

Boardman Local School District

High School Athletic Manual 2024 – 2025

A Commitment to Excellence for Parents and Student-Athletes

Message from the Administration

This handbook is being presented to you because your student desires to participate in interscholastic athletics in the Boardman Local School District. You have also expressed your willingness to permit your student to take part in a competitive sport. We appreciate the interest you have shown in our athletic program. We believe that participation in sports provides a wealth of opportunities and experiences that assist students in learning life skills, personal growth, and development.

The Boardman Local School District is interested in the development of young students through athletics. We feel that a properly controlled, well-organized sports program meets the needs for self-expression, mental alertness, and physical growth. It is our hope to maintain a program that is sound in purpose and will further each student's educational maturity.

Likewise, we believe you have committed yourselves to certain responsibilities and obligations as a parent/guardian of an athlete. We would like to take this opportunity to acquaint you with specific policies that are necessary to ensure a positive experience for your child.

It is the role of the athletic department to enforce rules governing interscholastic competition. These rules need broad-based community support to be fully effective and foster a successful athletic program. This is achieved only through communication between the athletic department and the parents/guardians of the athletes. It is our hope to accomplish this objective through this athletic handbook for students and parents.

Ultimately, students have no absolute right to participate in athletics and/or extracurriculars. These elements of our offerings are privileges, and students wishing to access these offerings must abide by the rules set forth in this document.

Go Spartans!

Christopher Neifer, Superintendent

Mark Zura, High School Principal

Jeff Hammerton, Athletic Director

Athletic Philosophy

The interscholastic athletic program shall be conducted in accordance with the existing Ohio High School Athletic Association and the Boardman Board of Education rules and regulations. While the Board of Education takes great pride in winning, it does not condone “winning at any cost”. Student-athletes are reminded that participating in athletics is a privilege, not a right. As such, it is imperative that student-athletes abide by the rules set forth in this document while both on and off school grounds, attending a school activity or event, or at a private event. Disciplinary action may result in suspension, expulsion, or removal from school or athletic activities in accordance with these regulations and those established by Ohio Revised Code.

Requirements for Participation

Student-athletes must:

1. Be in attendance (at least half of the school day) on the day of the contest/practice unless the absence is excused
2. Comply with district mandatory drug testing policy
3. Satisfy academic eligibility requirements
4. Submit the Pay-to-Participate fee
5. Return uniforms, equipment, and pay all fines
6. Attend the pre-season coach/athlete/parent meeting
7. Complete on FinalForms the following forms: OHSAA Physical Form, Emergency Medical Authorization Form, Sudden Cardiac Arrest Form, Concussion Form, Verification of Insurance Form, MRSA Form, Physical Education Waiver Form (if applicable), and Athletic Code of Conduct Form

Academic Eligibility

In order to be eligible, a student-athlete in grades 9, 10, 11, or 12 must be currently enrolled in the Boardman Local School District and have received passing grades in the equivalent of 5 credits (not classes) per year toward graduation during the immediately preceding grading quarter. Summer school grades earned do not count toward athletic eligibility (Reminder: Physical education only counts for $\frac{1}{4}$ credit). In addition, student-athletes must meet weekly academic eligibility as reported by their teachers during their season(s). For incoming 9th graders, in order to be eligible for the first grading period upon entrance into 9th grade, you must have received passing grades in a minimum of five classes in the immediately preceding grading quarter.

Definition of Terms

Duration of Policy

This policy is in effect year-round. Once a student-athlete signs a code of conduct, he/she is bound to the rules throughout all his/her years of high school. This policy applies to all student-athletes, regardless of whether they have turned 18 years of age.

Definition of Athletic Contests

Athletic contests are defined as regular/post-season games, meets, or matches where a score is calculated, and the final results are factored into the team or individual overall win/loss record. Scrimmages of any kind, Foundation Games, faculty games, and previews are not considered contests. Penalized contests will be served consecutively. When a game is cancelled or rescheduled, the penalized contest will adjust to reflect that change.

