

Athletic Policy

Purpose:

Participation in athletics is a privilege, not a right. The athlete must earn this privilege through dedication, desire, and discipline. Without the pursuit of these, the athlete can in no way do justice to him/herself, the team, or the school.

The athlete must discipline him/herself to be a good citizen and student to achieve athletic excellence. Athletes are members of a team. As a member of a team, athletes have an obligation and a commitment to the team. The choices and decisions of each athlete will reflect on the team, as a whole. The athletic department of Bridges Preparatory School believes that our tradition of success is established and maintained upon these principles. In order to pursue athletic achievement and character development in a determined course of action, the following "Athletic Policies" must be understood and agreed upon by the school, the student-athlete and his/her parents.

Attendance:

Attendance is the first step toward dedication. When you try out for a team you are making a commitment to your coaches and teammates that you can be counted on. All team members of every sport are expected to attend scheduled practices and meetings. A student should always consult his/her coach before missing a practice or game. Missing a practice or game without good reason will be considered an unexcused absence. Unexcused absences may result in loss of playing time. Excessive unexcused absences from practices, games or meetings may cause for removal from athletics.

An individual student who attempts to participate in several extracurricular school activities will, undoubtedly, be in a position of a conflict of obligations. Students have a responsibility to do everything they can to avoid continuous conflicts. Students should notify the faculty sponsor/coaches involved immediately when a conflict does arise. When a conflict does arise, the sponsors/coaches will work out a solution, so the student does not feel caught in the middle. If a solution cannot be found, the principal will make the decision based on the following:

- A) The relative importance of each event.
- B) The importance of each event to the student.
- C) The relative contribution the student can make.
- D) How long each event has been scheduled.
- E) A discussion with the student's parents.

Once the decision has been made and the student has followed that decision, he/she will not be penalized in any way by either the sponsor or coach. If it becomes obvious that a student cannot fulfill the obligations of a school activity, he/she should withdraw from that activity.

Students who miss over half of the school day due to illness will not be able to play in a contest or practice on that date. Students missing school for reasons other than illness must have an excused absence to participate. Final authority for infractions of this rule will rest with the principal. Students absent from school on the day prior to a non-school day athletic event will be eligible to participate the day after the absence. It is the responsibility of the student to see his/her teacher(s) the day before they are to be released to participate in an athletic activity. All work should be made up at the convenience of the teacher.

Excused vs unexcused

Examples of an excused absence include, but are not limited to, religious reasons, death in family, medical reasons, etc. An absence must be approved by the coach beforehand.

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Examples of an unexcused absence, no communication with a coach beforehand, work, travel not previously approved by coaches, personal reasons, etc. Approval from the coach will come down to their discrepancy.

Eligibility:

To be eligible for athletics, the athlete must be in compliance with the rules and regulations of the South Carolina High School League. These regulations are based upon academic requirements and legal enrollment and are detailed in the BPS Student Handbook. An athlete must maintain a minimum of a 70% in all academic classes throughout their season.

Grades will be pulled bi-weekly. If an athlete does not maintain expectations they will either attend tutoring or a study hall session during practice at least twice during the week. The athlete will be responsible to get their tutoring/study hall sheet signed by a teacher/coach. If an athlete does not comply during the week, they will be subject to miss practice and/or games until tutoring/study hall is complete. Once a student raises their grade above a 70%, they are no longer required to attend tutoring or a study hall session.

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An athlete is not permitted to participate in pre-season activities if they are currently participating in their current season. An athlete may not participate if they quit or get kicked off their current team to participate in pre-season workouts. For example – An athlete that is currently participating in volleyball (fall sport) cannot quit the team to participate in pre-season basketball (winter) conditioning or workouts. The athlete must wait until their current season is over before participating in the next.

Participation:

A student may participate in only one school sponsored sport per season unless the two coaches/sponsors agree to the student's competing in both activities and priorities are set to settle conflicts before the season. If a conflict arises that has not been previously agreed upon by the coaches, the athletic director will determine what activity the student athlete will participate in after receiving input from the athlete and his/her parents. Quitting or dropping a sport in season is an

intolerable habit to acquire. An athlete that has previously quit may lose the privilege of participating in the athletic program. If a student finds it necessary to drop a sport for good reason, they must immediately consult the team's head coach who will then report the situation to the athletic director. If a student wishes to change sports during a season, he/she shall consult with both coaches concerned and the athletic director. If both coaches fail to agree, the student cannot begin a new sport (including conditioning) until the season of the sport in which he/she is currently involved has been completed. This procedure assures a smooth transfer which is in the best interest of all involved.

Equipment:

School equipment or uniforms issued to the student-athlete is the student's responsibility. Loss of any equipment or uniform is the athlete's financial obligation and failing to meet that obligation can result in denial of participation in the athletic program.

Code of Conduct:

An athlete is expected to govern his/her behavior in accordance with the rules and regulations found in the BPS Student Handbook and as set forth in team rules which shall be communicated to each athlete by their head coach(es). Violation of the student's obligations under the handbook, the athletic policy and team rules may result in removal from competitive athletics. Any athlete exhibiting behavior(s) which cause(s) embarrassment to himself/herself, the team, the Athletic Department, or the school may be suspended from the team. The principal, athletic director and the head coach will determine if the athlete is eligible to return to participate in future athletic events. Athletes are also expected to have exemplary behavior outside of school. An athlete arrested, under investigation, on probation etc., will be suspended from competition until cleared by the principal. (Excluding minor violations, such as traffic violations.

