

BLISSFIELD ATHLETIC

DEPARTMENT

HANDBOOK

PURPOSE OF ATHLETICS

The purpose of school athletics is to provide the opportunity for individuals to participate in interscholastic sports. Through athletics, individuals will develop athletic skills for individual sports plus develop team membership skills such as teamwork, dedication, overcoming adversity, and sportsmanship. Competition is a strong factor, but encouraging participation and skill development must not be over-looked at the sub- varsity levels.

PHILOSOPHY OF COACHING

The coach is the leader of the team. Coaches should demonstrate leadership in appearance, professional pride, enthusiasm, enjoyment of the sport, and attitude. Remember a coach leads by example 24/7/365. Coaches must communicate effectively with athletes, parents, and administrators.

HEAD COACH

1. Vertical control of the entire program (K-12). Assemble/recommend staffing for all levels of the program through the Athletic Director and Building Administrator.
2. Responsible for a post-season evaluation of all assistants in the program (6-12).
3. Stay in contact with the Athletic Office to assure all physical forms and pay-to-participate fees are in. Stay on the athletes that do not have their physical forms in, they cannot participate (tryouts, practice) without it.
4. Stay in close contact with the coaching staff throughout the school year. Discuss the delegation of responsibilities, philosophy, set scrimmages, scouting, etc. The meetings should also inform coaches at each level of the fundamentals that should be taught and the methodology for teaching specific skills.
5. Promote and support lower levels of the sport. The head coach will do this by attending games and practices, holding camps, and/or heading up in-house leagues (i.e.- Junior Pro) for the lower levels during season.
6. Serve on Athletic Council by attending ALL meetings.
7. Help arrange for scorekeepers, timers, announcers, etc.
8. Verify Master Eligibility List.
9. End of Season Information
 - a. Inventory Sheet
 - b. Season Summary (results from games/tournaments)
 - c. Athletic Awards
 - d. Officials Ratings – online
 - e. Keys, Uniforms returned

RESPONSIBILITIES OF ALL COACHES

1. Must complete ALL MHSAA requirements.
2. Must attend the All-League meeting
3. Must be certified in CPR.
4. Attend clinics, seminars, etc. to further understanding of coaching methods, proper techniques, strategies, and motivation.
5. Membership in sport's coaches association. Many post season awards for the athletes are through the coaches association, which require the coach to be a member.
6. Know and enforce rules of the Michigan High School Athletic Association, School Board Policies, Administrative Guidelines, and the Athletic Code as they relate to your sport.
7. Develop respect by example in appearance, manners, behavior, language, and conduct. Model behaviors which reflect the values of good sportsmanship, fair competition, and ethical behavior whether actively coaching or in attendance as a spectator. All coaches must remember that they are representing Blissfield Community Schools at all times and must behave in a manner that is appropriate at all times.
8. Maintain effective individual and team discipline by being fair, understanding, tolerant, empathetic, and patient with team members.
9. Develop rapport with the athletic coaching staff, other teachers, administrators, and parents in a manner that is productive to the team, athletic department, and school.
10. Promote ALL athletes to participate in more than one sport.
11. Verify facilities are clean, equipment stored properly and locked, and lights turned off when done. Be the first to arrive and the last to leave each day.

ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY

Academic eligibility will be monitored when progress reports and grade cards are issued. If a student has 2 or more F's they are placed on academic probation and given one week to bring their grades up to the eligibility standards (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 may 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.

ATHLETIC COUNCIL

The purpose of the Athletic Council is to set standards, direction and provide any necessary disciplinary actions for any and all athletes involved in athletics at Blissfield Community Schools. Each varsity head coach is a member of the Athletic Council. There is a separate Athletic Council at each the Middle School and the High School levels.

