

## **ATHLETIC CODE - BLISSFIELD COMMUNITY SCHOOLS**

Blissfield Community Schools, which is a member of the Michigan High School Athletic Association (M.H.S.A.A.) and subject to its rules, feels that participation in athletics is a privilege which is an important part of the educational program. Through our athletic program, we strive to engender the principles of courage, fair play, sportsmanship, tolerance, and all traits of the good citizen. The athlete learns that certain rules are necessary and how to abide by them. One learns to respect the rights of others, win with grace and humility, and to accept defeat with poise and dignity.

The Blissfield Athletic Department, reserves the right to hold those individuals associated with a team accountable for his/her actions according to this policy. (Example: student/athlete, manager, statistician personnel, etc.)

### **ELIGIBILITY**

The Athletic Department feels that the primary purpose of the Blissfield Community School District is to provide an adequate education for everyone. In keeping with that principle, an athlete is a student first and must show responsibility in the classroom and in the citizenship arena to be eligible to participate in athletics.

#### **RESIDENCY**

To be considered for eligibility in athletics, a student must be enrolled full time at either Blissfield Middle School or Blissfield High School, adhering to our guidelines.

#### **MIDDLE SCHOOL ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY**

Academic eligibility will be monitored weekly at the Middle School level. To be eligible, a student must be passing all classes. If a student fails to meet eligibility standards at the weekly check on Friday, the student will be ineligible for a minimum of one week and until eligibility standards are met.

#### **HIGH SCHOOL ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY**

Academic eligibility will be monitored when progress reports and grade cards are issued. To be eligible, a student must be passing with 60% or higher and earning credit toward graduation in 5 classes (excluding VIP). 1. If a student fails to meet eligibility standards on the progress report card, they will be placed on "Academic Probation" until the marking period grade card is issued. While on "Academic Probation", the student must turn in weekly grade reports for all classes verifying they have brought their grades up to eligibility standards. The weekly reports must be turned into the Athletic Office by 2:30 Friday or the student is automatically ineligible for one week beginning the following Monday. 2. If a student falls below eligibility standards at the marking period grade report, they are ineligible for one week and then placed on "Academic Probation" until the progress report grade is issued. 3. If a student falls below eligibility standards for a semester, they are ineligible for the next sixty (60) school days. 4. It should be understood that fall eligibility is based upon the academic performance of the previous spring.

**CREDIT RECOVERY** – Students are allowed to use credit recovery to regain eligibility under the following guidelines: 1) Limited to one course make-up 2) If the course failed was a core course, the same course must be retaken 3) Course must be approved by the HS Principal 4) Eligibility is restored when the credit is officially posted to the transcript.

If a student is academically ineligible he/she will practice but not participate in any scrimmages/contests.

## **TRANSFER STUDENTS**

Transfer students will be eligible according to the guidelines set forth by MHSAA rules. In addition, Blissfield Community Schools will enforce upon a transfer student any period of ineligibility to which that student would have been subject as a result of a student or athletic code violation(s) at that student's most recent previously attended school. Students transferring from a non-accredited high school (i.e. Virtual School or Detention Center), will be required to wait one full semester before participating in athletics.

## **PAY TO PARTICIPATE FEE**

Athletes will have to pay a participation fee for each sport. This fee will be due in the athletic office after cuts have been made. The fee for each sport will be set by the Board of Education. ALL PARTICIPATION FEES ARE NON REFUNDABLE. (No refund for quitting, dismissal, moving, injury, etc.)

## **SUBSTANCE USE POLICY**

Since a well-trained body is essential to an athlete, use or possession of tobacco, alcohol, and illicit drugs, along with performance-enhancing substances that are banned by the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) must be prohibited. Use of these substances not only affects the physical fitness of the user but has a negative effect on one's mental attitude and the mental attitude of one's teammates. The Substance Use Policy is in effect a continual 12 month basis.

The first Substance Use Policy violation will result in a one-third (1/3) suspension of the regularly scheduled athletic contests of the sport season in which the violation occurred. Therefore, a suspension may carry over into the next season of participation. Athletes who stay at a situation where drugs (including alcohol) are provided to minors will be covered under the Substance Use Policy. Athletes using "Look-a-Like" drugs (including e-cigarettes and vaping devices) are also covered under this policy. Any athlete who is a host/hostess or a party may receive further punishment. It should be understood that the season in which a suspension is being served must be successfully completed in order for the suspension to be considered fulfilled. If the sport season is not successfully completed, the suspension would carry over to the next sport in which the student would participate. Any subsequent Substance Use Policy violations will result in suspension from athletic for one (1) calendar year. Any student who voluntarily seeks medical or professional help for substance abuse before getting caught will not face any disciplinary measures. A student who has a prior violation will not be allowed to avoid disciplinary measures by using the prior clause. A student will be allowed to voluntarily seek help one time during their high school career.

