

PHILOSOPHY

The Brandywine Heights Area School District believes that the purpose of an interscholastic athletic program is to provide learning experiences that will contribute to the personal, physical, and psychological development of the individual student-athlete. These learning experiences will be consistent with the educational goals of the Brandywine Heights Area School District and will complement its academic program.

The Brandywine Heights Area School District interscholastic athletic program is both voluntary and competitive and will be designed to meet the needs of student-athletes. In order to participate, students must be physically healthy, academically qualified, and willing to make a significant personal commitment to maximize the development of their knowledge, skills, and attitudes relative to the particular sport.

All athletic teams will operate under the leadership and supervision of an effective coaching staff committed to accomplishing the educational goals of the school system. Members of the coaching staff will employ safe and educationally sound techniques designed to actively promote the development of the student-athlete as a whole person. Also, coaches will be expected to continually improve their coaching techniques through participation in appropriate professional development programs.

The school administration, especially the athletic director and the principals, will provide a supportive environment for the coaches and athletes at all levels. All district administrators are committed to the philosophy stated herein.

The interscholastic athletic program will be increasingly competitive as students progress from the middle school through the junior varsity to the varsity levels. The earlier levels will serve as developmental programs for the more advanced levels. Team goals will reflect these goals. Varsity coaches will work with junior varsity and middle school coaches to coordinate the developmental aspects of the program in each particular sport.

At the middle school level of interscholastic competition, coaches will place a strong emphasis on instruction and on maintaining sufficient levels of participation in that sport to allow the individual student athlete to develop his/her athletic potential. Participation and development of skills in a sport will be valued above the winning of contests. The needs of the team would be balanced with the developmental needs of the individual team members. The number of participants accepted for membership on a team, however, must support this commitment to high levels of instruction and participation.

At the junior varsity level, instruction and the development of individual skills for all athletes will continue to be emphasized. However, team success in inter-school competition will also be valued. Athletes will become increasingly aware of the importance of teamwork and a positive attitude toward team success. The number of athletes selected for the team will allow the coaches not only to instruct and assist the participants in their individual development but also to teach teamwork as an important factor in interscholastic competition.

At the varsity level of interscholastic competition, coaches will have the dual responsibility of fostering individual skill development and achieving team success. To achieve this end, the most effective student-athletes as judged by the coaching staff, regardless of grade level, will be given the opportunity to further develop their athletic abilities and to participate at the most advanced levels of interscholastic athletic competition. Coaching emphasis will be placed on helping the members of the team to work together and to develop a strong desire to attain the highest possible levels of team success.

Many Brandywine Heights Area School District student-athletes participate at the interscholastic levels after going through the various athletic associations in the District which act as a feeder program for the

middle school and high school athletic teams. Coaches are encouraged to acknowledge and work in cooperation with all athletic associations and clubs within the District.

Although success and training students in a sense of fair play are important, they are only part of the training provided to the young men and women who attend Brandywine Heights Area School District. The Brandywine Heights athletic program will focus its efforts on the development of each individual student as a person within the context of a sense of fair play and a good won-lost record.

GUIDELINES FOR STUDENT-ATHLETES

Jurisdiction

The “Guidelines for Student-Athletes” have been approved by the Brandywine Heights administration and the Board of School Directors and shall apply to any actions, on and off school premises, in season and out of season. Failure to adhere to any school or team regulation may result in BOTH school and team penalties. The extent of discipline will depend on the degree of the infraction. These policies are not all-inclusive and are intended as a guideline for student-athlete behavior. All situations are subject to review by the proper administrative channels. Students should note that participation in athletics is not a guaranteed right, but a privilege that is earned in part through good citizenship and good academics.

PIAA Policies

All secondary schools of the Brandywine Heights Area School District are members of the Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association (PIAA) and subscribe to the philosophy and intent of its by-laws. The PIAA by-laws that pertain to age, awards, attendance, health, transfers and residence, participation, representation, curriculum and seasonal rules will be followed. Copies of the PIAA policies can be found in the athletic office.

Sportsmanship

1. Student-athletes must keep in mind that their personal conduct will be a representation of the Brandywine Heights Area School District.
2. Student-athletes must always show respect for authority and property.
3. Teams must emphasize the ideals of loyalty, ethical conduct and fair play.
4. Any display of unsportsmanlike behavior toward an opponent, coach, official or spectator during the season will result in possible suspension from the team.

