

# BEDFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS DEPARTMENT of ATHLETICS

## Student-Athlete Handbook 2023-2024



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### **Scheduling Information:**

Website – [www.bedfordps.org/bhs/athletics](http://www.bedfordps.org/bhs/athletics)

Twitter - @BedfordBucs

Instagram - @bedfordathletics

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**Welcome:**

The following information defines the interscholastic athletic policies and procedures for all students participating in our Athletic Programs. The Athletics Department hopes this provides parents and students with a better understanding of our philosophy, goals and policies. Participation on an athletic team can be a rewarding educational experience. It is important that students realize the time demands, responsibility, dedication and sacrifices required when making this commitment. Please refer to the following information when a question about your sons or daughters athletic experience arises.

We urge you to support Bedford Athletics by:

- ❑ Attending games both home and away.
- ❑ Lending positive support to our teams and coaches.
- ❑ Encouraging all players without regard to their role on the team.
- ❑ Helping other spectators and parents to maintain an appropriate sportsmanlike attitude.
- ❑ Showing respect for the authority of the game officials.

Directions to Away Sites- The Athletics Department has directions to all DCL opponents on the school website ([www.bedfordps.org/bhs/athletics](http://www.bedfordps.org/bhs/athletics)). Also available is the sports hotline at 781-275-1700, ext 9100. The hotline is updated everyday after 12 pm and lists daily events, cancellations and directions to away sites.

## **Philosophy of Athletics**

Our interscholastic athletics program seeks to help student-athletes grow physically, mentally, emotionally, and socially through the challenges of athletic discipline, team participation, and interscholastic competition. Our mission is educational and designed to enrich and complement the academic experience at Bedford High School.

## **Governing Bodies**

Bedford High School is a member of the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association (MIAA), whose purpose is to organize, regulate and promote interscholastic athletics for secondary schools in Massachusetts. As an MIAA school, Bedford High School abides by the minimum standards set forth by this organization. Please note that these are minimal standards and members may enforce stricter standards, which Bedford High School does in many instances. The MIAA Handbook can be found here <https://miaa.net/wp-content/uploads/2023/07/MIAA-Handbook-23-25.pdf>

On the local level, Bedford High School is a member of the Dual County League (DCL), which is comprised of 11 area schools. Those schools are Acton-Boxborough, Boston Latin, Cambridge Rindge & Latin, Concord-Carlisle, Lincoln-Sudbury, Newton South, Waltham, Wayland, Westford Academy and Weston High School. We also compete against teams from other leagues, and these are referred to as non-league opponents.

John Glenn Middle School is a member of the Middlesex Athletic League.

## Policies and Procedures

### **Athletic Code of Conduct**

All athletes must be a student in “good standing” in order to participate in athletics. “Good standing” is defined but not limited to:

- Adherence to school rules that regulate behavior and attendance- including, but not limited to a major suspension (Category A/B) or multiple minor suspensions, detentions or class cuts. A student who receives one or more major suspension or multiple minor suspensions, detentions or class cuts prior to the season of play, but in the same school year, may be considered not to be in good standing.
- Adherence to Pursuing Victory with Honor and the Six Pillars of Character:

#### 1. Trustworthiness

- Trustworthiness – be worthy of trust in all you do!
- Integrity – Do what’s right even when it’s unpopular!!
- Honesty – Live and compete honorably.
- Reliability – Do what you say you will do! Be on time!
- Loyalty – Put your team above personal glory.

#### 2. Respect

- Respect - Treat all people with respect all the time.
- Class – Be a good sport. Be gracious in victory and accept defeat with dignity.
- Disrespectful Conduct – Do not engage in trash talking, taunting, or other actions that demean individuals or the sport.
- Respect for Officials – Treat officials with respect. Don’t complain or argue with calls or decisions.

#### 3. Responsibility

- Importance of Education – The primary responsibility of a student-athlete is academic achievement.
- Role Model – Remember that participation in athletics is a privilege, not a right. Be a positive role model.
- Self-Control – Don’t fight or show excessive displays of anger.
- Healthy Lifestyle – Safeguard your health. Don’t use illegal or unhealthy substances.

#### 4. Fairness

- Fairness and Openness – Live up to high standards of fair play. Be open-minded, always be willing to listen and learn.

#### 5. Caring

- Concern for Others – Put safety and health considerations above the desire to win. Never permit student-athletes to intentionally injure any player or engage in reckless behavior that might cause injury to themselves or others.
- Teammates – Help promote the well being of teammates through positive encouragement. Report unhealthy or dangerous conduct to your coaches.

#### 6. Citizenship

- Playing by the Rules – Have a thorough knowledge of and abide by all applicable game and competition rules. Demonstrate and demand integrity.
- Spirit of Rules – Honor, observe and enforce the spirit and letter of the rules. Do not engage in or allow any conduct designed to evade the rules governing fair competition.

**A student found not to be in good standing might be denied the privilege of participating in an interscholastic sport or extracurricular activity.**

## Athletic Offerings and Program Goals

### Fall

The fall season begins sometime around the third Monday in August and ends in late October. Varsity teams who qualify for the postseason tournament may participate into the month of November. Football concludes its regular season on Thanksgiving Day. Informational meetings will be held in late May.

