

## Athletic Policy and Expectations

**The Blue Hill School supports a variety of sports programs for students to extend their interest beyond the regular academic program. Our sports programs allow for a wide range of levels and allow for flexible grouping based on changing program needs. The BHCS staff members encourage broad participation among students in our athletic programs, and recognizes and values the tenets of the Association for Middle Level Education, acknowledging that “all students who want to participate and are willing to make the commitment necessary for team membership should be allowed to participate in interscholastic sports at the middle school. An exclusive interscholastic program (cutting) has no place at the middle school since it contradicts the very tenets on which the middle school was founded. A variety of policies can be implemented to overcome any and all obstacles related to achieving this goal.”\*\*** Students and families should understand that like all extra-curricular programs, participation in athletics is a privilege earned by abiding by the policies and expectations outlined in this policy.

### Goals of the BHCS Athletic Program

- To develop individual and team responsibility
- To reinforce sportsmanship: personal integrity and a sense of fair play
- To encourage athletes to achieve and improve
- To teach basic physical skills
- To improve socialization, self-esteem, self-perception and psychological well-being
- To keep sports fun for kids and establish the basis for a healthy lifestyle and lifelong commitment to physical activity

### Interscholastic Sports

We offer the following interscholastic sports: Baseball, Softball, Girls and Boys Basketball, Cheerleading, Cross Country, Track, and Soccer. We offer clinics for soccer, basketball, gymnastics, and baseball/softball. Athletes may participate in only one interscholastic sport at a time.

### Safety

The Blue Hill Consolidated School Committee recognizes that extra-curricular activities may create certain safety risks; therefore, the following procedures have been adopted.

- A. Coaches will be provided with a list of students who have physical conditions that may create an emergency situation prior to the season (i.e. allergies, asthma, epilepsy, etc.) Coaches will also be provided necessary medical supplies to respond to minor injuries and must take them to each practice and game. Coaches are encouraged to take first aid or other training that will help them cope with emergencies that arise. Coaches will attend a preseason clinic on how to handle blood and body fluid spills.

- B. Coaches may not play athletes who have been injured until a medical doctor and/or parents have approved his/her return in writing. Parents will be asked to sign a form indicating responsibility for further injury.
- C. See concussion policy for additional safety guidelines.

### **Policies, Rules, and Expectations**

As well as the policies and rules that apply to all BHCS students, there are policies, rules, and expectations that pertain specifically to students who are participating in an interscholastic sport, as follows:

#### **Uniforms**

Team uniforms checked out by the student athlete are his or her responsibility. Athletes are expected to keep all uniforms clean and in good condition. It is the athlete's responsibility to pay for lost or carelessly damaged uniforms.

#### **Missing Practice**

Athletes are expected to attend all practices and games.

- In the case of doctor appointments, illness or emergencies the athlete or athlete's parents should notify the coach as soon as possible.
- Students who face a conflict of obligations with other extra-curricular activities have a responsibility to communicate with coaches and extra-curricular leaders to work out a plan.

A student athlete will not be penalized for an excused absence or extra-curricular conflict, given proper communication.

#### **Absence from School**

Students absent from school due to illness for all or part of a day, may not participate in the next game or practice without a written explanation from a parent or physician and the support of the principal and athletic director.

#### **Travel**

Students traveling on a bus to an away game are expected to travel to the game and return home on the bus. Students are expected to dress appropriately. Students may return home with a parent or guardian only if the coach has been notified in writing at the game or meet. Athletes must remain with their team and under the supervision of the coach when attending away games. BHCS bus rules and expectations should be followed. Coaches are expected to supervise their athletes until parents pick them up.

#### **Eligibility Requirements**

- Parent permission
- Physical examination: Students who wish to participate in middle school athletics grades (5-8) at Blue Hill Consolidated School are required to have a **physical examination no later than October 1st**. Physical exams must be submitted prior to participation once every two years. A student athlete will not

be allowed to participate in practice or in competition without the required physical exam and medical approval after October 1st. The cost of the physical is the responsibility of the parents.

- Academic standing: An athlete must meet academic and behavior eligibility requirements outlined in Policy 6500.
- Behavior: An athlete disciplined for serious misbehavior or on suspension will not be eligible to practice or play for the duration of the suspension.
- Mandatory pre-season meeting: An athlete and/or parent must attend the mandatory preseason meeting in order to participate in a sport.
- Athletes are expected to adhere to all coach-established rules and regulations. Coaches will establish rules and regulations prior to the sports season and present them to students and parents. Failure to meet expectations may result in discipline and/or exclusion from extra-curricular activities.