Academic Eligibility

1. To be eligible for interscholastic athletics, a student must pursue a curriculum defined and approved by the principal as a full-time curriculum.
2. Eligibility shall be cumulative from the beginning of a grading period and shall be reported on a weekly basis.
3. The academic reporting period will be from 8:00am on Mondays to 3:00pm on Thursdays.
4. If an athlete fails two or more courses on the weekly report, he/she will be ineligible to participate in contests for a period of one week.
5. If the head coach consents, an ineligible athlete may practice providing he/she attends daily tutoring sessions. If the ineligible athlete does not attend tutoring or no tutoring sessions are offered on a particular day, the athlete may not practice that day.
6. The weekly ineligibility period begins on Sunday and continues through the following Saturday.
7. If an athlete fails two or more courses for a marking period, he/she will be ineligible to participate in contests for the first 15 school days of the next marking period.
8. Athletes who drop a course and have an average grade of “F” will be required to carry that failure toward eligibility for the remainder of the school term.
9. Senior student-athletes must successfully meet each benchmark in the Senior Project in order to remain eligible for athletic participation. Seniors that fail to do so will be ineligible to participate in contests for a period of one week. Senior Project progress will be monitored on a weekly basis.

10. Athletes who enroll for the first time must comply with the requirements of the curriculum rules. The standing required for the preceding grading period or previous year shall be obtained from the records of the last school which the student has attended.
11. At the end of the school year, the student's final grades shall be used to determine his/her eligibility for the next grading period. A student who attends summer school to correct deficiencies shall be eligible.

Insurance

1. The school district does not carry insurance to cover student athletic injuries.
2. Athletes must either purchase insurance through the school or verify that they are covered by a family insurance plan prior to athletic participation.

Attendance

1. Student-athletes are expected to attend all classes on the day of a contest and the next school day following the contest. Habitual or unexcused absence before or after a contest may result in suspension from the team.
2. If a student is absent from school for the entire day, the student may not practice or participate in athletics that day.
3. If a student leaves school before the end of the day due to illness (and does not return), the student may not practice or participate in athletics that day.
4. Athletes must be in school by 7:34am for high school athletes and 8:15am for middle school athletes on the day of a practice or a contest. Athletes arriving after the start of school must provide a school sanctioned excuse in order to participate in a practice or a contest.
*Athletes arriving after 11:00am will only be allowed to participate in a practice or a contest with an exempt excuse, which is explained in the student handbook.
5. If a game is played on a Saturday, the student must be in school the preceding Friday.
6. No student shall practice or participate in athletics during any period of suspension. If a suspension ends on a Friday, the athlete will not be eligible until Monday.
7. Team members are expected to be present at all practices, team meetings, contests, and special occasions unless excused by the head coach.
8. Any exception to the attendance rules must have prior approval of athletic director or principal.

Hazing

1. The Brandywine Heights Area School District does not allow any acts of hazing or rights of initiation.
2. Students found in violation will be subject to removal from interscholastic athletics and face suspension and/or expulsion.

Transportation

1. Participants are required to use school transportation to & from all athletic events.
 - a. Only under extenuating circumstances will this regulation be waived.
 - b. A written note from the parent/guardian must be given to the head coach prior to a student being excused from school transportation.
 - c. Students may only leave with a parent/guardian.
2. All school bus rules are in effect during transportation to & from athletic events.

Substance Abuse

1. The use and/or possession of alcohol, other drugs and steroids are a violation of school rules and a violation of the law. Furthermore, medical research clearly indicates that use of mood modifying substances produce harmful effects on the human body.
2. If a student is found possessing, using or under the influence of illegal drugs or narcotics, alcohol, or any other foreign substance that provides a mood modification he/she will be suspended from athletic participation. Penalties will be assessed as follows:

- a. First violation- The student will be suspended from participation for minimum of 25% of the scheduled contests in the sport in which the student is a participant. If the penalty cannot be fully administered during that sport season, or a student is not “in-season”, the remainder of the penalty will be applied to the next interscholastic sport season in which the student participates. The student will also be referred to the Student Assistance Program in accordance with school policy. If the student follows the recommendation of the SAP team, the student suspension may be reduced to 15%.
 - b. Second violation- The student will be immediately suspended from athletic activities for a period of one school year. The student will also be referred to the Student Assistance Program in accordance with school policy.
 - c. Third violation- The student will be suspended from athletic participation for the remainder of his/her secondary school career.
3. If a student is found selling or providing drugs, narcotics or alcohol, he/she will forfeit the privilege of athletic participation for the remainder of the school year.

Tobacco

The PIAA prohibits the use of tobacco products by participating and non-participating team personnel, including coaches, during any level of interscholastic competition.

Civil Law Infraction

1. A student that has committed a civil law infraction will be suspended from all co-curricular activities for a period of thirty (30) school days.
2. Upon the end of the suspension period, with administrative recommendation, the student may be allowed to resume co-curricular activities.
3. If the infraction occurs while an athlete is in season, he/she will be removed from the team roster and will forfeit any awards earned for that particular sport.

