

# Athletic Handbook



## Bartlett Bulldogs & Lassies

*“Above the Line”*

**--ELITE--**

## **Acknowledgement Page**

Upon Review of the Bartlett ISD Athletic Handbook for 2019-2020, please complete the information below, sign and return this page to the District Athletic Director.

I have accessed/read the Bartlett ISD Athletic Handbook for 2019-2020 and will abide by the guidelines and procedures of the Bartlett ISD District.

I understand I can review a hard copy of this document on my campus or in the Bartlett ISD Athletic Department.

My signature certifies that I have reviewed the Bartlett ISD Athletic Handbook for 2019-2020

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(Print Name)

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(Your Signature)

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(Date)

# ATHLETIC HANDBOOK

## PROGRAM VISION

The purpose of the athletic program is to develop Above the Line behavior by teaching a non-negotiable culture designed for continuous growth towards character, integrity, leadership, and work ethic. The athletic program will represent the school district in the way the administration expects of all teachers, coaches, students, and student-athletes. When student-athletes graduate they will be able to utilize Above the Line behaviors in order to be exceptional leaders, employees, spouses, parents, and community members.

## PROGRAM MISSION

The athletic program will strive for competitive excellence in all aspects of the student-athletes' lives while maintaining the high standard of character reflective of our great school district. We will be trained to be elite leaders and competitors among our competition, and we will equip all student-athletes with all the tools necessary to successfully lead and win in every area of athletics.

- **ELITE:** Being the best version of yourself; Be better today than you were yesterday and better tomorrow than you were today.
- **ABOVE THE LINE BEHAVIORS:**

Above the Line: Intentional, On Purpose, Skillful

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Below the Line: Impulsive, On Autopilot, Resistant

## ATHLETIC HANDBOOK

Bartlett ISD supports the philosophy that a quality interscholastic athletic program is vital to the positive social, physical, and educational development of students. The interscholastic athletic program enhances and supports the academic mission of the school system. We are committed to promoting the proper ideals of sportsmanship, ethical conduct, and fair play at all athletic contests. We support high standards of good citizenship and propriety, along with regard for the rights of others.

Being a member of the interscholastic program is a privilege to be earned and maintained throughout the season. Each time participants step into a school or onto the practice field and anytime they participate in a game they are expected to represent themselves, family, team and school in a responsible, sportsmanlike manner.

It is our responsibility to provide challenging opportunities for our student-athletes to compete successfully at the local, district, and state levels.

In addition to embracing and committing to this philosophy, at Bartlett ISD, we will also encourage and promote:

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

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.

There are many relationships which are involved in being the parent of an athlete.

### **The Player-Coach Relationship:**

Unfortunately, through televised games and the more recent proliferation of sporting channels, many adults feel that they understand or perhaps know more than many coaches. Everyone becomes an expert. While this new found expertise may heighten your appreciation of a sport as a parent; however, you are not the coach.

The player-coach relationship is perhaps the most critical relationship in athletics. Fortunately, 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 decided effect upon your child.

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

Receiving technical or strategic instruction at home may interfere and conflict with the instructional process at practice sessions and games. This may ultimately impede your son's/daughter's progress and affect their playing time or whether they win a starting position.

The coach(es) of the sport will decide how and what to practice and will also determine who plays where and when. Please respect this decision and remember that the coach(es) have a responsibility to the team and athletic program as a whole.

### **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/her but an athlete can have only one coach. Allowing the coach to instruct and guide the team is crucial in many respects.

Should you have any questions or concerns, do not approach the coach immediately at the conclusion of a contest. At this time, coaches have many 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.

One of the responsibilities that 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. Coaches have the ability to eliminate a player's communication during an event if they feel it is necessary. Please respect this decision and allow the coach to do his/her job as the instructor.

### **The Parent-Player Relationship:**

Some parents may try to live through their child's athletic efforts. Being positive and supportive is important, but adding pressure and unrealistic expectations can be extremely harmful. Allow your son/daughter to enjoy and grow from this valuable experience. In numerous national studies, it has been determined that most athletes participate for enjoyment and 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/her play, how many points they scored or if they started. Instead, first ask how the team did? Did your son/daughter play hard, give 100% 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. All officials are assigned by the assignor for that sport and neither team has control of 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. It is also important to understand that they are a very necessary part of the game. A contest cannot be played without them.

So while you may not agree with all of their calls, 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 directors, and schools often work hard to establish a rapport and good working relationship which can easily be damaged by spectators.

### **Spectator-Cheerleader Relationship:**

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 who leave the stands to direct cheers may often cause or lead to confrontations with the opponents. Following the cheerleader's directions, therefore, is 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.

### **Athletic Chain of Command:**

At Bartlett ISD, there is a chain of command that is in effect. Players and parents go to ask questions in this order. Start first with:

Coach; then Head Coach; District Athletic Director; then Superintendent.