Timing of Penalties

Penalties will be completed in the current sport season, if possible, which includes both regular and post-season contests. If a penalty cannot be completed in the current season, which includes regular and post-season contests, then the penalty will carry over into the student-athlete's next sport season. The student-athlete must maintain membership on the team through the last regular season contest or the penalty will be assessed on the next sports season.

Prohibited Behaviors

1. Substance use: Alcohol, tobacco, nicotine, marijuana, hemp-derived compounds, vaping, nicotine-delivery systems, illegal drugs, prescription medications not prescribed to the athlete, paraphernalia associated with any of the substances, counterfeit substances represented as prohibited substances.
2. Hazing: Coercing another student, including the victim, to perform some act of initiation to another student or organization; permission, consent, or assumption of risk by the victim does not lessen this prohibition.
3. Violation of law and/or violation of school Student Code of Conduct
4. All other acts unbecoming of a Spartan student-athlete as determined by the administration. Acts or gestures which would be considered "unbecoming" are those that are rude, obscene, dangerous, immoral and/or in any way reflect poorly on Boardman Local Schools. (Reminder: This includes the inappropriate use of social media.)

Suspension Procedures

1. High school administration will conduct an investigation and gather information.
2. High school administration will issue the athletic suspension to the student-athlete and notify the parent(s)/guardian(s) of suspension.

3. Administration will inform Athletic Council (may include: Principal, Assistant Principal, Athletic Director & Coach) of the suspension and duration of the suspension.

(Student-athletes who receive an academic/school home suspension may also receive an athletic suspension.)

Appeal Process

1. Parent(s)/guardian(s) may appeal the athletic suspension. This appeal must be communicated to the high school administration within five days of the suspension being issued.
2. An appeal hearing will be set which allows parent(s)/guardian(s) an opportunity to present their concerns to the Athletic Council.
3. The Athletic Council will issue their decision and parent(s)/guardian(s) will be notified.
4. All decisions of the Athletic Council will be final.

Non-Substance Violations

Progressive Penalties

Penalties will be assigned as follows:

1st Offense **10% of the season**

2nd Offense **20% of the season**

(Student-athlete forfeits any athletic leadership position for one calendar year [365 days].)

3rd Offense **50% of the season**

(If penalties cannot be completed in the current sport season [regular and post-season contests], then the penalty will carry over into the student-athlete's next sport season. The student-athlete must maintain membership on the team through the last regular season contest, or the penalty will be assessed on the next sport season.)

Any additional infractions beyond third offense will result in immediate ineligibility for participation for a duration to be determined by administration.

A written warning with conditions may be an option for first time (cumulative) violations that are minor in nature as determined by administration. Such minor infractions would include situations when the student-athlete is present but not proven to be participating in a violation of the code of conduct. Written warning with conditions may not be an option in situations where the violation is also a violation of law.

Student-athletes are not to be present where violations of this code are taking place and should immediately remove themselves from such violating situations.

The administration reserves the right to ban student-athletes under investigation, charged with, and/or convicted of serious crimes from participation in any extra-curricular activity for a duration of time to be determined by administration.

Student Athlete Drug Testing Policy

Philosophy/Purpose

The Board of Education and administration believe that the use of prohibited substances by students who participate in athletics presents a particular hazard to the health and welfare of the student-athlete and those who compete with those student-athletes. We also believe that our student-athletes occupy a significant place in our community where they are admired and respected by many younger students who may be influenced by their actions. Therefore, the District is conducting a mandatory drug testing program for all high school student-athletes to help them make good life choices. **Student-athletes will be drug tested every school year.** We will help our student-athletes to say NO to drug use and YES to positive decisions. The District will also provide an opportunity for those taking drugs to receive help and intervention.

This policy is meant to deter the use of prohibited substances and not to be severely punitive in terms of disqualifying student-athletes from total participation. Accordingly, the results of any drug test administered under this policy shall be used for determination of eligibility to participate in high school sports programs.