General Regulations

1. All athletes are required to have a physical examination **before** participating in interscholastic activities. No athlete may practice until physical requirements are met.
2. No athlete may quit one sport and try out for another sport after the season has begun without the mutual consent of both coaches.
3. Any athlete who comes out for a team during the season must have five (5) days of practice before they can compete in a contest. This is to ensure the general health and well being of the student and allow the athletic department time to validate his/her eligibility.
4. Equipment and uniforms are issued to student-athletes on a loan basis. If any of the equipment is not returned at the conclusion of the season, an obligation will be issued to the student for the fair cost of replacing it. Until the obligation is resolved, the student will not receive report cards and will not be permitted to participate in any future athletic season.
5. Student-athletes must secure all valuables in their locker. Valuables should be left at home.
6. The District cannot be responsible for lost or stolen articles.
7. Vacations by athletic team members during a sport season are discouraged. In the event of and unavoidable absence due to a vacation, an athlete must contact the head coach prior to the vacation and be willing to assume any team consequences related to his/her absence.
8. Individual coaches may develop additional rules and regulations specific to their program (but still consistent with District policies). Athletes will be required to adhere to the additional policies as well. Copies of these rules will be approved by the athletic director & principal prior to the start of the sport season and kept on file in the Athletic Office.
9. Student-athletes are encouraged to maintain their physical conditioning in the off-season by utilizing appropriate cardiovascular and strength training principles.

Penalties/Due Process

1. A student-athlete may be suspended or removed from a team, if he or she is found to be in violation of school or team policies.
 2. A student and his/her parents shall be given notice of a coach's intention and justification to suspend/remove the athlete.
 3. The student and his/her parents have the right to an informal hearing before the coach to review the charges. The request for an informal hearing must be made within two (2) days of the discipline notification.
 4. If the coach decides to continue with the suspension/removal, the student has the right to appeal the action to the athletic director and principal within five (5) days of the informal hearing.
- In the event that a student is removed from a team for disciplinary reasons, he or she may not tryout for another team that same season.

TEAM SELECTION/TRYOUTS

It is the philosophy of the Brandywine Heights Athletic department to provide opportunities for as many athletes as possible to participate in the programs. However, it may be necessary to limit the number of participants in an effort to offer the most worthwhile experience for everyone involved. If there are too many student-athletes on any given team, no one will receive the individual instruction they need and deserve.

Therefore, coaches are permitted to "cut" when necessary. Coaches that intend to hold "tryouts" will:

- a. Discuss their intentions with the athletic director prior to tryouts.
- b. Provide a written copy of the selection process, including criteria to all athletes involved.
- c. Maintain accurate records of observation during each practice session.
- d. Provide sufficient observation opportunities for each athlete over the duration of tryouts to fairly compare candidates.
- e. Personally inform athletes that have been cut from the team.
- f. Provide an opportunity for "face to face" discussions between players not selected and the coaching staff.
- g. Refrain from posting a list of name of students who have not made the team.
- h. Encourage these athletes not selected to try out for the team again next season.
- i. Provide a list students that are cut to the athletic director as soon as tryouts are concluded.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

1. Principals are responsible for the decision to cancel school activities. Activities include athletic events & practices, plays, concerts, field trips, meetings, rehearsals, shows, clubs, co-curricular events, etc.
2. Principals are also responsible for notification of parents and students if an event is cancelled. Principals may use district codes to notify radio and television stations of cancellations.
3. If an event is held during inclement weather and custodians are not on duty, principals should notify Bob Kripplebauer if snow removal is required. All decisions for weekend events should involve Mike Wetzel and/or Bob Kripplebauer.
4. Cancellation of school usually results in cancellation of all school activities (including athletic practices and contests).
5. Principals do have the authority to hold an activity when school is cancelled if weather conditions improve. **Coaches may not assume this authority. They must receive verbal confirmation from either the principal or athletic director before activities may be held.**
6. During times when the principal is not available to make a decision prior arrangements should be made to identify an alternate person to make the decision.
7. Principals must be aware of all activities involving their students so that appropriate action can be taken in a timely manner.

HOME SCHOOL STUDENTS

1. District students receiving home school education may participate in athletics after obtaining permission from the building principal.
2. Home school student-athletes must obtain a physical examination prior to athletic participation.
3. The home school instructor must report academic eligibility to the athletic office no later than 11:00am each Thursday.
4. Home school student-athletes are responsible for their own transportation to and from school for practice sessions and contests.
5. Home school student-athletes must ride the bus to away contests.
6. Home school student-athletes must adhere to the same policies as all other student-athletes.

