

Boonsboro High School



Handbook For Parents and Athletes

(Revised 10/31/18)

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Handbook for Parents of Athletes

Being a parent is often challenging. This effort and responsibility is frequently complicated by being a parent of an athlete. This handbook, with its guidelines and suggestions, will give you some insights into this responsibility as it pertains to Boonsboro High School and its athletic programs.

The Player-Coach Relationship:

Unfortunately, through televised games and the more recent proliferation of cable TV, ESPN, and the NFL Network, many adults feel that they understand or perhaps know more than many coaches. Everyone becomes an expert. This newfound expertise may heighten your appreciation of a sport, but the role is still as a parent; not the coach.

The player-coach relationship is perhaps the most critical relationship in athletics. A parent can have a pronounced effect on this very important and delicate relationship. While you may not agree with all decisions of a coach, how and when you express your feelings can have a distinct effect upon your child.

If you express a negative opinion in the presence of your child, he or she will return to practice the next day and may carry with him or her, your convictions. Your son or daughter will then have to interact productively with this coach. You, as the parent, can greatly affect and even enhance this delicate relationship.

Receiving technical or strategic instruction at home may interfere and conflict with the instructional process at practice and games. This may ultimately impede your son or daughter's progress and affect his or her playing time. Please be positive and do not try to tarnish the coach's image in front of your child. **We welcome feedback and request that it be given privately by requesting a meeting with our coaches.**

The Parent-Coach Relationship:

In your role as a parent, you obviously love and are concerned about your child's welfare. You want the best for him or her. But an athlete can have only one coach. Allowing the coach to instruct and guide the team is crucial in many respects. **So coaches will not discuss playing time, starting line ups, or playing ability of other players on the team with parents.**

Should you have any questions or concerns, **do not approach the coach immediately at the conclusion of a contest.** At this time, coaches have other responsibilities and it may be an emotional time. Call and make an appointment for a later time and approach this meeting in a calm, courteous and logical manner. All of our coaches have been instructed to not talk to parents immediately following contests **if the conversation is confrontational.**

One of the responsibilities which a coach has at the conclusion of a contest is to have a brief meeting with his or her players. Athletes should not pause to talk to parents or friends immediately after games. These brief meetings are essential to the learning process involved in athletics.

The Parent-Player

Being positive and supportive is important, but adding pressure and unrealistic expectations can be extremely harmful. Allow your son or daughter to enjoy and grow from this valuable experience. In numerous national studies, it has been determined that most athletes participate for enjoyment or fun. Excessive pressure or expectations can alter this most fundamental reason for playing.

When you do speak with your child after a contest, don't dwell on his or her play, how many points they scored, or if they started. Instead, first ask how the team did? Did your son or daughter play hard, give 100 percent, and have a good experience?

Relationship With Officials:

There is an age-old refrain often used by irate fans. “How much are you paying the officials?” The home school does not get the officials. The commissioner of the particular sport assigns all officials and neither team controls which officials are assigned.

Officials agree to and follow a code of ethics. They really do not care or have a vested interest in which team emerges as the victor. These men and women are simply to do their job and do it to the best of their abilities. It is also important to understand that they are a very necessary part of a game. A contest cannot be played without them.

So while you may not agree with all of their calls, (who does?), please do not harass and taunt them. It is also important to remember that they are in charge of the contest and have complete authority to have unruly spectators removed. In many sports, a team will see the same official several times during a season. Coaches, athletic administrators and schools often work hard to establish a rapport and good working relationship which can easily be damaged by spectators.

Spectator-Cheerleader:

Cheerleaders try to infuse spirit into the fans/spectators and to lead them in selected cheers. Taking this responsibility into your own hands is not appropriate. Fans that leave the stands to direct cheers may often cause or lead to confrontations with the opponents. Following the cheerleaders’ lead; therefore, are absolutely necessary at all athletic contests.

The emotion and atmosphere at athletic contests can be very exciting and the cheerleaders need to be allowed to direct and control this aspect of the event.

