristol Public Schools Parent/Athlete Acknowledgement Form
 - e. [Bristol Public Schools Student-Athlete Handbook](#)
 - f. Permission to Participate and Permission to Seek Medical Treatment

A scholar-athlete will be permitted to practice once a current physical is listed in FamilyID AND their registration has been approved by the Office of the Director of Athletics.

Please keep in mind that a new athletic registration through FamilyID is required to sign-up for each athletic season- the only thing that will carry over through the school year is the scholar-athletes physical on file as long as it is not expired.

Insurance Information

Bristol Public Schools has interscholastic insurance coverage for injuries sustained by scholars while participating on the high school interscholastic sports teams.

The following are the conditions under which claims may be submitted to the insurance carrier:

- It is the responsibility of the parents to first submit their child's bills for all injuries sustained through sports to their insurance carrier.
- After a denial for payment from the scholar's health insurance carrier, a bill may be submitted to the school interscholastic insurance carrier.
- By adhering to the above procedure, consideration for reimbursement under the interscholastic sports coverage plan will be promptly evaluated by the Bristol Board of Education's insurance carrier.
- The insurance policy paid for by the Board of Education is secondary coverage that becomes effective after a parent's insurance company has paid out its maximum benefit for an injured athlete.
- Questions concerning insurance coverage should be addressed to the school Business Office.

Student-Athlete's Responsibilities

School Discipline

Detention

An athlete with a school disciplining obligation or detention is expected to fulfill the disciplining obligation before reporting to practice and/or game. Students cannot expect, and should not request, disciplining action to be postponed or canceled for any athletic reason. An athlete may be removed from a team for excessive disciplinary problems. The athlete may be reinstated upon sufficient evidence of improvement. It is expected that Bristol student-athletes be model citizens both in and out of school.

Suspensions

Any athlete suspended out of school (OSS) or assigned in-school suspension (ISS) may not practice, play, or be with the team on the day(s) in which he/she is serving the suspension. The suspension is not considered over until the student-athlete is reinstated on the next school day.

Attendance Requirement

All student-athletes will adhere to the attendance policies established by the Bristol Board of Education, as explained in the Student-Parent Handbook.

Equipment/Uniforms

All athletes are responsible for the equipment and/or uniform issued to them during the course of the season.

Equipment/uniform must be returned at the end of the season and prior to the next season or graduation.

Athletes failing to turn in all issued equipment/uniform, or returning equipment/uniform damaged through misuse, are responsible to meet the current replacement cost. In the event that the equipment/uniform is found and/returned after the payment, a refund will be made.

1. Parents will be notified by the coach/or Director of Athletics for collection or payment for equipment not returned.
2. An athlete will be denied participation until equipment has been returned or paid for.
3. Athletic equipment is to be used ONLY for team activities and not for personal use.

Transportation

All athletes must travel to and from in-town and out-of-town athletic contests in transportation provided by the athletic department. The student-athletes will not be allowed to participate in any contest if they do not travel with the team.

- The student-athlete will remain with their squad and under the supervision of the coach when attending away contests.
- All regular school bus rules will be followed.
- When the bus is in motion, remain seated with feet on the floor. In the unlikely event of an accident, the bus was designed for all passengers to be seated in this manner. Sitting or lying in any other position can cause injuries which could otherwise be prevented. Also, please keep the noise level down so as not to distract the driver from keeping full attention on the road.
- Never hang any object, including parts of your body, from the window of a moving bus. This could cause serious injury to you or could cause your driver to be distracted and cause an accident.
- Your bus is private property. Please keep it clean, and avoid damage to seats, etc., which may be caused by your equipment. Please pick up after yourself when disembarking: we ask that you not leave orange peels, soda spills, tape, and other trash for the driver to clean up.
- All student-athletes are expected to return with the team in the transportation provided. If he/she is to return home with a parent, **due to extenuating circumstances***, a Travel Release Form must be completed in advance. Travel Release Forms are available from the Athletic Coordinator.