- 1) Soccer (Boys/Girls) - Varsity, JV and Freshmen\*\*
- 2) Football - Varsity, JV and Freshman\*\*
- 3) Competitive Cheerleading - Varsity
- 4) Field Hockey - Varsity, JV and Freshman\*\*
- 5) Golf - Varsity
- 6) Girls Volleyball - Varsity, JV and Freshman\*\*
- 7) Cross Country (Boys/Girls) - Varsity and JV
- 8) Unified Basketball - Varsity

### Winter Sports

The winter season begins the Monday after Thanksgiving and ends in late February. Varsity teams that qualify for the post-season tournament may be participating into March. Informational meetings will be held in late October / early November.

- 1) Basketball (Boys/Girls) - Varsity, JV and Freshman\*\*
- 2) Indoor Track (Boys/Girls) - Varsity and JV
- 3) Swimming & Diving (Boys/Girls) - Varsity
- 4) Alpine Skiing - Varsity and JV
- 5) Rifle - Varsity and JV
- 6) Cheerleading - Varsity
- 7) Boys Ice Hockey - Varsity & JV
- 8) Girls Ice Hockey Co-op with Shawsheen Tech- Varsity
- 9) Wrestling Co-op with Acton Boxboro – Varsity
- 10) Gymnastics Co-op with Wilmington - Varsity

### Spring Sports

The spring season begins the third Monday of March and ends in late May. Varsity teams that qualify for the post-season tournament may be participating into June. Informational meetings will be held in February.

- 1) Baseball- Varsity, JV and Freshman\*\*
- 2) Softball- Varsity and JV
- 3) Lacrosse (Boys/Girls) - Varsity, JV and Freshman\*\*
- 4) Outdoor Track (Boys/Girls) - Varsity and JV
- 5) Tennis (Boys/Girls) - Varsity and JV

**\*\*All Freshman teams will be fielded if the numbers are sufficient!**

The Bedford High School Athletic Department philosophy regarding level of play has three goals:

- To emphasize the development of basic skills, appropriate attitudes, values and team concepts.

- ❑ To allow as many students as possible to participate and share the experience and benefits derived from team membership.
- ❑ To compete competitively with Dual County and non-league opponents.

Participation at the varsity level is generally limited to the most highly skilled players and those with the ability to interact with other players for team success. Assessments will be made by the coaching staff relative to the level of play, (Varsity, Junior Varsity and Freshman), which will be most beneficial to the development and progress of each player and team. It should be understood that playing time could be limited.

FRESHMAN: At the entry level for high school athletics, athletes and their parents should accept the following concepts:

1. Development of fundamental skills.
2. Equal practice opportunities for all participants.
3. The amount of game time is determined by the coach's evaluation of the athlete's attitude, skills and team role, working toward equitable playing time.
4. Learning the rules of the game.
5. Development of love for the sport.
6. Development of an orientation toward team effort by each athlete.
7. Sportsmanship and fair play.
8. Development of the ambition to achieve at the next level of competition.
9. Winning has a lower priority than skill and character development.

JUNIOR VARSITY: This level is a transitional one that emphasizes:

1. Reinforcement and refinement of fundamental skills.
2. The amount of game time is determined by the coach's evaluation of the athlete's attitude, skills and team role.
3. Learning rules of the game.
4. Sportsmanship and fair play.
5. More sophisticated athletic strategies.
6. Specific definition of the athlete's role within the team concept.
7. Greater emphasis is given to the concepts of commitment and team play.
8. Emphasis on physical conditioning and development.
9. Development of the ambition to achieve at the next level of competition is encouraged.
10. Winning has a lower priority than skill and character development.

VARSAITY: This level emphasizes:

1. Development of high proficiency in the physical skills of the sport.
2. The amount of game time is determined by the coach's evaluation of the athlete's attitude, skills and team role.
3. Sportsmanship and fair play.
4. Strategy, situation analysis and all mental aspects of the sport.
5. Specific definition of the individual athlete's role within the team concept.
6. Maximum commitment to the athletic team.
7. Physical conditioning components of one's sport.
8. Individual sacrifice for the good of the team.
9. Winning within the rules of sportsmanship and fair play.

There are many decisions made on a regular basis by members of our coaching staff. These include: which athletes should start a contest, who should play what position and the amount of playing time. Only members of our coaching staff make these very difficult coaching

decisions after weighing a considerable number of factors. The most competitive, skilled team members will play the major portion of contests. However, teams cannot be successful without committed substitutes. These athletes have to be ready at all times to step forward to compete. They must work as hard as they can to help make the team as competitive as possible. They must also strive to move up to a starting role.

### **Conflict Resolution**

Participation in athletics should be an enjoyable experience for all parties involved; student, coach and parent. There is no doubt that participation tends to be emotionally charged and dealing constructively with these emotions can be an excellent learning experience. In most cases, athletic competition is extremely positive and compliments the educational experience enjoyed by students at Bedford High School. Occasionally conflicts between coaches and students arise. These conflicts must be addressed and resolved immediately so that the many benefits of athletic involvement may continue to contribute to the emotional and physical growth of Bedford High School Student-athletes.

Protocol: If at any time a student-athlete or parent desires to lodge a complaint or discuss an alleged injustice, this procedure should be followed:

1. Contact the immediate coach involved (may be contacted through the Athletic Office). For example, freshmen team player - contact freshmen coach.
1. If resolution is unacceptable, contact the head coach of the program.
2. If resolution is unacceptable, contact the Director of Athletics.
3. If resolution is unacceptable, contact the School Principal.
4. If resolution is unacceptable, contact the Superintendent of Schools.