Expectations for Spectator Behavior

- Applaud players for their efforts
- Accept the decisions of officials
- Appreciate participants for their commitment
- Support school personnel in conducting an orderly and spirited contest
- Maintain composure when things seem to go against your team
- Respect the rights of other spectators
- Reward sportsmanlike behavior through cheering
- Focus attention on positive aspects of competition

- Encourage players by showing enthusiasm and positive recognition
- Demonstrate concern for the safety and welfare of athletes

Remember

These young men and women are students and not professional athletes. They will make errors in the course of competition, as will game officials and coaches. However, all participants are trying their best. **Negative criticism and booing will not help them to improve and are unacceptable forms of expression at these events. You can assist in their development as athletes by focusing attention on the positive aspects of their performance.** Your cooperation is important and appreciated.

At Boonsboro High School:

In addition to embracing and committing to the WCPS Philosophy, at Boonsboro High School, we will also encourage and promote:

- The belief that athletes should participate in multiple sports and not specialize in any one specific sport.
- The concept of the broadest-based participation possible by offering all of the teams which we can financially and facility wise, and extending the opportunity to participate to as many students as possible.
- The premise that all teams are considered equal is vital for our student-athletes and each is a valued part of our athletic program. No one sport is considered more important than any other.
- The approach that all teams are treated as fairly as possible.

Athletic Chain of Command

At Boonsboro High School, the following chain of command is in effect:

- Player to Coach
- Parent/Player to Coach
- Parent/Player to Athletic Director
- Parent/Player to Assistant Principal (Todd McCarty, Justin Bright)
- Parent/Player to Principal

If there are any questions or concerns involving some aspect of our athletic program, the athletes and/or parent should first contact the appropriate coach. If there is no resolution, he or she would then go to the head coach, etc. Skipping of any of the levels of the Chain of Command will lead to the parent being referred to the skipped step.

Expressing Concerns

When expressing an occasional concern with a coach, please refer to and use the following guidelines:

1. **NEVER** approach a coach immediately after a contest. This is not the proper time or place for a discussion concerning your child or the team. This behavior could result in the parent or fan being not allowing to attend the next game or as severe as receiving a No Trespass notification from the principal and Washington County Board of Education.
2. Call or Email the following day and make an appointment which is convenient for both you and the coach to meet.
3. Raise your concern in a calm and civil manner. Yelling, being rude or using foul language is totally unacceptable.
4. Once you have stated your question or concern, listen to the explanation. Emotion can override logic and reason. Listening receptively may really help you to understand any explanation which is given.

Sportsmanship

Since athletics should be educational in nature, it is important that all parents demonstrate good sportsmanship and serve as role models for our athletes and students. **Sportsmanship is an overt display of respect for the rules of the sport and for others around you.** It also involves a commitment to fair play, ethical behavior, and integrity. This means:

1. There can be no vulgar or inappropriate language from our fans or spectators.
2. Taunting or trash talking of our opponents and their cheerleaders cannot be tolerated.
3. Spectators cannot leave the bleachers or enter onto the court or field during a contest.
4. Fans should be supportive and positive. Cheering should be done for our team and not against our opponent.
5. We should not impede or interfere with our opponent's cheerleaders from leading their cheers.
6. In some specific sports such as basketball and volleyball, we should not yell at an opponent during a foul shot or as a player attempts to serve.
7. Possession of intoxicants and/or illegal substances is prohibited. Use of tobacco is also prohibited on all WCPS school grounds.
8. Spectators will not be permitted to leave and reenter a competition.
9. During competition spectators may not play catch or pickup games inside the stadium or gymnasium. Elementary and Middle school aged students must in in the accompaniment of their parents at sporting events.
- 10.Noisemakers are prohibited at athletic events.

School officials have the authority to remove a spectator (s) from a contest for unruly or improper conduct. The individual (s) may be removed for the duration of a particular contest or for any extended period of time depending on the severity or frequency of the improper conduct.

Responsibilities of an Athlete

Most coaches would expect an athlete to adhere to the following guidelines:

1. The team's goals, welfare, and success must come before any individual.
2. An athlete needs to consistently attend practice sessions. This also includes weekend and holiday periods.
3. Players must be receptive to coaching.
4. Team members are responsible for all issued uniforms and equipment.
5. As a member of a team, an athlete must agree to and follow the team rules. Athletes need to remember that they are ambassadors and represent not only themselves, but also the coaching staff, school and community.
6. If injured, an athlete must report all injuries to the coach and athletic trainer.