ATHLETIC TRAINER

Blissfield High School has a service contract through Transcend Physical Therapy for a certified athletic trainer (ATC) at the high school level. It is the responsibility of the head coach to meet with the trainer before the season begins to refresh the memory of how the training service will work with each sport. Details such as where practices will be during the season and what time practice is will assist the trainer in setting up a plan for each team. Information such as: medical kits, water for practice, water for games, taping of athletes, rehab workouts, restrictions of workouts, and when to send an athlete to the training room are all things that need to be discussed in advance of the season. The trainer is also a good resource if questions arise concerning nutrition for our athletes. The head coach of each team has the responsibility to maintain **COMMUNICATION** with the trainer concerning their athletes that are being treated. **Just a reminder – the trainer has the final authority on when an injured athlete returns to competition and how much the athlete can do while undergoing treatment.**

ATTENDANCE IN SCHOOL

The Blissfield Student handbook mentions that students **MUST** be in attendance ALL day in order to participate in extra-curricular competition. Students must be in school by the end of 3rd hour in order to participate in practice. The only exceptions would be pre-arranged appointments such as doctors or funerals. The Administration may grant other exceptions if circumstances warrant.

BUDGETS AND PURCHASING

Each team has a budget based on the finances available within the district, the request list, amount of equipment needed to be purchased yearly (disposable items), etc. The budget is the responsibility of the Athletic Director. **No coach is to purchase any items without prior approval.** Team shirts and other non-inventoried items will not be purchased through the Athletic Office. Any purchase to be worn by the team representing Blissfield must have the head coach's knowledge and prior approval from the Athletic Director.

CAPTAINS

Choosing captains for a team is not a popularity contest or automatic because of senior status. Team captains must be leaders on and off the playing field. Captains should possess a strong work ethic, show leadership, and be of unquestionable character. Teams are limited to two captains unless approval is given for a third. Captains can be elected by the players or placed by the coaching staff.

COMMUNICATION

It is extremely important to make contact with the Athletic Office on a regular basis both during the season and off-season. Each sport has a team box in the Athletic Office. Coaches should check their box daily for messages while in-season. During the off-season, once a month is sufficient to check the team mailbox.

It is the responsibility of the head coach to make media contact following each competition win or lose. The main media to contact include The Advance, Daily Telegram, Toledo Blade, the local radio stations (WABJ, WQTE, WLEN) and the Toledo TV stations (11, 13, 24).

CUTTING AN ATHLETE

Because of numbers, it is sometimes necessary to cut athletes. Before cutting an athlete, a coach must have a valid reason or reasons why the individual is not qualified to be on the team. A valid reason can be character orientated such as attitude, discipline problems in school, etc. **UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES ARE ATHLETES TO BE CUT THROUGH THE POSTING OR BY READING OFF A LIST,** the coach must talk face to face with each athlete cut.

EQUIPMENT AND UNIFORMS

It is the responsibility of the coach to verify the team has the proper equipment, emergency medical forms, and medical supplies needed for each practice and contest. It is also the responsibility of the coach to verify all equipment is secured, in proper working condition, and inventoried at the end of the season. All uniforms must be collected no later than one week after the completion of the season.

FUND RAISING

There will be no individual team fundraisers without permission from the Athletic Director. Types of fund raisers that will be considered are service type activities such as: working at the festival, car washes, working at MIS ...

LOYALTY

Coaches must maintain loyalty to all coaches, administrators, and the school system. There will be times individual coaches may not agree with procedures or policies set forth by the Athletic Director, Administration, or Board of Education but under **NO CIRCUMSTANCES** should a coach discuss their dissatisfaction with athletes, parents, community members, etc.

MEETINGS - PRESEASON / PLAYER AND PARENT

Each sport should have a sign-up meeting approximately one month before the season begins. For fall sports this meeting should be in late May, before the end of school. At this meeting coaches should announce when and where the first practices will be held. The Athletic Director will verify all necessary paperwork is on file and completed. **NO ATHLETE IS ALLOWED TO PRACTICE UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCE IF ALL FORMS ARE NOT TURNED IN.** Turn in a final team roster as soon as possible to help the Athletic Office in establishing the correct eligibility information.

It is the responsibility of the head coach to hold a preseason parent meeting. This gives the parents a chance to meet the coaching staff and gives the head coach a chance to go through team rules and expectations for the upcoming season. The coach has the opportunity to discuss playing time policy, travel, goals, player equipment needs, etc.

MHSAA REGULATIONS AND GUIDELINES

Coaches are expected to know and understand the MHSAA regulations concerning their sport and general guidelines that affect all athletes. The MHSAA web site (www.mhsaa.com) has all the information in the MHSAA Handbook and each sports rules meeting. The Athletic Director can also be used as a resource for rules and regulations.