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Hazing:

The athletic department will not tolerate hazing by students, staff and third parties as part of any school sponsored activity. All students must avoid any action that could be viewed as planning, directing, encouraging, assisting, or engaging in any hazing activity. Students should also not engage in acts that have a foreseeable potential for causing physical harm to any person for the purpose of initiation or admission into or affiliation with any athletic team.

State law defines hazing as "the wrongful striking, laying open hand upon, threatening with violence or offering to do bodily harm by a superior student to a subordinate student with the intent to punish or injure the subordinate student, or other authorized treatment by the superior student of a subordinate of a tyrannical, abusive, shameful, insulting or humiliating nature." Any hazing activity, whether by an individual or a group, will be presumed to be a forced activity, even if the student willingly participates.

Any student who feels he/she has been subjected to hazing is encouraged to immediately notify the athletic director or the principal. All complaints will be investigated promptly and confidentially. A student found to be in violation of this policy may be subject to discipline from the school, athletic

department, and law enforcement.

Personal Health Practices:

Due to the harmful effect upon the health of the individual, all athletes will refrain, in or out of season, from the use of tobacco (in any form), all alcoholic beverages, steroids, or illegal drugs or mood-altering substances found in legal over-the-counter products. Verification of the above behaviors will result in immediate disciplinary action detailed below:

A. Tobacco/Vaping/Juuling Violations:

1st offense: Athlete will not be able to participate for the duration of the school suspension. As well as a 2-game suspension.

2nd offense: Athlete will no longer be able to participate for the team they are currently on.

3rd offense: In or out of season, exclusion from all interscholastic activities for the remainder of the academic school year.

B. Drugs/Alcohol Violations:

1st offense: Forfeiture of 20% of scheduled contests

2nd offense: In or out of season, forfeiture of one calendar year of participation in all interscholastic activities.

In-School and Out-of-School Suspension:

Students that are placed in ISS for a full day or more due to inappropriate conduct may not be allowed to participate in athletic contest(s) during the suspension period depending upon the severity of the infraction. The student's right to participate in contests will be determined by the principal and athletic director. Students that have been assigned OSS are not allowed to participate in any team practice or contest during the suspension period. Absences during the time that an athlete is in OSS will be considered unexcused. Excessive unexcused absences from practice, games or meetings may be cause for removal from athletics.

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Team Travel:

Athletes are expected to travel to contests/practices on the team bus unless they are riding with a parent. If it is necessary for an athlete not to ride the bus, he/she must complete an athletic travel release form and have it signed by a parent, the head coach, and the athletic director in advance of the trip. Athletes are not permitted to drive themselves or teammates to any practice/game. Athletes must ride with a parent or guardian if they are unable to ride the bus.

Reporting of Injury:

All injuries that occur while participating in athletics should be reported to the trainer and coach immediately. If the injury requires medical attention by a doctor or treatment center, it will be necessary to have an injury report form completed.

Sportsmanship:

Athletes are expected to show good sportsmanship, honesty, respect and integrity toward fellow players, coaches, teachers, administrators, staff, opponents, and officials. Profanity and abusive language or behavior will not be tolerated. Athletes who violate this standard of behavior are subject to disciplinary action by the South Carolina High School League, the school, the athletic department, and the team. Student-athletes are ambassadors of the school and should be positive role models for the younger athletes in our community.

Parent Policy:

Parents should exhibit good character, sportsmanship, and manners while attending BPS sporting events. Offensive language to coaches, teams, and officials will not be tolerated and will be grounds for removal from the event, and possibly future events.

“Closed door” practice policy. Only Bridges faculty and coaching staff are permitted to attend practices. Parents will not be allowed to sit in on practices.

24-Hour Rule:

Parents are not to speak with coaches about concerns immediately after sporting events. Parents must email the coach and/or AD the next day to set up an in person meeting to discuss any concerns that they may have. This rule is put in place to eliminate post game confrontation that may be dissipated within 24 hours. After a game, coaches, players, and parents may experience a high level of emotion due to the competitive nature of the event. At this moment, it is not appropriate to voice concerns to coaches or ADs. An email or phone call, the following day, will be sufficient to set up a meeting with coaches or ADs.

Late policy – If a parent/guardian is 30 minutes late (without notice) to pick up their athlete from a practice/game, the coach has the option to deny playing time for the next contest after the third offense. This will not come without notice or warning. A conference with parents and coach must take place before penalty.

Chain of command. Steps to handle a conflict.

Athlete meets with coach

Athlete and parent meet with coach

Athlete and parent meet with coach and AD

Athlete and parent meet with Principal/AD/CEO (coach if necessary)

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ATHLETE – PARENT VERIFICATION FORM

This form should be completed and signed by the athlete and parents/guardians and returned to the appropriate head coach or AD.

Athlete's Name (please print) Year

As a Bridges Preparatory School student-athlete participating voluntarily in interscholastic athletics, I understand that: I will abide by the BPS student code of conduct, the school's athletic policy, the coaches team rules, and the rules of the South Carolina High School League.

Student's signature Date

Parent's signature Date

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