Responsibilities of a Coach

At Boonsboro High School, a coach has the responsibility for the following:

1. The selection of the squad.
2. The determination of the style of play, including the offensive and defensive philosophy.
3. The teaching and instruction at practice sessions.
4. The determination of who starts and how long an athlete plays in a contest.
5. The decision of who plays in what position.
6. The establishing of team rules.
7. The selection of team captains.
8. The establishing of the requirements to earn a letter.
9. The communication with athletes and parents with respect to when practice sessions will be held, and when the sessions will start and finish.

Participation and Selecting the Team

It is important to understand that participation on an athletic team at Boonsboro High School is a privilege and not a right. Being on and maintaining one's membership on a team means accepting all the responsibilities of an athlete. However, unlike recreation or intramural teams, **equal or guaranteed playing time does not exist**. In an effort to win, a coach will use players best suited to the conditions or demands of the contest at that time.

Every coach has the responsibility and authority for selecting his or her team. The criterion for selecting the team is developed by the coaching staff.

It is also important to remember that there are no guarantees. Players from the previous year's JV team; for example, do not automatically make either the JV or varsity squad the following year. Having been a member of a team during the previous year or even being a senior does not ensure that an athlete will make the squad.

Parents should expect that every candidate will be treated fairly and given every consideration. Coaches are sensitive to feelings of disappointment, and will handle the task as positively as possible and will be available to answer athletes' questions.

While we understand that being cut is disappointing for many athletes and even for their parents, we unfortunately cannot keep everyone. Anyone cut from a team is welcome to tryout again next season or to try another sport. When parents and athletes understand and support the coach's decision, this difficult process becomes a less painful experience for all.

Eligibility

Boonsboro student eligibility requirements fall within a number of separate categories and are in addition to those of the Washington County Public Secondary School Athletic Association www.wcpsmd.org and the Maryland Public Secondary Schools Athletic Association www.mpssaa.org

Academic Ineligibility: If academically ineligible according to WCPS standards athletes may try out for a sport and participate in practices during that time of ineligibility. They may not however, participate or be part of the team during competition home or away. Coaches will encourage athletes to participate in study hall and tutoring sessions rather than practice to gain complete eligibility.

Conduct Ineligibility: If deemed conduct ineligible by the administration at Boonsboro High School, athletes will have no contact with the team during the stent of ineligibility. That means no practice, games or even as a spectator at home or away games. At the conclusion of the conduct ineligibility time the student may return to the team under the discretion of the coach. If the conduct ineligibility time falls during a tryout period the athlete will be allowed to attend the tryout period. If the athlete is selected for the team, they cannot participate with the team in any capacity until their conduct ineligibility period expires. Boonsboro High School believes our athletes should be held to a high standard, they represent our school, community and family. We expect them to be the positive role models of our student body.

Uniforms

Teams are on a four year cycle for new uniforms. Each uniform is then cycled through the program.

Each and every athletic team has a quality uniform to wear for contests. It is the responsibility of the student-athlete to maintain the uniform. All uniforms must be returned to the coaches within 72 hours of the final contest.

Students, who want to borrow uniforms for their senior photos in the summer or out of season, must contact the Athletic Director to fill out the required paperwork and understand they may only keep the uniform(s) for a 7 day period. Suspensions from practice and play of sports seasons are the penalty for not adhering to this rule.

The Purpose of a JV and Freshman Team

JV and Freshman Teams exist to provide those athletes who are unable to participate on the varsity squad an opportunity to develop skills and gain experience. While the athlete's age, size, or skill level may be the limiting factor in not making the varsity team, participation on a JV or freshman team may enhance the athlete's potential to make the next level in the future.

A caution, however, must also be given. Being a member of a JV or freshman team does not guarantee that an athlete will automatically move up to the next level the following year. The athletes best suited for varsity competition will make the squad each year.

Striving to win is important in athletics, however, compiling a great record or winning a championship should not be the primary objective of a JV or freshman team. The development of athletes should be the ultimate purpose of a JV or freshman squad, while at the same time acknowledging the value of winning, learning, and enjoying being a member of a team.