Drug Testing Procedure

1. To try out for or to participate in an OHSAA sanctioned interscholastic sport, the student-athlete must read this policy and sign this form by which the student-athlete agrees that as a condition of participation in extracurricular activities, he/she will consent to the drug testing program outlined in this procedure. This consent form must also be signed (FinalForms) by the parents/guardians of the student-athlete at the beginning of the school year or prior to tryouts for a specific activity.
2. The drug test will be conducted by trained personnel via urine sample. This 5-panel protocol includes testing cocaine, opiates, marijuana, amphetamines including MDMA (ecstasy), and PCP. After initial mandatory drug testing, all student-athletes are subject to random drug testing.
3. If the student-athlete or his/her parents/guardians refuse to sign the consent form for substance abuse testing, the student-athlete will not be permitted to be a member of the activity until such consent form is signed. Additionally, if the student-athlete refuses to be tested or does not complete the test as instructed, the student-athlete will be considered in violation of this policy and automatically be ineligible as a student-athlete until testing is completed and results are negative.
4. Student-athlete must test drug free in order to begin participation.
5. If a student-athlete tests positive for banned substance(s), he/she is subject to the board adopted penalty as stated below.
6. In order to regain athletic eligibility, a student-athlete must participate in a drug intervention program as recommended by school officials and submit to a second school drug test at the expense of the parent/guardian. This test will be administered when deemed appropriate by administration and may be required prior to the student-athlete returning to competition.
7. If a student-athlete seeks assistance for a drug/alcohol problem through a self-referral to a coach/administrator and agrees to participate with a spirit of cooperation in a rehabilitation program approved by the school administration, the self-referral will not be considered a violation. This self-referral

option is a one time option for a student-athlete and must not be made in an attempt to circumvent an impending penalty and/or drug test as determined by the administration.

Student-athletes who fail a district drug test will be required to fulfill their penalty before becoming eligible. This may require that the penalty be completed the following school year. Violation of the drug policy is cumulative throughout the student-athlete's high school career.

Substance Violations

Progressive Penalties

Penalties will be assigned as follows:

1st Offense	20% of season
2nd Offense	50% of season
3rd Offense	Immediate ineligibility for participation for duration determined by administration.

Student-athletes must fulfill the 50% penalty from 2nd offense if not already fulfilled. Because this is a cumulative policy through the student-athlete's high school career; the student-athlete will remain at the 3rd offense level and be required to drug test (with clean results) every 90 days in order to earn 90 days of participation. These drug tests will be at parent/guardian expense. Student-athletes must follow all recommendations made by administration and guidance.

(If penalties cannot be completed in the current sport season [regular and post-season contests], then the penalty will carry over into the student-athlete's next sport season. The student-athlete must maintain membership on the team through the last regular season contest, or the penalty will be assessed on the next sport season.)

In addition to the above-mentioned penalties, the following additional penalties will be applied when the offense is a substance violation.

First Offense:

1. The student-athlete must follow all recommendations made by his/her school guidance counselor and, if applicable, the outside drug treatment facility in a spirit of cooperation. Any follow-up drug testing will be at parent/guardian expense until the student-athlete tests drug free. Student-athletes may be required to rest prior to returning to competition. Failure to follow ALL recommendations made by the school counselor will result in the athlete remaining ineligible.
2. The student-athlete will be required (also at parent/guardian expense) to complete a district drug test every 90 days until said test is passed. Failure to pass subsequent drug tests will be considered an offense. Upon passage, the student-athlete will then be placed into the random drug testing pool (at the district's expense) for the remainder of the school year.

3. Refusal to take any required drug test will be viewed as a failed test.
4. Refusal to follow school recommendations after receiving a positive test result will result in the student-athlete being ineligible from athletics for the remainder of that school year. Said student-athlete will be required to test again the following school year. This test will be at parent/guardian expense.

Second Offense:

1. The student-athlete must follow all recommendations made by his/her school guidance counselor and, if applicable, the outside drug treatment facility in a spirit of cooperation. Any follow-up drug testing will be at parent/guardian expense until the student-athlete tests drug free. Student-athletes may be required to rest prior to returning to competition. Failure to follow ALL recommendations made by the school counselor will result in the athlete remaining ineligible.
2. The student-athlete will be required (also at parent/guardian expense) to complete a district drug test every 90 days until said test is passed. Failure to pass subsequent drug tests will be considered an offense. Upon passage, the student-athlete will then be placed into the random drug testing pool (at the district's expense) for the remainder of the school year.
3. Refusal to take any required drug test will be viewed as a failed test.
4. Refusal to follow school recommendations after receiving a positive test result will result in the student-athlete being ineligible from athletics for the remainder of that school year. Said student-athlete will be required to test again the following school year prior to participation in athletics. This test will be at parent/guardian expense.