If there becomes a need for a formal complaint, Level I grievance forms can be picked up from the district administration office and a Level I meeting will be held with the Athletic Director.

### **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 sport and for all others-players, coaches, officials, and fans (National Federation News, March, 1995, p.10). It also involves a commitment to fair play, ethical behavior, and integrity. This means:

1. Taunting or trash talking of our opponents and their cheerleaders cannot be tolerated.
2. Spectators cannot leave the bleachers or enter onto the court or field during a contest.
3. Fans should be supportive and positive. Cheering should be done for our team and not against our opponent.
4. We should not impede or interfere with our opponent's cheerleaders from leading their cheers.
5. In some specific sports such as basketball, we should not yell while an opponent takes a foul shot.
6. There is to be no vulgar or inappropriate language from our fans or spectators.

### **Responsibilities of the Athlete:**

Coaches will 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. Financial/monetary consequences will be given for equipment that is damaged or lost within the athlete's control.
5. As a member of a team, an athlete must agree to and follow the team rules. Athletes need to remember they are ambassadors and represent not only themselves, but the coaching staff and the school. Consequences may be taken by coaches if any of the team rules and expectations are not followed. These consequences may also be applied to athletes' actions and decisions made outside of school and/or outside of the athletic realm if the actions are determined to have a negative impact on the teams and/or athletic program.
6. Athletes are required to complete all practice/workout requirements prior to participation in athletic events. Examples of these workouts include, but are not limited to: practice, conditioning, weight room, study halls. Make ups may be required by the coach to ensure all workouts have been completed. Failure to complete any of these requirements could result in partial or full suspension from one or multiple game.

7. Athletes who are in multiple sports at the same time are required to compete in the contests for all the sports where possible. Games/events take priority over practice and Varsity contests take priority over JV contests. If there are two athletic contests happening at the same time the athlete and coaches of each sport will determine which event the athlete will attend.
8. If injured, an athlete must report all injuries to the coach. This gives the coach a chance to contact the athletic trainer.
9. Continued participation in sport even if injured or ineligible.
10. In order for an athlete to receive any awards for the season, he or she must finish the current season. If a player quits, he or she will forfeit any awards which he or she would have been receiving.
11. It is also important for the athlete and his or her family to remember that as a senior a recognition night is held for each sport during the school year. Athletes will have paperwork sent home for the parent, it is very important that it is returned in a timely manner.

### **Responsibilities of a Coach:**

At Bartlett ISD, a coach has the responsibility for the following:

1. The selection of the team.
2. The determination of the style of play, including the offensive and defensive philosophy if appropriate for his or her sport.
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 establishing of consequences and make-ups on a case-by-case basis
8. The selection of team captains.
9. The establishing of the requirements to earn a letter.
10. The communication with athletes and parents with respect to when practice sessions will be held, and when the sessions will start and finish.

### **Participation on an Athletic Team:**

It is important to understand that participation on an athletic team at Bartlett ISD is a privilege and not a right. Being on and maintaining one's membership on the team means accepting all the responsibilities of an athlete. However, unlike recreation or intramural teams, equal and 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.

### **Criteria for Lettering:**

Earning a varsity letter is symbolic of an athlete's contribution to their varsity sport for that season. Being on a varsity team does not automatically allow an athlete to earn a varsity letter even if there is no JV team for that sport. Varsity lettering is ultimately at the Head Coach and Athletic Director's discretion.

1. Team Sports (Football, Volleyball, Boys & Girls Basketball, Softball, and Baseball): Athlete must play in 50% of the varsity district and/or playoff games for that season to be considered for a letter. Final lettering decisions will be made by the Head Coach and Athletic Director.

2. Individual Sports (Cross Country, Tennis, and Track): Athlete must point at the District Competition. Final lettering decisions will be made by the Head Coach and Athletic Director.

### **Team Captains:**

There may be 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. The existence of captains in a sport is ultimately decided upon by that sport's head coach.

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. This is also a responsibility that can be changed, redistributed, or removed at the discretion of the Head Coach.

### **Hazing:**

In athletic settings, some may view hazing as a harmless rite of initiation or an important activity for team bonding. However, it is actually a form of harassment.

Hazing, therefore, cannot and will not be condoned or permitted in the athletic program of Bartlett ISD. This means on the fields or courts, in the locker room, on the bus, or at any other activity in which athletes represent Bartlett ISD.

### **Choosing the Team:**

Every coach has the responsibility and authority for selecting the team. The criteria for selecting the team is developed by the coach.

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 team the following year. Having been a member of a Varsity team during the previous year or even being a senior does not ensure that an athlete will make the Varsity team again.

### **The Purpose of a JV Team:**

JV teams exist to provide those athletes unable to participate on the varsity team 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 team may enhance the athlete's potential to make the varsity team in the future.