Practice Sessions

Practice sessions are closed to spectators and there is a very sound reason for this. These sessions are the equivalent of a teacher's classroom and there is real, quality instruction taking place. Interruptions and interference to an athlete's concentration and focus in practice cannot be allowed any more than a disruption would be tolerated in an academic setting. Education in any setting cannot be compromised.

At Boonsboro High School, practice sessions:

1. May last two hours, classroom/film sessions are not included in the two hour time limit. **This schedule will occur after the mandatory heat acclimatization period of 14 days.**
2. May start and end at different times due to the schedule of the coach or of our facilities. (Check with the coach for the specific times.)
3. Will not be held when school is dismissed early due to inclement weather.
4. Will not be held when school is not in session due to inclement weather.
5. May and usually are held on Saturdays and over holiday periods.
6. May not be held on Sundays.

Dual Sport Participation

Washington County has approved dual sport participation for athletes with the rationale that "some students have talents and abilities in which they have a desire to contribute to more than one team in a particular athletic season and both of these teams can benefit." To do so, the following guidelines must be met:

1. Students wishing to participate will need to obtain a request form from the athletic director and follow the guidelines established by the athletic department involving dual sport participation.
2. A student who wishes to participate in two sports during the same season must designate a primary sport before the beginning of the first allowed practice date as determined by the MPSSAA.
3. A primary sport is defined as the sport taking precedence over another sport in the event there is a conflict of schedule or other matter that could lead to a conflict. The student must adhere to the primary sport in the event of any conflicts of schedule. If one sport has a contest and the other has practice, the contest will take precedence. Students are not allowed to participate in two competitions on the same day.

4. The student must practice in both sports but the amount of practice time must meet the agreed requirements of the head coaches of those sports involved. Again that must be worked out prior to the start of the season.
5. Approval may be denied because of academic concerns at any time during the sport season. The athlete then will participate in the primary sport only.
6. The student and parents or legal guardians, must sign a contract of dual-sport participation before the first practice session the athlete attends.
7. In the event that a student is disciplined for any infraction in a specific sport, the consequence will also be applied to the second sport in the season of dual participation.
8. The high school athletic director and the high school principal will serve in the capacity of advisors and final judgments on matters concerning dual-sport participation.

Games and Competition

Schedules for all sports can be found on the following website: www.washingtoncountycmc.org all changes made will be reflected on that website. The website has the capability for you as parents to get alert updates when changes are made to the schedule. This is very handy when deciding when to leave work or making an away trip.

Policy is that our athletes travel to and from competitions on the bus provided, however, we know extenuating circumstances sometimes requires the athlete to go to or from a competition with a parent. These situations must be approved prior to the competition by the administration for signature approval. It is then the athlete's responsibility to give the signed note to the coach. Athletes will only be released to the parent. They may not drive themselves or ride with anyone who is not listed as an emergency contact. If no prior approval from the administration exists the athlete must go to and from the competition on the bus.

Cost of admission to varsity games or varsity and JV competitions that happen together is \$5.00 for adults and \$2.00 for students. If you become a BABI member the admission cost of a regularly scheduled home game will be \$3.00 for adults and \$1.00 for students with the presentation of your membership card to the gate employee. **This BABI discount does not apply to away games, MPSSAA playoff games or County Tournament or Invitational held at our school.**

Conduct of Spectators during Games and Competition

If sportsmanship rules are not followed, school officials and event staff has the authority to remove a spectator(s) from a contest without reimbursement of entry fee. The individual (s) may be removed for the duration or a particular contest or for any extended period of time depending on the severity or frequency of the improper conduct.

Athletic Award & Letters

To receive a varsity letter at Boonsboro High School the student athlete must:

- Finish the season in good standing.
- Been academically eligible for the entire season.
- Have met the qualifying standards as set forth by the Varsity Head Coach of the specific sport. Those standards could vary from year to year, but are established by the coach at the beginning of the season.

Other athletic department awards are given on the basis of grade and number of times lettered. Each athlete will be given a certificate of participation as well as the following:

- 9th grade – graduation year numbers
- 10th grade – Indian Head Patch
- First Letter – Big B and/or sport pin
- Second letter and each following - Bar

Team Captains and Managers

There are several good reasons for having captains of a team. These athletes may serve as positive role models, links between the team and the coach, and they certainly should be leaders. A good captain can be a real asset to the team and coaching staff.