## Attendance

Any student-athlete absent from school the day of a scheduled game or practice session will not be allowed to participate in that game or practice.

A student must be in school prior to 10:25 am (9:41 on Wednesdays) and stay the whole day. If a student reports to school on time, they may not be dismissed until the conclusion of the 3rd class of the day. Students who display a pattern of excessive or inappropriate dismissals/detentions, regardless of length, will similarly be withheld from practice and/or games. Students who cut class or do not fulfill their detention responsibilities will also be ruled ineligible for participation.

When athletes miss practice or games, coaches will base their consequences decisions on:

- ❑ Principles of fairness to players who practice
- ❑ The importance of conditioning
- ❑ Professional discretion

If a player misses more than three unexcused days of practice, he or she will need to meet with the Athletic Director who will determine that player's eligibility.

Exempt absences (with proper documentation) will not prevent a student-athlete from participating in interscholastic athletics. Examples of exempt absences include: When a student is absent for medical reasons (doctor's note required), religious observance (parent call required), court appearance (court documentation required), funeral, college visit (juniors and seniors only—letter from college or university required—limit 4 per year—additional visits require counselor approval) and field trips. A suspension from school will exclude student-athletes from participation on the day of the suspension.

Excused or Unexcused absences from games will result in a one to one game suspension. This suspension will occur during the first contests immediately following the absence. The athletic director may change the date of suspension if the first contest immediately following the absence is a multiple team event, for example a tri-meet in track, or if a team will not have enough players to participate in an event. Normal school year exemption will apply.

### School Vacations

#### End of Summer Vacation

Athletes are expected to be at the first day of practice. If an athlete is not at practice/try-outs, he or she may jeopardize his or her chances of making the team.

#### Winter Vacation

No games scheduled on December 24, 25 or 26. No practices scheduled on December 24 or 25, and only on the 26<sup>th</sup> if a game is scheduled on December 27, in which case every effort will be made to schedule practice after 4:00 PM. The Athletics Department will make every effort to minimize the number of games scheduled during winter vacation, and will work with the DCL to do so.

#### February Vacation

The Athletic Department will make every effort not to schedule regular season games during February vacation, and will work with the DCL to do so.

## April Vacation

While practices will be optional for coaches to call on Friday through Monday, they will only be required from Tuesday on, during April Vacation. Due to inclement weather or holidays, Varsity games may be scheduled throughout the week.

## Awards

Each student-athlete will receive a certificate at the completion of the season. In all cases, an athlete must be in good standing at the end of the season to qualify for an award.

### Varsity Award (Letter):

Each sport has established criteria as to what constitutes an award. Numerous factors, including but not limited to contribution, attendance, work ethic, academics, and number of years the student has been associated with the program. A letter will be awarded to a senior who has participated in the sport for four years (or while they were enrolled at Bedford High School). Students that do not finish the season in good standing may not be eligible for a letter.

### Additional Criteria (By Sport):

#### Baseball

- Participate in 1/3 of innings played. An inning is defined as an inning in which a player gets in, regardless of how long he plays. An inning pitched is worth 1 ½ innings towards a letter.

#### Basketball

- Participate in 25% of the total varsity quarters played prior to the tournament.

#### Cheerleading

- Participate in at least 100% of games.

#### Cross Country

- Compete in at least 50% of the varsity league meets.

#### Field Hockey

- Participate in at least 50% of varsity games; a player must be in the game for at least 25% (15 minutes) of a game for it to count towards the 50%

#### Football

- Participate in 25% of the varsity quarters.

#### Golf

- Compete in at least 25% of varsity matches.

#### Ice Hockey

- Participate in 1/3 of varsity periods played.

#### Lacrosse

- Participate in 50% of the total quarters played. (Girls Lacrosse = halves)

#### Rifle

- Compete in a league match and finish as one of the top eight scorers.

#### Skiing

- Participate in at least 50% of the total varsity races.

#### Soccer

- Participate in 50% of the total number of halves played during the regular season.

#### Softball

- Participate in 1/3 of the innings played. An inning is defined as an inning in which a player gets in, regardless of how long she plays. An inning pitched is worth 1 ½ innings towards a letter.

#### Swimming

- Scored an average of 3 points per meet.

#### Tennis

- Participate in 25% of the total varsity matches.

#### Track

- Score an average of 1 ½ points per varsity meet.
- Qualified for the State Meet.

#### Volleyball

- Participate in 50% of the total games played (not matches).

#### Wrestling

- Participate in 50% of the total varsity matches.

#### Participation Award:

Athletes who do not receive a varsity letter and have excellent attendance, work ethic, and academics.

#### Manager's Letter:

The student must adhere to all general rules and regulations of athletes and fulfill all the duties as outlined by the coach (will be in writing, signed by the manager, and filed with the Athletic Director).

#### Student Athletic Trainer's Letter:

The student must fulfill all the specific requirements as required by the Athletic Trainer, work one full season (opening day to the last regular season game plus post-season tournaments) and adhere to all rules and regulations of the student athlete.

