Bowling Green Middle School
Athletic Handbook
2026-2027

Table of Contents

Philosophy	**4**
BGMS Athletic Options	**4**
Associations	**4**
Equal Opportunity and Non-Harassment	**5**
Interscholastic Goals and Objectives	**5**
Responsibilities of the Athlete	**5**
Responsibilities of the Parent/Guardian	**6**
Required Forms	**6**
Eligibility Requirements	**6**
Medical Examinations	**7**
Parent and Coach Meeting	**7**
Risk of Participation	**7**
Injury Procedure	**7**
Summer Moratorium Week	**7**
Attendance Policy	**7**
Athletes Changing/Quitting Teams	**7**
Scheduling Conflicts	**7**
Financial Obligations	**8**
Pay to Participate Policy	**8**

Travel and Transportation	**9**
Summer and Off-season	**9**
Middle School Awards	**9**
Interscholastic Code of Conduct	**9**
Unacceptable Behavior and Consequences	**9**
Unsportsmanlike Conduct – Player Ejection	**10**
Supplemental Team Rules	**10**
Due Process and Chain of Communication	**11**
Additional OHSAA Policies	**11**
District Student Release from Transportation	**12**

Philosophy

The mission statement of Bowling Green City Schools is*: Bowling Green City Schools is committed to high academic expectations and extracurricular opportunities in an inclusive, caring, safe, and healthy environment. We empower and support our teachers to be responsive to each student through a challenging and engaging curriculum. We partner with families and the community to ensure student success.*

The Athletic Department at Bowling Green City Schools believes interscholastic athletics exist to allow academically and behaviorally qualified students to fulfill this mission. Within this context, the school aims to foster and promote:

- Age-appropriate physical, social, and psychological development.
- The concepts of competition, teamwork, and sportsmanship while achieving the goals of success and participation.
- The development of self-confidence, self-discipline, organization, decision-making skills, and goal orientation.
- The connection between a sound mind and body, leading to a lifelong appreciation of physical fitness and good health.
- A positive sense of school loyalty and pride shared by participants, students, parents, and the community.
- Access and availability to all students regardless of race, religion, gender, disability, or national origin.

Fall Athletics	Winter Athletics	Spring Athletics
7th Grade Football	7th Grade Boys Basketball	7th/8th Grade Boys Track and Field
8th Grade Football	8th Grade Boys Basketball	7th/8th Grade Girls Track and Field
7th/8th Grade Boys Cross Country	7th Grade Girls Basketball	
7th/8th Grade Girls Cross Country	8th Grade Girls Basketball	
7th Grade Girls Volleyball	7th/8th Grade Cheerleading	
8th Grade Girls Volleyball	7th/8th Grade Wrestling	
7th/8th Grade Cheerleading	7th/8th Grade Quiz Bowl	

Associations

Bowling Green City Schools Athletics operates under the guidelines of several associations. Please refer to their specific handbooks for specific policies. Those governing authorities include:

1. Bowling Green City Schools
2. Northern Lakes League (NLL)
3. Ohio High School Athletic Association (OHSAA)

Schools competing in the NLL:

- Anthony Wayne
- Bowling Green
- Donnell, Findlay
- Fassett, Oregon
- Fremont
- Glenwood, Findlay
- Liberty Benton
- Napoleon
- Perrysburg
- Springfield
- Sylvania Arbor Hills
- Sylvania McCord
- Sylvania Timberstone
- Washington Local

Equal Opportunity and Non-Harassment

We believe every individual should have the opportunity to participate in our athletic programs. Therefore, our policy is to provide athletes and coaches with the chance to participate without regard to race, color, religion, gender, age, disability, ethnicity, or national origin. The Athletic Department is committed to treating people with respect, an expectation for every athlete and coach.

We prohibit harassment of any kind, including but not limited to sexual harassment, or harassment based on race, color, religion, gender, age, disability, ethnicity, or national origin. Harassment includes, but is not limited to, slurs, threats, derogatory comments, unwelcome jokes, teasing, sexual advances, inappropriate conduct, and requests for sexual favors.