In addition to all written eligibility rules, or for situations not covered by policy, the athletic director and administration reserve the right to determine eligibility.

### **Eliminating and Tryouts**

Currently, in soccer, cross country, basketball, softball, baseball, track, and cheering teams student athletes are not eliminated based on specific numbers of participants. However, students are placed on the team that the coach and AD believe will best meet the student's needs. This means that every student who meets the eligibility criteria and attends tryouts is given an opportunity to participate on a team or in a clinic experience.

- Students are placed on teams using a list of criteria provided by the coach prior to the first day of tryouts. For example, "The student must be able to make a lay-up."
- Tryouts must last for at least 2 practice sessions to ensure that students have adequate time to demonstrate their skills.
- The coach will keep accurate data on how each student's skills compare with the criteria.
- The coach will tell students individually, at the end of the tryout sessions which team or clinic is the best fit according to the criteria used at tryouts.

### **Team Structure**

For soccer and basketball, teams will be structured as follows:

#### *Varsity or Coastal*

Students participating on the Coastal team are expected to attend 4 games or practices a week. The Coastal team plays some local varsity teams (i.e.: Bay School, Penbrook, Surry) and travels to schools on Mt. Desert Island to play varsity teams that are similar in age and ability (i.e.: Pemetic, Trenton, Tremont, MDES, Bar Harbor). The instructional focus is to learn to play competitively. Roster spots on the Coastal team are filled with 7th and 8th grade players based on the criteria used at tryouts.

#### *Varsity or Peninsula*

Students participating on the Peninsula team are expected to attend 4 games or practices a week. The Peninsula team plays local varsity teams (i.e.: Sedgwick, Castine, Penbrook, Brooklin, Surry) and travels to schools on Mt. Desert to play junior varsity teams that are similar in age and ability (i.e.: Tremont, MDES, Bar Harbor). The instructional focus is to practice skills in game situations. Roster spots on the Peninsula team are filled with 8th, 7th, and 6th grade players first based on the criteria used at tryouts.

*Students may choose to play on the Peninsula team unless the coach and AD decide this is not an inappropriate placement.*

#### *Junior Varsity or Clinic*

Students participating on the Clinic team are expected to attend practices 3 times a week. The instructional focus is to learn the basics of the sport before being put into a game situation. Roster spots on the Clinic team may be filled with students in grades 3/5. Students in grades 6 and 7 may volunteer to take the clinic if they have not had the opportunity to learn basic skills earlier in their school years.

#### **Team Size Guidelines**

The coach, AD and principal will agree on how the teams will be filled based on the number of interested players. We will strive to find a team that best meets the needs of each of our athletes.

The AD and principal will assess each season the level of interest and general age and ability levels of the athletes and make recommendations to the Board if altering the Team Structure or Team Size Guidelines is the best way to meet the needs of the BHCS athletes.

#### **Sport**

	Coastal	Peninsula	Clinic
Soccer	22	22	36
Cross Country/Track	22		
Basketball	12	12	36
Baseball/Softball	15		36
Cheering	12		

#### **Playing Time**

All varsity (Coastal) players can expect playing time in all regular season games and significant playing time over the course of the season.

All junior varsity (Peninsula) players can expect approximately equal playing time over the course of the season.

The AD will schedule games with teams at varying ability levels to enable coaches to meet the playing time needs of all students.

#### **Miscellaneous**

The AD and coaches will schedule practices to make best use of the school facilities and fields with priority of letting younger students practice earlier.

## **Parent-Coach Communications**

*You should expect your child's coach to keep you informed about:*

- The time and place of games
- The expectations for athletes on the team, and your child in particular
- Participation requirements: fees, equipment
- Any injury your child suffers while participating
- Any discipline your child receives

*You are encouraged to talk to your child's coach about:*

- Your child's skills improvement and development
- Concerns about your child's behavior

*You should avoid talking to your child's coach about:*

- Playing time
- Team strategy
- Other student athletes

Coaches expect you as parents to:

- Notify the coach of schedule conflicts well in advance.
- Support the program
- Ensure your child attends practices on time
- Support your child in being well prepared for games and practices

If you have concerns about a coach, please follow these steps:

- Speak directly to the AD
- The AD may then arrange a meeting with the coach to resolve issues
- The AD will work with you and the coach to find a resolution.

\*\* Position statement by The National Association for Sport and Physical Education's (NASPE) Middle and Secondary School Physical Education Council (MASSPEC).

Amended: August 14, 2013