#### All-Stars:

Honors such as LEAGUE ALL-STAR selection are awarded to BHS students from time to time by organizations outside of the school. It must be understood that while coaches may nominate students for some of these awards, they have no control over the final selection. Any student-athlete that had committed a chemical health or code of conduct violation will not be nominated or selected for all-star awards.

### **Department Awards (Sponsored by the Bedford Athletic Association)**

#### The Helen Gfroerer Scholar Athlete Award

This award is given annually to a member of the senior class who has distinguished herself in academics and athletics. The award is given in honor of Helen Gfroerer for her many years of dedicated service as a teacher and coach at Bedford High School.

#### Jay F. Porter Memorial Award

This award is given in memory of Jay F. Porter. Jay Porter, as a member of the Class of

1970, was a recipient of both the Bedford High School Most Outstanding Student Athlete and the Bedford Lions Club Outstanding Athlete Award. This award is given to a student who best exemplifies the interests and desires that Jay had in distinguishing himself through various athletic and scholastic achievements.

#### The Ned Spellman Memorial Award

This award is given annually to the outstanding Male and Female athletes in memory of Ned Spellman, who was a dedicated supporter of Bedford High School Athletics.

#### DCL Sportsmanship Award

This award is given to a male and female athlete from each DCL School who best represents the characteristics and qualities of Sportsmanship.

#### Buccaneer Award

The buccaneer award is awarded to honor two senior student-athletes. The recipients have participated in athletics throughout their high school career. Athletes who have encouraged and supported their teammates and have always put the team ahead of any personal goals.

#### Athletic Directors Award

This award is given to athletes who have participated in all three sports seasons each year in high school.

### **Captains**

Captains are elected by team members and/or appointed by coaches. Prior to the selection, the coach will inform the team members of the selection criteria and obligations of the position. The position of team captain is one of honor, leadership and responsibility. As a result, students serving in that capacity are expected to conduct themselves in an exemplary manner both in and outside of school.

Students must complete the mandatory training session in order to be eligible to be selected as a team captain.

Any student who is involved in a violation of the athletic code of conduct or a chemical violation will lose the ability to serve as or be appointed to the position during the season that the violation occurred or served the suspension.

### **Chemical Health**

As allowed by the MIAA, Bedford High School exceeds the MIAA Chemical Health Policy **Rule 62**.

From the earliest fall practice date, to the conclusion of the academic year or final athletic event (whichever is latest), a student shall not, regardless of the quantity, use, consume, possess, buy/sell, or give away any beverage containing alcohol; any tobacco product (including e-cigarettes, VAP pens and all similar devices); marijuana (including synthetic); steroids; or any controlled substance. This policy includes products such as "NA or near beer". It is not a violation for a student to be in possession of a legally defined drug specifically prescribed for the student's own use by his/her doctor.

If a student in violation of this rule is unable to participate in interscholastic sports due to

injury or academics, the penalty will not take effect until that student is able to participate again. In addition, all penalties are cumulative while the student-athlete is enrolled at BHS. Any violation during the season will prevent the student-athlete from receiving a varsity letter and/ or from becoming a league all-star.

Any athlete found to be under the influence of, using or possessing any alcoholic beverages or drugs on school property or at official school functions both home or away will also be punished according to the school's policies for all students. In such cases, a police report of use, possession, or being in the presence of shall be considered a reliable report of actionable information barring the presentation of additional exculpatory evidence.

#### Minimum PENALTIES:

First violation: When the Principal confirms, following an opportunity for the student to be heard, that a violation occurred, the student shall lose eligibility for the next consecutive interscholastic contests totaling 25% of all interscholastic contests in that sport. No exception is permitted for a student who becomes a participant in a treatment program. It is recommended that the student be allowed to remain at practice for the purpose of rehabilitation. All decimal part of an event will be truncated i.e. All fractional part of an event will be dropped when calculating the 25% of the season.

Second and subsequent violations: When the Principal confirms, following an opportunity for the student to be heard, that a violation occurred, the student shall lose eligibility for the next consecutive interscholastic contests totaling 60% of all interscholastic contests in that sport. All decimal part of an event will be truncated i.e. All fractional part of an event will be dropped when calculating the 60% of the season. If after the second or subsequent violations the student of his/her own volition becomes a participant in an approved chemical dependency program or treatment program, the student may be certified for reinstatement in MIAA activities after a minimum of 40% of events provided the student was fully engaged in the program throughout that penalty period. The high school principal in collaboration with a Chemical Dependency Program or Treatment Program must certify that student is attending or issue a certificate of completion. If student does not complete program, penalty reverts back to 60% of the season. All decimal part of an event will be truncated i.e. All fractional part of an event will be dropped when calculating the 40% of the season. Penalties shall be cumulative each academic year, but serving the penalty could carry over for one year. Or, if the penalty period is not completed during the season of violation, the penalty shall carry over to the student's next season of actual participation, which may affect the eligibility status of the student during the next academic year. (e.g. A student plays only football: he violates the rule in winter and/or the spring of same academic year: he would serve the penalty during the fall season of the next academic year).

### **Commitment**

Each Member of our athletic teams MUST:

1. Commit to be present at all team activities including try-outs, practices, meetings and contest with other schools.
2. Dedicate themselves to becoming excellent team members and school citizens.
3. Strive to continually improve as an athlete.
4. Demonstrate pride in team performance and in themselves as members of a team.