Third Offense:

1. The student-athlete must follow all recommendations made by his/her school guidance counselor and, if applicable, the outside drug treatment facility in a spirit of cooperation. Any follow-up drug testing will be at parent/guardian expense until the student-athlete tests clean. Student-athletes may be required to rest prior to returning to competition. Failure to follow ALL recommendations made by the school counselor will result in the athlete remaining ineligible.
2. The student-athlete will be required to complete a district drug test every 90 days at the parent/guardian expense through the remainder of the student-athlete's high school career. Once the student-athlete passes the drug screening, the student-athlete is eligible for athletic participation for 90 days after which time the student-athlete will be tested again for continued eligibility.
3. Student-athletes who fail the district drug test will remain ineligible for the entire 90 days. Student-athletes can regain eligibility if the drug test is passed after the 90 day period.
4. Refusal to take any required drug test will be viewed as a failed test.
5. Refusal to follow school recommendations after receiving a positive test result will result in the student-athlete being ineligible from athletics for the remainder of that school year. Said student-athlete will be required to test again the following school year prior to participation in athletics. This test will be at parent/guardian expense.

Sale and Distribution of Drugs/Alcohol/Chemical Substances

A student-athlete involved in the sale and/or distribution of any drug, alcohol, or chemical substance (ex. Nicotine) will be immediately removed from the particular sport(s) and recommended to the Athletic Council for permanent denial of athletic participation for the duration of the student-athlete's high school enrollment. (A student-athlete may, after one calendar year: appeal to the Athletic Council for re-consideration of this policy.)

Individual Sport Rule

Coaches may establish additional rules, regulations, and penalties that go beyond any identified in this code of conduct. Student-athletes and parent(s)/guardian (s) will be informed in writing before the season. These rules will be discussed at the mandatory preseason meeting and will be on file in the Athletic Director's office.

Table A:

SPORT	Total Contests	10%	20%	50%
Baseball	27	3	5	14
*Basketball	22	2	4	11
Bowling	24	2	5	12
Cheerleading - F	10	1	2	5
Cheerleading - W	22	2	4	11
Cross-Country	16	2	3	8
*Football	10	1	2	5
Golf	20	2	4	10
*Lacrosse	18	2	4	9
*Soccer	16	2	3	8
Softball	27	3	5	14
Swimming	16	2	3	8
Tennis	22	2	4	11
Track	16	2	3	8
Volleyball	22	2	4	11
*Wrestling	20 pts	2 pts	4 pts	10 pts

***These sports will determine remaining eligibility based on quarter/halves.**

Financial Obligations and Equipment

Athletic Fee – A \$50 athletic fee will be charged to each student-athlete per sport. Student-athletes who participate in multiple sports in a single season will not incur additional charges (example: a cross-country runner who plays soccer).

Uniforms – In some sports, student-athletes will be required to purchase a portion of the game uniform, which will become their property.

Equipment – Student-athletes are responsible for the proper care and security of equipment issued to them.

1. All equipment issued to a student-athlete is to be worn only at practice or scheduled games or scrimmages involving that particular sport. Exceptions must be approved by the coach.
2. Each student-athlete is responsible for all equipment issued. Keep it clean and in the best possible condition. The Boardman Local School District is not responsible for lost or stolen equipment. **Student-athletes should use a lock on athletic lockers to avoid theft.**
3. All athletic equipment is the property of the Board of Education and the Athletic Department; therefore, school equipment may not be taken from the school building for the use of any other organization or for personal use. Any exception must be approved by the Athletic Director.
4. All equipment issued to a student-athlete must be returned at the end of the sport season. Equipment that is not returned for any reason or is damaged beyond normal wear and tear must be paid for at REPLACEMENT cost. Equipment is to be returned or lost equipment paid for within one week of the last contest of the sport. Any student-athlete who has not returned or paid for lost equipment will be denied the right to participate in athletics until the equipment is paid for or returned.