MALES ON FEMALE ATHLETIC TEAMS

Due to the fact that the general physical size, speed and power of male athletes could create a hazard to the health and safety of female participants, the Brandywine Heights Area School District prohibits male participation on the following teams:

Girls' Field Hockey
Girls' Tennis
Girls' Volleyball
Girls' Basketball
Girls' Softball
Girls' Soccer

HAZING

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to maintain a safe, positive environment for student and staff that is free from hazing. Hazing activities of any type are inconsistent with the educational goals of the district and are prohibited at all times.

Definition

For purposes of this policy hazing is defined as any activity that recklessly or intentionally endangers the mental health, physical health or safety of students for the purpose of initiation or membership in or affiliation with any organization recognized by the Board.

Endangers the physical health shall include but not be limited to any brutality of a physical nature, such as whipping; beating; branding; forced calisthenics; exposure to the elements; forced consumption of any food, alcoholic beverage, drug, or controlled substance; or other forced physical activity that could adversely affect the physical health or safety of the individual.

Endangers the mental health shall include any activity, that would subject an individual to extreme mental stress, such as prolonged sleep deprivation, forced prolonged exclusion from social contact, forced conduct, forced conduct which could result in extreme embarrassment, violation of school policies and rules, or any other forced activity which could adversely affect the mental health or dignity of the individual.

Any hazing activity, whether by an individual or a group, shall be presumed to be a forced activity, even if a student willingly participates.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Purpose

The Board recognizes the value of maintaining an environment that is free of sexual harassment and provides the opportunity for students and employees to achieve at their highest level.

Definition

For purposes of this policy, any action, verbal or physical, and including touching or verbal suggestions in its slightest or subtlest form, as well as written, pictorial or other forms which have sexual overtones and molestation shall be considered under the definition of sexual harassment.

Unwelcome sexual advances, molestation, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal and physical conduct of a sexual nature constitutes sexual harassment when: 1) submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's education or employment; 2) submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for educational or employment decisions affecting such individual; or 3) such conduct has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with an individual's education or work performance, or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational or working environment.

Delegation of Responsibility

The Board directs the Superintendent to assure that any accusations of sexual harassment are reviewed using the following guidelines:

1. This policy shall apply to all students and employees of the District.
2. The District will act positively to investigate alleged claims and to effectively remedy them when an allegation is determined to be valid.
3. Any person who feels that he/she has been sexually harassed is responsible for reporting any act of harassment directly to their principal or supervisor. In the event that a student or employee is unable to talk to the principal or supervisor, he/she should report the incident to the Superintendent.
4. These reports shall be submitted in writing and should identify:
 - a. the name of the complainant
 - b. the nature of the improper conduct
 - c. the perpetrator
 - d. the date(s), time(s) and place(s) of improper conduct
 - e. any witnesses
 - f. the remedial action sought
5. The Superintendent or his designee will investigate each complaint, impose discipline where appropriate, and report back to the complainant.
6. Complaints not resolved by the Superintendent can be appealed to the Board of Education. Legitimate interest of confidentiality should be protected.

AWARD GUIDELINES

Middle School Awards

First season	Participation Certificate
Second season	Participation Certificate
Subsequent seasons	Participation Certificate

High School Awards

Junior Varsity:

First season	Participation Certificate
Second season	Participation Certificate and Felt Letter
Third season	Participation Certificate

Varsity:

First season	Varsity Certificate and Chenille Letter
Subsequent seasons	Varsity Certificate and pin
Third season in the same sport	Plaque
Fourth season in the same sport	Watch
12 varsity letters in 4 years	Commemorative Plaque

In order to be eligible to receive a varsity award, the athlete must attend 90% of all practices and play in a minimum amount of varsity contests. Listed below are the designated minimums:

Baseball	50% of the innings (Pitchers-25% of the innings)
Basketball	50% of the quarters
Cheerleading	90% of the games and must be named to the "varsity" squad
Field Hockey	50% of the halves
Golf	50% of the matches
Soccer	50% of the halves
Softball	50% of the innings
Tennis	50% of the matches
Volleyball	50% of the games
Wrestling	50% of the matches and must earn as many points as bouts wrestled in.

1. Varsity status is awarded upon recommendation by the head coach at the conclusion of each season. The head coach has the authority to deny letter awards if an athlete did not fully complete the season, broke team rules, displayed poor sportsmanship or represented his/her school in a dishonorable manor.
2. Exceptions to the minimum criteria can be made in extenuating circumstances (i.e. injury). Such decisions are left to the discretion of the coaching staff.
3. Injured athletes that are unable to complete the sport season, should dress for contests and remain part of the team if they wish to be considered for varsity status. Coaches should communicate this information to their injured athletes.
4. Seniors who have been on the team for three or more years may be eligible for a letter if recommended by the coach.
5. Team managers shall receive a varsity award after serving two years with the recommendation of the head coach.