Student athletes must commit to be at all practice sessions, contests and team meetings. Practices are held daily for approximately 2 hours, or as appropriate to the activity. Some

practices and games may be held on weekends. Most practice sessions do not begin before 2:45 pm on school days to allow time for students to see teachers for help after school. Any team member who must be late, or miss practice, games, or meetings must confer with his/her coach. Practice and game schedules, particularly in the case of winter and spring sports, include school vacation weeks. Students and families should take this into consideration when students are deciding to try-out for our teams.

### **Bona Fide Team Member**

**MIAA Rule 45:** A bona fide member of the school team is a student who is consistently present for, and actively participates in, all high school team sessions (e.g. practices, tryouts, competitions). Bona fide members of a school team are precluded from missing a high school practice or competition in order to participate in a non-school athletic activity/event in any sport recognized by the MIAA. First Offense: Student athlete is suspended for one (1) contest and shall not participate in the next scheduled interscholastic competition that is part of their regular season schedule or in tournament play. Second Offense: Student athlete is suspended for an additional 25% of the season, and is ineligible for tournament play immediately upon confirmation of the violation.

### **Eligibility**

All students who try out for athletic teams must have a valid physical and completed all eligibility information. All forms are available in the Athletic Department website at [www.bedford.k12.ma.us/bhs/athletics](http://www.bedford.k12.ma.us/bhs/athletics)

The school's nurse practitioner conducts physical exams three times a year coinciding with the beginning of each sport season (Fall exams are given the previous June). Physical exams are offered during the school day and by appointment only. It is strongly encouraged that a student-athlete receives a physical from his/her private physician. **MIAA Rule 56** states that a physical is good for thirteen months. This means a physical expires after 395 days and the athlete becomes ineligible.

### **Transfer Students**

**MIAA Rule 57:** A student who transfers from any school to an MIAA member high school is ineligible to participate in any interscholastic contest at any level for a period of one year in all sports in which that student participated at the varsity level or its equivalent during the one-year period immediately preceding the transfer. "Varsity participation" is defined as any appearance, as a competitor, in a varsity inter-scholastic contest other than a scrimmage. The MIAA executive staff on the basis of the quality of non-school sport program participation will judge the "equivalent".

### **Academics**

**MIAA Rule 58:** A student must secure during the last marking period preceding the contest (e.g. second quarter marks and not semester grades determine third quarter eligibility) a passing grade, and full credit, in the equivalent of four traditional year-long major English courses. A transfer student may not gain academic eligibility if he/she was not, or would not be, eligible at the sending school, unless transfer was necessitated by a move of parents and then eligibility would be determined by receiving schools eligibility standards. A student cannot at any time represent a school unless that student is taking courses which would

provide Carnegie Units equivalent to four traditional year long major English courses. To be eligible for the fall marking period, students are required to have passed and received full credits for the previous academic year the equivalent of four traditional year long major English courses.

Academic eligibility of all students shall be considered as official and determined on the published date when the report cards for that ranking period are to be issued to the parents of all students within a particular class.

Incomplete grades may not be counted toward eligibility until they are made up following school policy. A student who repeats work upon which he/she has once received credit cannot count that subject a second time for eligibility. A student cannot count for eligibility any subject taken during the summer, unless that subject was pursued and failed during the immediately preceding academic year.

### **Time Allowed for Participation**

**MIAA Rule 59:** A student shall be eligible for interscholastic competition for no more than four consecutive years after initially entering Grade 9. This limitation shall apply without regard to actual participation or attempt to participate. In no case may a student be eligible to participate in more than four of each of the three annual athletic seasons. In special cases where a student has been absent from school because of an accident or illness, the executive director, or his/her designee, shall have the authority to extend the student's eligibility upon presentation of a doctor's certificate on the student's behalf and a letter from the principal attesting to the inability of the student to attend school during a specific period because of an accident or illness. In instances where an extended eligibility is granted, the student may be declared eligible only for the season(s) that the student's accident/illness prevented participation.

### **Age**

**MIAA Rule 60:** A student shall be under 19 years of age, but may compete during the remainder of the school year, provided that his/her 19th birthday occurs on or after September 1 of that year. For freshman competition, a student shall be under 16 years of age but may compete during the remainder of the school year provided that the sixteenth birthday occurs on or after September 1 of that year. Principals must exercise great care in determining age of contestants, and in all doubtful cases, must secure birth certificates from the town clerk of the pupil's place of birth.

### **Graduation**

**MIAA Rule 61:** A student must be an undergraduate: i.e., he/she shall not be a graduate of any secondary school. Any student who has the credits required for a diploma shall be regarded as a graduate with the following exceptions:

- ❑ An early graduate of a high school may represent his/her school in athletics until the end of the sport season in which he/she is participating, if otherwise eligible. The diploma must be withheld until at least the season is completed, and the student may not attend classes outside of that high school during that season.
- ❑ A student who earns the credits required for a diploma prior to attending eight semesters in a four-year high school, and who is not granted a diploma may continue

to participate if he/she continues to take at least the equivalent of four traditional year long major English courses.

### **Equipment**

Students are responsible for, and are expected to maintain proper care of all equipment issued to them. Students are responsible for payment of any items lost, stolen or damaged. Each item not returned will be assessed at a rate comparable to the current replacement cost. All equipment is to be returned at the completion of the season. Grades will be withheld for those who do not either return or pay for lost/damaged equipment. Additionally, they will not be allowed to participate in another sport.