**ATHLETIC COUNCIL** – The Athletic Council consists of coaches and non-coaches and is responsible for upholding the Athletic Code.

**ATTENDANCE** – Students must be in attendance all day in order to participate after school (practice or games). Exceptions for doctor appointments, funerals or school related absences may be made if pre-authorized.

1. In school suspensions: athlete may practice but cannot play.
2. Out of school suspensions: athlete cannot practice or play.

**CODE OF CONDUCT** – An athlete is expected to behave in a manner that brings only respect and admiration for the athlete and the school. The athlete is expected to have full knowledge of the rules and guidelines contained in the Blissfield Student Handbook, the Substance Use Policy, team membership requirements, and to be guided by wisdom and prudence in all actions both in and out of season. The use or possession of tobacco, alcohol, illicit drugs or performance-

enhancing substances, involvement in any unlawful acts or situations that are detrimental to oneself, team or school, are examples of violations of the Code of Conduct, whether it were to occur in or out of season. Other examples of violations include but are not limited to: fighting (on or off school property), stealing, vandalism, inappropriate behavior at home or away school functions, unsportsmanlike conduct, or harassment of students. An athlete is expected to inform the coach of any occurrence that could alter eligibility. Undesirable conduct and/or involvement with the law (even without legal convictions) could result in consequences ranging from no action to dismissal from athletics. This decision will be made by the Athletic Council.

**DUAL SPORT** – Blissfield athletes are permitted under certain circumstances to participate in two (2) sports during the same season. Athletes interested in dual sport participation, need to inquire in the Athletic Office for information. This applies to High School athletes only. Middle School athletes are not permitted to dual sport (per MHSAA rule).

**DURATION** -- The Athletic Code is in effect for the entire calendar year.

**DUE PROCESS** -- A hearing shall be granted by the Athletic Council upon the request of the athlete or parent in cases involving suspension from athletic activities. Each hearing will be decided by a three-fourths (3/4) vote of the Council present.

**INTERNET USE / SOCIAL MEDIA** – Athletes are cautioned against misusing the internet including social media, both in written postings and in visual (picture) postings. Any behavior that would be unacceptable or improper in person would also be unacceptable and improper and subject to disciplinary action if posted on a website or broadcasted through social media. Violations of the Athletic Code include but not limited to: tobacco, alcohol, and other drugs (use of, mention of use of, or possession of), obscenity, slander/libel and threats to others.

**SEARCH AND SEIZURE**--Upon reasonable suspicion of a staff member, any and all athletes, their vehicles, and/or their possessions may be searched according to School Board Policy. This may include drug testing.

**SUNDAY ACTIVITIES** – There will be NO Sunday activities involving students unless directed by the MHSAA. Teams will be allowed to practice the Sunday before their MHSAA tournament begins.

**TEAM MEMBERSHIP RULES** – Practice is mandatory and the athlete is expected to be on time. Extenuating circumstances must be discussed with the coach beforehand. (Extenuating circumstances in the case of football camp could include sickness, transferring from another school to Blissfield, or representing Blissfield in athletic games-in which case players will be excused from camp in adequate time to participate in the game and will return to camp immediately following the game).

**TRAVEL** -- Everyone will go to and return from the game with the team. In the event of extenuating circumstances, another form of transportation may be requested by the parents in writing, providing the situation is discussed with the coach beforehand.

**VACATIONS** -- Athletes may accompany parents on “family vacations” during vacation periods when practice is scheduled. However, their standing within the team will not be guaranteed upon return. During summer vacation there will be no mandatory summer practices, conditioning, weight lifting, camps, leagues, etc. until the official start of the fall sports season determined by the MHSAA.

### **APPEAL PROCESS**

**STEP I** -- **Appeal to the Principal:** Formal presentation (written) of appeal to the Principal within five (5) school days. The Principal must render a written decision within five (5) school days of receipt of the appeal.

**STEP II** -- **Appeal to the Superintendent:** Formal presentation (written) of appeal to the Superintendent of Schools within five (5) school days of receipt of the Principal’s decision. The Superintendent must render a written decision with five (5) school days of receipt of the appeal.

**STEP III** -- **Appeal to the Board of Education:** Formal (written) appeal to the Board of Education within fourteen (14) calendar days of receipt of the Superintendent's decision. The Board of Education must render a written decision within fourteen (14) calendar days of receipt of the written appeal.

In the above procedure, a decision or agreement may be reached at any step in the plan. Any loss of privilege of participation will continue during the appeal process.