Conflicts in Extracurricular Activities

An individual student-athlete who attempts to participate in many extracurricular activities will, undoubtedly, be in a position of a conflict of obligations.

The Athletic Department recognizes that each student-athlete should have the opportunity for a broad range of experiences in the area of extracurricular activities. The Athletic Department will attempt when possible, to schedule events in a manner so as to minimize conflicts. Student-athletes should attempt to prevent continuous conflict. This would include being cautious about belonging to many activities where conflicts are bound to happen. It also means notifying the faculty sponsors involved immediately when a conflict does arise. Some after-school activities are part of the curriculum, and attendance is required. Performances and/or competition will take priority over rehearsals and/or practices. Student-athletes will be given a choice when conflicts arise. Additional issues that arise may require administrative assistance.

Risk of Participation

All student-athletes and parents/guardians must realize the risk of serious injury, permanent disability, or death which may be a result of athletic participation. The Boardman Local School District will make every effort to eliminate injury. The Athletic Department will make every effort to provide a preseason conditioning program as a preventative measure for avoiding injury, safe facilities, and equipment that meets all safety standards.

Parent/Coach Communication Guidelines

We are pleased that your student-athlete has chosen to participate in the Boardman athletic program. Our mission is to do all we can to provide a positive experience for your student-athlete. Possibly, the most important ingredient to achieve this outcome is to ensure that lines of communication are in place to allow for free and easy resolution of questions before they become conflicts. As a parent/guardian, you should have knowledge of the expectations that are placed on your student-athlete. This information is intended to spell out lines of communication so that parents are aware of the steps they have available to resolve a question or potential problem.

Communication Expected from the Coach

1. Philosophy of the coach
2. Expectations the coach has for your student-athlete
3. Location and time of practice contests (changes may occur – consult your student-athlete)
4. Team requirements: special equipment, off season conditioning, fees, etc.
5. Procedure to follow in the event of an injury
6. Athletic Code of Conduct, Emergency Medical Form, Substance Abuse Form, Physicals, Concussion Form, Sudden Cardiac Arrest Form, MRSA Form, and Insurance Form completed on FinalForms by student-athlete and parent/guardian.
7. Additional team rules beyond the scope of the Code of Conduct
8. Requirements for lettering (each sport is unique in requirements for lettering)
9. Procedures for lost/outstanding equipment at the conclusion of the season
10. Academic eligibility: OHSAA, Boardman Board of Education Policy
11. Travel arrangements to contests

Communication Expected from Parent/Guardian

1. Concerns must be directly addressed to the coach **FIRST**
2. Notifications of any schedule conflicts in advance: Co-curricular activities, family functions, etc.
3. Concerns about grades and possible solutions

Regarding athletics, the following chain of command is in effect:

1. Head Coach
2. Athletic Administrator
3. Principal
4. Superintendent

As your student-athlete becomes involved in the various programs at Boardman High School, your student-athlete will experience some of the most rewarding moments in his/her life. It is important to recognize that there may be times when things do not go the way your student-athlete wishes. At these times, discussion with the coach (or for that matter, a teacher) may be desirable to bring resolution to an issue and avoid a potentially greater problem.

Issues Not Appropriate for Discussion

1. Playing time
2. Team strategy
3. Play calling, player positions
4. Comparing your student-athlete to another athlete unless provisions are made to ensure that parents are present.

When a parent/coach meeting is necessary, the student-athlete involved must be present.

Procedure for Parent/Coach Meeting

1. DO NOT attempt to confront a coach immediately before or after a contest/practice. These can be emotional times for both the parent and coach. Secondly, most often there are post-game/practice responsibilities that must be fulfilled by the coach.
2. Arrange an appointment to talk with the coach
3. In the event the conference with the coach does not satisfy your concerns, you may contact the Athletic Director to set up an appointment. This meeting will include the coach, player, yourself and the Athletic Director.