Student-athletes are not to wear uniforms, either practice or game, at any time other than those allowed by specified team regulations

### **Hazing**

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows: Chapter 269 of the General Laws is hereby amended by adding the following three sections:

Section 17: Whoever is a principle organizer or participant in the crime of hazing as defined herein shall be punished by a fine of not more than one thousand dollars or by imprisonment in a house of correction for not more than one hundred days, or by both such fine and imprisonment. The term "hazing" as used in this section and in sections eighteen and nineteen, shall mean any conduct or method of initiation into any student organization, whether on public or private property, which willfully or recklessly endangers the physical or mental health of any student or other person. Such conduct shall include whipping, beating, branding, forced calisthenics, exposure to the weather, forced consumption of any food, liquor, beverage, drug or other substance, or any other brutal treatment or forced physical activity which is likely to adversely affect the physical health or safety of any such student or other person, or which subjects such student or other person to extreme mental stress, including extended deprivation of sleep or rest or extended isolation.

Section 18: Whoever knows that another person is the victim of hazing as defined in section seventeen and is at the scene of such crime shall, to the extent that such person can do so without danger or peril to himself or others, report such crime to an appropriate law enforcement official as soon as reasonably practicable. Whoever fails to report such crime shall be punished by a fine of not more than five hundred dollars.

Section 19: Each secondary school and each public and private school or college shall issue to every group or organization under its authority or operating on or in conjunction with its campus or school, and to every member, plebe, pledgee or applicant for membership in such group organization, a copy of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen. An officer of each such group or organization, and each individual receiving a copy of said sections seventeen and eighteen shall sign an acknowledgment stating that such group, organization or individual has received a copy of said sections seventeen and eighteen.

Each secondary school and each public or private school or college shall file, at least annually, a report with the regents of higher education and in the case of secondary schools, the board of education, certifying that such institution has complied with the provisions of this

section and also certifying that said school has adopted a disciplinary policy with regards to the organizers and participants of hazing. The board of regents and in the case of secondary schools, the board of education shall promulgate regulations governing the content and frequency of such reports, and shall forthwith report to the attorney general any such institution, which fails to make such report.

Passed to be enacted by the House of Representatives November 13, 1985. Passed to be enacted by the Senate November 14, 1985. Approved November 26, 1985 by Governor Michael J. Dukakis.

## **Injuries**

Bedford High School is fortunate to have a highly qualified athletic trainer as a member of our staff. On school days our athletic trainer's hours are usually 12:00 pm until the conclusion of the last practice or home game. During weekends, and when school is not in session, the athletic trainer is required to be on site only for contests and for some scheduled scrimmages. Occasionally the athletic trainer will be on site for non-school day practices. At certain times, the athletic trainer, student staff and facility are extremely busy. Because of this, access to the athletic training room and its services is limited to athletes who are there for care only. Athletic training services are granted on a first come, first served basis on practice days. On game days, students will be treated in an order that will allow bus and/or game commitments to be met. The athletic training program exists to help athletes receive the best possible care. In the event of an athletic injury, the athletic trainer is in immediate control. At away contests, if the athletic trainer is not present, the host school medical personnel are in control. If no medical personnel are present, members of the coaching staff are instructed to "take charge" of the situation and, if warranted, call for emergency care.

All sport related injuries must be reported to the athletic trainer and a student may not return to competition without clearance by the athletic trainer, which may also include written permission from a physician.

### Traumatic Brain Injury/Concussion Policy

All school districts and schools must have policies and procedures governing the prevention and management of sports-related head injuries within the school district or school. The Athletic Director is responsible for the implementation of these policies and protocols.

#### Pre-participation Requirements.

Each year, the school district shall provide current Department of Public Health-approved training, written materials or a list and Internet links for DPH-approved on-line courses to all students who plan to participate in extracurricular athletic activities in advance of the student's participation.

All students who plan to participate in extracurricular athletic activities and their parents shall satisfy the following pre-participation requirements:

- ❑ Completion of registration in Aspen.  
[https://www.bedfordps.org/sites/g/files/vyhlf2786f/uploads/sports\\_registration\\_instructions5\\_0.pdf](https://www.bedfordps.org/sites/g/files/vyhlf2786f/uploads/sports_registration_instructions5_0.pdf)
- ❑ Every Student-Athlete must complete a Pre-Season Physical Examination in

accordance with MIAA Rule 56.

- Complete a Baseline Test (ImPact). That is valid for 2 years.

The following individuals must complete annual training in the prevention and recognition of a sports-related-head injury, and associated health risks including second impact syndrome utilizing DPH-approved training materials or program, and documentation of each person's completion of such training;

- (1) Coaches
- (2) Certified athletic trainers
- (3) Volunteers
- (4) School and team physicians
- (5) School nurses
- (6) Athletic Director
- (7) Band Director
- (8) Parents of a student who participates in an extracurricular athletic activity (BPS Athletics-Form 4)
- (9) Students who participate in an extracurricular athletic activity (BPS Athletics-Form

The required training applies to one school year and must be repeated for every subsequent year.

#### Exclusion from Play

Any student, who during a practice or competition, sustains a head injury or suspected concussion, or exhibits signs and symptoms of a concussion, or loses consciousness, even briefly, shall be removed from the practice or competition immediately and may not return to the practice or competition that day. The student shall not return to practice or competition unless and until the student provides medical clearance and authorization.