**Extenuating circumstances refers to unusual or unexpected events that may need immediate attention and may only occur ONCE.*

Conflicts in Co-Curricular Activities

The Athletic Department recognizes that each student should have the opportunity for a broad range of experiences in the area of co-curricular activities and therefore attempts to schedule events in a manner to minimize conflicts.

Student-athletes have the responsibility to do everything they can to avoid conflicts, including belonging to too many activities.

Student Conduct

Academics

Bristol athletes are expected and encouraged to maintain the highest level of academic achievement possible. Extra help sessions and make-up work are expected to be completed as soon as possible. On a practice day, athletes should stay after school to complete work whenever necessary. Students should inform coaches in advance, if possible, when practice time will be missed due to academic obligations. Once the obligations are completed, athletes are expected to report to practice as soon as possible. If advance notification was not given to the coach, students should ask their teacher for a note explaining the tardiness. Students arriving late to practice due to make-up work or extra help will not suffer an athletic team penalty. On game days, if time allows, students should ask their classroom teacher if makeup work or extra help may be postponed to a practice day. A classroom teacher may or may not grant a postponement.

Behavior

When student's athletes participate in a school sporting event, they become representatives of their city, school, and team and should act appropriately. Bristol has a reputation for having well-behaved athletes who make a respectable appearance both on and off the playing field. This is a positive reputation that Bristol athletes should want to uphold. Bristol athletes have the responsibility of keeping this reputation intact through their actions. It is also the responsibility of athletes to take pride in their sport and always perform to the best of their abilities to provide an exciting, well-played event.

As a team member, each individual has the opportunity to contribute towards the team goals by performing at the best of their ability. Also, each team member has the responsibilities to respect the contributions of their teammates, to adhere to established team rules, and to demonstrate good sportsmanship at all times. Team members have the additional responsibility of ensuring that teammates do not let the team down and act in accordance with these guidelines.

Sportsmanship

Sportsmanship is a number one priority at the Bristol Public Schools.

The Athletic Department expects all parties present at an event to display the highest possible level of sportsmanship. Players, coaches, and spectators should treat opponents, game officials, and visiting spectators with respect.

All athletic events are conducted in accordance with the rules and regulations of the CIAC, the NCAA, or the National Federation. Any form of taunting of officials or players will not be tolerated at any Bristol High/Middle School athletic event. Likewise, profanity, objectionable cheers, or gestures have no place at an athletic event, be it in Bristol or at another town.

The Bristol High/Middle School administration reserves the right to warn, censor, or suspend up to one calendar year any spectators displaying poor sportsmanship at any athletic event, home or away.

A display of unsportsmanlike conduct which results in an ejection from an athletic contest for violent or abusive behavior prior to, during, or immediately following the athletic contest shall not be eligible for the next athletic contest.

Taunting Rule

Taunting includes, but is not limited to, any actions or comments by coaches or players which are intended to bait, anger, embarrass, ridicule or demean other players, coaches, or game officials. Included in this is conduct that berates, “needles”, intimidates, or threatens based on race, gender, ethnic origin, or background and conduct that attacks religious beliefs, size, economic status, speech, family, special needs, or personal matters. Examples of taunting that would lead to ejection include, but are not limited to, physical and verbal intimidation outside the

spirit of the game (“trash talk”), reference to sexual orientation, “in-the-face confrontation” by one player to another, standing over, straddling a tackled or fallen player, etc.

Penalty: In all sports, game officials are to consider taunting a flagrant unsportsmanlike foul that disqualifies the offending bench personnel or athletes from that contest/day of competition and the player or coach from the following contest/day of competition, i.e. the CIAC player/coach ejection rule will be invoked. A warning may be given, but it is not required before ejection.

Bullying

Please refer to the [Board of Education Policy](#) page attached here regarding this topic.

Hazing

Please refer to the [CIAC Handbook](#) to review the CIAC’s specific dealing regarding this topic.

Please refer to the [Board of Education Policy](#) page attached here regarding this topic.

Resources

[BPS Website](#) and [Policy Page](#)

[Bristol Public Schools Parent Handbooks](#)