While some coaches may allow their team to select captains, the ultimate responsibility lies with the coach. It is also important to understand that serving in the capacity of a captain is not reserved solely for seniors on a team, but rather this position is for the athlete who is best suited to filling the responsibilities.

Managers perform duties assigned by the coach and are a vital part of the athletic programs for which they serve.

Hazing and Bullying

Bullying, harassment, or intimidation of any individual by any person or group of people will not be tolerated in the Washington County Public School System. Bullying, harassment, or intimidation of any person on school property or at school-sponsored functions or by the use of electronic technology at a public school is prohibited.

The Board of Education prohibits reprisal or retaliation against students who report acts of bullying, harassment, or intimidation or who are victims, witnesses, bystanders, or other with reliable information about an act of bullying, harassment, or intimidations.

Students under the jurisdiction of the Board of Education whose behavior is alleged to be in violation of this policy will be subject to an investigation which may result in disciplinary action including suspension, and expulsion from team or school.

Behavioral examples that are not tolerated include but are not limited to the following:

- Physical aggression such as hitting, kicking, shoving, spitting, hair pulling or throwing things resulting from bullying, harassment or intimidation.
- Encouraging or influencing another person to hit or harm a student.
- Teasing, name-calling, making critical remarks, or threatening, in person or by other means.
- Demeaning or derogatory jokes.
- Making rude and/or threatening gestures.
- Excluding or rejecting a student by another student or group of students as a means of creating a hostile environment that is verified or documented through investigation.
- Intimidating (bullying), extorting or exploiting.
- Spreading harmful rumors or gossip.

Risks of Athletic Participation

In spite of protective equipment, and the supervision and sound instruction by our coaches, there are some risks associated with athletic participation. Injuries can and do occur. In extremely rare cases, death could also result. All athletes and parents need to be aware and understand this possibility. At Boonsboro High School, we will do all that we can to ensure a safe and healthy environment for our athletes.

Certified Athletic Trainer (ATC)

Boonsboro is very fortunate to have an athletic trainer on site. The trainer will be available most days during athletic practice times and at all home games until the conclusion of the event. There are some expectations pertaining to having an ATC:

1. The trainer is an Authorized Health Care Provider (AHCP).
2. The athlete's health and well-being is his/her primary concern. If there is an issue outside of his/her areas of expertise, he/she will recommend that the athlete see a physician.
3. The ATC's judgment on an injury will only be overruled by a physician. A parent nor a coach can clear an athlete to play if the ATC has determined them not well enough to participate.
4. The ATC will keep a written record for anyone that requires extensive treatment or rehabilitation so that we can keep track of progress for those athletes.
5. Athletic Trainers are provided through Pivot Physical Therapy.

Sports Booster Club

www.boonsboroboosters.com

Boonsboro High School's Sports Booster Club exists to support all teams and the entire athletic program. Our Booster Club has three primary goals: To raise funds to assist the athletic programs, to increase school spirit, and to encourage and promote good sportsmanship.

The Booster Club is not a vehicle to remove coaches, advance vested interests, or to alter Athletic Department policy and cannot do so. It is a service and support organization, which works in harmony with Boonsboro High School and its athletic program.

The athletic director and BHS administration serve as the liaisons between the club and the school. They also serve as advisors to the club. All requests for purchases come through the athletic director who determines their priority. Consideration of requests is given to the budget, strategic plan, and an overriding belief that any purchase should help the total athletic program and not a single team. No individual coach or team should directly approach the Booster Club without working through the athletic director.

Booster Meetings will be held the second Tuesday of the Month in the Boonsboro High School Media Center starting at 7pm. It is requested that each team have a parent representative attend each meeting.

Parent-Athlete Handbook

I have read and understand the rules and expectations of Boonsboro High School as outlined in this handbook.

_____ Name of Athlete	_____ Sport
_____ Parent/Guardian Signature	_____ Date
_____ Parent/Guardian Signature	_____ Date

Upon review of this document: Please complete signature page on sports website registration site: www.familyid.com Boonsboro High.