A caution, however, must also be given. Being a member of a JV team does not guarantee that an athlete will automatically move up the following year to the varsity team. The athletes best suited for varsity competition will make the team 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 team. The development of athletes should be the ultimate purpose of a JV team while at the same time acknowledging the value of winning, learning, and enjoying being a member of a team.

### **Practice Sessions and Games:**

Practice sessions are normally 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 Bartlett ISD, practice sessions:

1. May last two or more hours.
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. May be held on Saturdays and over holiday periods.
4. Every athlete is expected to be at every practice unless they have permission from coach or there is an extreme emergency. In any case the athlete should contact their coach.

### **Fundraising:**

Whether to supplement the budget or to purchase additional discretionary items, fundraising in athletics has become increasingly important and in many cases necessary. At Bartlett ISD, fundraising by all organizations, including athletics, is organized and structured by the administration.

### **Risks of Athletic Participation:**

In spite of protective equipment, and the supervision and sound instruction by our coaches, there are some risks associated when someone participates in athletics. Injuries in some of our activities 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 Bartlett ISD, we will do all that we can to ensure a safe and healthy environment for our athletes. We do have insurance protection for our athletes. However, this insurance is designed to be a back-up to the family's insurance. Families are encouraged to secure insurance protection for your family members who are athletes.

If a student is injured, it is the responsibility of the student to visit the district's assigned trainer to secure an insurance form which must be filled out in order to file claims through the insurance carrier of the athletic department. If no form is on file, then no payments will be made by the carrier.

### **Travel Policy for Athletic Team Members:**

The Bartlett ISD policy on travel to athletic contests states:

All team members must travel as a group to and from all athletic contests. A team member may be released to the custody of a parent, and only a parent, at the conclusion of an away contest.

Any other exceptions to this mode of travel must be approved, in advance, by the athletic director and/or head coach.

The following procedures should be used:

1. A note from the parent or a form from the school district provided to the parent seeking permission for them to transport the athlete home after a contest must be received by the coach and approved by the Athletic Director or his designee. The form or note is required at least 24 hours prior to the date of the contest.
2. Written documentation from the parent/guardian only
3. Coaches/assigned supervisors must meet in person with the parent/guardian at the contest before the student will be released.
4. Violation of these procedures could result in additional consequences for the athlete including but not limited to extra physical activity and/or suspension from future contests.

## **Policy for Athletes Changing Teams**

Whether by being cut, by quitting, or by being dismissed, an athlete's membership on a team can be altered. While we at Bartlett ISD want to promote participation, we also want to safeguard fairness and an ethical approach with regard to all coaches and teams. In order to achieve all of the above objectives, the following guidelines will be used:

1. Any player dismissed from a squad must get the approval of the original coach before joining another team.
2. The Athletic Director will mediate all problems when an athlete changes teams.
3. Quitting
  - Participation in our athletic program requires commitment from start to finish of a season. If any athlete starts a sport and quits, he/she will not be allowed to start another sport for the remainder of the school year unless an arrangement has been made with the head coach of the sport the athlete is quitting and the Athletic Director. This arrangement can include, but is not limited to, additional physical activity in order to compete in the athlete's next sport, community service, not allowing participation in the athlete's next sport, or removal from all sports for the remainder of the school year. The times for these arranged activities can be before school, after school, or during an athletic period. The decision for when will be made by the Head Coach and the Athletic Director. Removal from an individual or multiple sports does not necessarily equate to removal from athletics.. If an athlete quits a sport or becomes ineligible before the season is completed, the athlete will not be awarded a letter or letter jacket for that sport. Any exemption to this rule must be appealed to the Athletic Director.

## **Post-Game/Practice Responsibilities:**

Student-athletes waiting and/or loitering on school grounds pose problems at Bartlett ISD. Risk of injury and property damage can possibly result from unsupervised gatherings. In part to address this issue, the following guidelines will be used:

1. The coach will be responsible to:
  - a. Call-in game results.
  - b. Supervise the locker room while athletes change.
  - c. Secure all equipment, locker rooms, and gymnasium.
  - d. Supervise until the last athlete's transportation has arrived and he/she leaves Bartlett ISD.
1. The athlete is responsible to:
  - a. Arrange for transportation for after practices and games in advance.
  - b. Leave the building and grounds within approximately one-half hour after the conclusion of a contest or practice session. Waiting, lounging, or "hanging out" on school property past this point is not permissible.

## **Future Athletics in College:**

If an athlete is planning on participating in college athletics, he or she should stop by the Office of the Dean of Students for information about the NCAA Clearinghouse application which must

be filled out for certain colleges in order to participate in athletics. There is a fee involved, but without this form finished a student possibly forfeits college eligibility.

**Closing Comments:**

Please feel free to call with comments concerning this handbook. It is an attempt to make parents more aware of vital information that the Athletic Department feels is important for you, the parent, to know. Hopefully, you will find it useful. You might also want to take a few minutes and share this handbook information with your son or daughter. Have a great season!!!!!!!!!!