The Coach and/or Athletic Trainer shall communicate the nature of the injury directly to the parent in person or by phone immediately after the practice or competition in which a student has been removed from play for a head injury, suspected concussion, signs and symptoms of a concussion, or loss of consciousness. The coach also must provide this information to the parent in writing, whether paper or electronic format, by the end of the next business day.

The coach and/or athletic trainer will complete the Department Report of a Head Injury During Sports Season Form (DPH-Report of Head Injury Form), in the event of a head injury or suspected concussion that takes place during the athletic season. Parents will complete the Head Injury During Sports Season Form (DPH-Report of Head Injury Form) in the event of a head injury that is sustained in an extracurricular activity during an athletic season.

Each student who is removed from practice or competition and subsequently diagnosed with a concussion shall have a written graduated reentry plan for return to full academic and extracurricular athletic activities. The plan, developed by Student Assistance Team (comprised of the athletic director, athletic trainer, school nurse and guidance counselors), will address, but not be limited to:

- (a) Physical and cognitive rest as appropriate;
- (b) Graduated return to extracurricular athletic activities and classroom studies as appropriate, including accommodations or modifications as needed;
- (c) Estimated time intervals for resumption of activities;

- (d) Frequency of assessments, as appropriate, by the school nurse, school physician, team physician, certified athletic trainer if on staff, or neuropsychologist if available until full return to classroom activities and extracurricular athletic activities are authorized; and
- (e) A plan for communication and coordination between and among school personnel and between the school, the parent, and the student's primary care provider or the physician who made the diagnosis or who is managing the student's recovery.

Student-Athletes must be completely symptom free and medically cleared in order to begin graduated reentry to extracurricular athletic activities.

### Medical Clearance and Re-Entry Plan

The ultimate return to play decision is a medical decision that may involve a multidisciplinary approach, including consultation with parents, the school nurse and teachers as appropriate. Each student who is removed from practice or competition for a head injury or suspected concussion, or loses consciousness, even briefly, or exhibits signs and symptoms of a concussion, shall obtain and present to the Athletic Director, unless another person is specified in school policy or procedure, a Department Post Sports-Related Head Injury Medical Clearance and Authorization Form (DPH-Medical Clearance and Authorization Form) prior to resuming the extracurricular athletic activity. This form must be completed by a physician or one of the individuals listed below:

- (1) A duly licensed physician;
- (2) A duly licensed certified athletic trainer in consultation with a licensed physician;
- (3) A duly licensed nurse practitioner in consultation with a licensed physician; or
- (4) A duly licensed neuropsychologist in coordination with the physician managing the student's recovery.

### Graduated Return to Play

Once it has been determined by any of the above medical professionals that an athlete has been symptom-free for 7 consecutive days, a gradual progression for return to play may begin. During this time, the athlete will need to return to his or her diagnosing physician for a DPH-Post Sports-Related Head Injury Medical Clearance And Authorization Form to be filled out and returned to the Bedford High School Certified Athletic Trainer. Only after this form is returned and the athlete has successfully completed their gradual progression shall he or she be allowed to participate in athletic competition. The stages of gradual progression are as follows as defined by the Center for Disease Control:

- (1) Aerobic exercise (e.g., stationary bicycle)
- (2) Sport-specific training (e.g., running, skating)
- (3) Non-contact drills (includes cutting and other lateral movements)
- (4) Full contact controlled training
- (5) Full contact game play

An athlete may only advance to the next stage of the progression if they are able to complete the prior stage without the presence of concussion symptoms.

From the day an athlete is diagnosed with a concussion, it will be required that the athlete to check in with the Certified Athletic Trainer every other day to discuss symptoms and go through basic cognitive testing. Check-ins will be used to help determine when the athlete

has been symptom-free for 7 consecutive days and may be eligible to begin the gradual progression for return to play.

## **Social Media**

The Bedford Public Schools Athletic Department recognize and support the student-athletes' rights to freedom of speech, expression, and association, including the use of social networks. In this context, however, each student-athlete must remember that playing and competing for the Bedford Public Schools is a privilege. As a student-athlete, you represent the Bedford Public Schools and you are expected to portray yourself, your team, and the School District in a positive manner at all times.

Attached you will find the new social networking guidelines which provide the following guidelines for social networking site usage:

- Everything you post is public information – any text or photo placed online is completely out of your control the moment it is placed online – even if you limit access to your site. Information (including pictures, videos, and comments) may be accessible even after you remove it. Once you post a photo or comment on a social networking site, that photo or comment becomes the property of the site and may be searchable even after you remove it.
- What you post may affect your future. Many employers and college admissions officers review social networking sites as part of their overall evaluation of an applicant. Carefully consider how you want people to perceive you before you give them a chance to misinterpret your information (including pictures, videos, comments, and posters).
- Similar to comments made in person, the Bedford Public Schools Department of Athletics will not tolerate disrespectful comments and behavior online, such as, but not limited to:
  - Derogatory language or remarks that may harm my teammates or coaches; other Bedford student athletes, teachers, or coaches; and student-athletes, coaches, or representatives of other schools, including comments that may disrespect my opponents.
  - Incriminating photos or statements depicting violence; hazing; sexual harassment; full or partial nudity; inappropriate gestures; vandalism, stalking; underage drinking, selling, possessing, or using controlled substances; or any other inappropriate behaviors.
  - Creating a serious danger to the safety of another person or making a credible threat of serious physical or emotional injury to another person.
  - Indicating knowledge of an unreported school or team violation— regardless if the violation was unintentional or intentional.