PARENT MEETINGS

Protocol for parent meetings are as follows:

1. Meetings between parents and coaches are never to take place after a game – please observe the 24 hour rule before scheduling a meeting.
2. Initial meeting should be between player and coach or parent/player and coach.
3. If issue does not resolve within a logical timeframe, parent/player may appeal with a meeting with parent/player, coach, and Athletic Director.
4. If the parent/player feel this issue was not addressed and still exists they then may appeal refer to the appeal process at the end of this document.

Questions over playing time are the number one reason parents meet with coaches during the season. Although playing time is traditionally a “hands-off” topic of discussion, coaches are encouraged to sit down with parents under the following guidelines:

1. Meetings between parents and coaches are never to take place after a game – please observe the 24 hour rule before scheduling a meeting.

2. Playing time discussions are limited to the parent's child only. Under no circumstance is it acceptable to discuss another player.
3. Discussions should center on "What does the player need to work on to improve?"
4. Establish a standard for the parents that although you are willing to discuss the issue of playing time, it is important to emphasize that athletes, however, should be encouraged to talk to their coach with the purpose of asking for suggestions of what can they do in practice to improve.
5. Explain to parents and athletes that playing time is earned by the performance and effort that is put forth during practice.
6. Expand explanations to athletes and parents to cover the concept of filling roles on a team. It helps when all athletes and parents understand what their role is on the team.

PLAYING TIME

Playing time can be a delicate issue but there needs to be an understanding of what level is being played as playing time issues are decided. Playing time fairness and equality questions mean different things as the level of play increases. It is expected that playing time will be closer to equal at the 7th grade level than at the varsity level. As the athlete moves up the ranks, fair does not always mean equal. Yes, as long as scores are kept, winning is a major goal. There isn't a game played where athletes, parents and coaches do not want to win. Coaches are encouraged to coach to win just as the athletes are encouraged to play to win. Coaching to win does not mean certain athletes do not play at the lower levels. A coach can coach just as hard, using play calling and game strategies as the game situations dictate regardless of which athletes are in the game.

Playing time can be reduced for behavioral reasons or academic reasons. If this is the case, the coach has the responsibility to COMMUNICATE with the athlete the reasons.

PRACTICE PROTOCOL

There is an obligation to hold structured and organized daily practices. There is nothing wrong with giving an occasional day off during the season.

SCHEDULES

Schedules are available on line (www.blissfieldathletics.com). During the winter, practice schedules will also be posted.

Gym practice schedules are done from mid-November to the first of April when multiple teams use the gym. The schedule is for both High School and Middle School Gyms. Practice schedules will be out 2 – 3 weeks in advance.

TEAM PICTURES

Team pictures for each sport season will take place on the same day for all in-season sports. The Advance, Telegram and the Yearbook will take pictures at the same time. Individual photos are not arranged for through the school.

TEAM RULES

Team rules do not need to be long but **MUST** be what you will enforce. The number one rule should be: **Do nothing that will bring embarrassment to the Team, School or Community.** The rest should explain the coach's expectations as far as practice, games, dress.

TRANSPORTATION

The school will provide transportation to and from most Monday-Friday athletic events unless other arrangements are made to car pool. All team members are required to ride the school provided transportation to and from all events/games. This also will require that all team members stay and support their teammates until the competition is complete. There must be at least one coach per team on the bus to provide supervision at all times.

Parents will be allowed to take their child home (rare circumstances) provided the following has taken place:

1. The parent must talk face-to-face with the head coach at the time of departure
2. The coach must approve
3. The parents signs the athlete out after the coach approves
4. Parents may only transport their own child

Blissfield Community Schools owns a van to be used for school business. If a coach needs to travel to a sport related activity (rules meeting, league meeting, scouting,...) where mileage was previously reimbursed, they are to request use of the school van.

WEIGHT TRAINING AND CONDITIONING

Coaches need to demand year-round weight training and conditioning. This is the 21st Century and we owe it to our athletes to develop the total athlete.

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 response/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 response/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 response/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.