In short, do not have a false sense of security about your rights to freedom of speech. Understand that freedom of speech is not unlimited. The on-line social network sites are NOT a place where you can say and do whatever you want without repercussions. The information you post on a social networking site is considered public information. Protect yourself by maintaining a self-image of which you can be proud for years to come.

## Sportsmanship Policy

Bedford High School expects all parties present at a contest to display the highest possible level of sportsmanship. Players, Coaches and Spectators should treat opponents, game officials and visiting spectators with respect. Bedford High School reserves the right to warn, censure, place on probation or suspend, up to one calendar year any player, team, coach, game, spectator\*\* or school official determined to be acting in a manner contrary to the standards of good sportsmanship. If you are not sure what details good sportsmanship, please follow this simple rule: Cheer for your own team and do not belittle opposing teams and officials. Three important MIAA Rules pertaining to student-athletes should be noted.

- ❑ A player “thrown out” of a game shall, at a minimum, miss the next game (Baseball, Ice Hockey and Boys Soccer miss two games).
- ❑ A player “thrown out” of two games during the same season is disqualified for one full calendar year.
- ❑ Striking or assaulting an official will result in a disqualification for one full year.

**\*\* May be asked to leave or prohibited from future contests.**

**ANY PERSON “THROWN OUT” OF A CONTEST MUST COMPLETE THE NFHS SPORTSMANSHIP COURSE IN ORDER TO RETURN!**

### DUAL COUNTY LEAGUE SPECTATOR EXPECTATIONS

- ❑ Be a FAN....not a fanatic!
- ❑ Attending a high school event is a not a right, but rather a privilege.
- ❑ Cheer for your team, rather than belittling the opposition. All cheers should be positive at all times. Do not verbally assault or abuse players, coaches, other spectators, or officials.
- ❑ Obey and respect faculty supervisors who are responsible for providing a safe and friendly venue. Respect the integrity and judgment of game officials.
- ❑ Negative chants are prohibited. Examples include use of player’s name in a negative way, cursing, or any form of taunting.
- ❑ Booming of cheerleaders is not allowed.
- ❑ Noisemakers, inappropriate signs, newspapers, etc., are not allowed.
- ❑ Stay off the playing area at all times.
- ❑ Respect school property. Do not damage bleachers, school equipment or any part of the facility.
- ❑ The use of alcohol, tobacco products, and drugs are strictly forbidden.

***FAILURE TO ABIDE BY THESE GUIDELINES MAY RESULT IN REMOVAL FROM THE GAME SITE. THANK YOU AND ENJOY THE GAME!***

### Tickets

Admission to Sporting Events- Bedford High School charges admission to some home contests. These contests include Varsity Football, Varsity Hockey, Varsity/JV Boys’ and Girls’ Basketball, Night JV/Varsity Girls’ and Boys’ Soccer, Night JV/Varsity Field Hockey and Night Boys’ and Girls’ Lacrosse games. Ticket prices have been set by the DCL for the 2023-2024 seasons at \$7 for adults and \$5 for students. MIAA Tournament ticket prices are set by the

MIAA. For information regarding season passes please log onto our website at [www.bedfordps.org/bhs/athletics](http://www.bedfordps.org/bhs/athletics)

### **Transportation Policy**

When Bedford High School provides transportation to and from athletic events, student-athletes are required to ride that transportation. The members of the athletic staff feel it is in the best interest of team unity that everyone travel together and share the game experience. As the “guardian” during these trips, it is also important that the athletic staff be able to account for all student-athletes and insure their safe whereabouts. In the event that there are extenuating personal circumstances or JV/Varsity back to back games and the parent wishes to take responsibility for the transportation of his/her son or daughter, it is required, barring unforeseen circumstances, that the parent/guardian provide a written 24-hour notice to the coach requesting the exception. A parent/guardian then must present himself/herself to a member of the coaching staff informing the coach that his/her child is leaving with him/her. Student-athletes may then ride with their parent/guardian. Student-athletes may ride with other student-athletes, if documentation has been received from both sets of parents/guardians. Student-athletes **CANNOT** drive themselves to competitions. It is expected that our student-athletes will conduct themselves appropriately while on bus transportation. Any misconduct will result in a penalty including and up to dismissal if warranted. Student-athletes will be responsible for any damages to bus property and subsequent costs to repair or replace.

### **Team Tryouts / Selection**

During the tryout period, each coach will provide an explanation of his/her expectations. It is the duty of the student to demonstrate to the coach that they can fulfill these expectations. If a student is not selected for a team, he/she may contact the coach personally for an explanation. Students who are not selected are encouraged to explore other BHS sport opportunities on teams that have not finalized their rosters.

The coaching staff of each sport has the sole responsibility for selecting members of the team, determining the level of play and the amount of playing time.

An athlete will not be allowed to join a team after its third official practice without the approval of the Director of Athletics and Coach. Switching sports is also not allowed after the first contest.

Please note: **MIAA Rule 35** states that a student athlete participating in football must have 15 days of practice.