Anyone who believes they are a victim of harassment should immediately report the matter to school personnel. The Athletic Department will investigate all reports promptly and as confidentially as possible. No adverse action will be taken against an individual who, in good faith, reports or participates in the investigation of a violation of this policy. Violations are not permitted and may result in disciplinary action.

Bowling Green Middle School Interscholastic Policy

The Bowling Green Middle School Interscholastic Program provides a variety of experiences to develop favorable habits and attitudes in students, preparing them for adult life. The program adheres to existing Board of Education policies, school rules, and team regulations. While the Board takes pride in successful programs, it does not condone "winning at any cost" and discourages pressures that neglect good sportsmanship and mental health. The athletic program must always justify itself as an educational activity.

Interscholastic Goals and Objectives

Our Goal: Student athletes will become more effective citizens in an inclusive school community committed to academic excellence and integrity.

Our Specific Objectives: Student athletes will learn teamwork, self-discipline, respect for authority, and the spirit of hard work and sacrifice. Athletes must prioritize team objectives over personal desires.

1. **To Be Successful** - Our society is competitive, and while our student athletes will not always win, they succeed by striving to excel with earnest dedication.
2. **To Be a Good Spor**t - Athletes will accept success humbly and defeat gracefully, treating others as they wish to be treated, and developing traits like emotional control, honesty, cooperation, and dependability.
3. **To Improve** - Continual improvement is essential to good citizenship. Athletes will set positive, attainable goals in the classroom and on the field, striving to reach them.
4. **To Enjoy Athletics** - Athletes will acknowledge personal rewards from competition and have fun, while coaches instill pride and a desire to enhance the program.
5. **To Develop Desirable Personal Health Habits** - Athletes will achieve high physical fitness through exercise and good health habits, maintaining this level even after formal competition ends.

Responsibilities of a Bobcat Athlete

Being a member of a Bobcat interscholastic team fulfills an early ambition for many students, carrying traditions and responsibilities that must be upheld. Our great interscholastic tradition, built over years of hard work, is yours to maintain.

We aim to win with honor, valuing dignity to our athletes, school, and community. This tradition deserves your best effort. Competing for your school may require sacrifices, and by wearing Bobcat colors, we assume you understand and accept these responsibilities.

- **Responsibilities to Yourself** - Broaden yourself and develop character. Your academics and participation in extracurricular activities prepare you for adult life.
- **Responsibilities to Your School** - Bowling Green's reputation as an outstanding school depends on your best efforts in all activities. Your participation enhances its reputation, and as a

team member, you assume a leadership role in the community. Make us proud by doing things the right way.

- **Responsibilities to Others** - You bear responsibility to your family and peers. By adhering to training rules, practicing diligently, and playing your best, you strengthen your self-respect and make your family proud. Set a positive example for others in Bowling Green who look up to you.

Responsibilities of the Parents and Guardians of Bobcat Athletes

1. Be positive with your child, affirming their accomplishment in being part of the team.
2. Encourage hard work and contribution to the team, avoiding excuses for limited playing time.
3. Support coaches openly rather than criticizing them, preventing your child from feeling caught between conflicting authorities.
4. Support your child's adherence to the Interscholastic Code of Conduct and team rules, modeling positive behavior.
5. Emphasize academics and OHSAA academic guidelines, recognizing their importance over athletic scholarships for future success.
6. Treat sports as games meant to be fun, avoiding criticism or envy of teammates or opponents, and respecting all efforts.
7. Focus on supporting the team rather than tearing it down, being a positive part of the athlete-coach-parent trio.
8. Promote good sportsmanship—win or lose, your child should respect opponents and officials, understanding self-respect begins with self-control.
9. Stress that "team" precedes individual recognition, which comes at season's end based on team success and individual contribution.
10. Keep sports in perspective, recognizing athletic lessons as life lessons.

Required Forms for Participation

Athletes are ineligible to try out, practice, or participate until the following are completed:

- Physical Examination – Forms are available online or in the office; submit to the head coach of your current sport.
- FinalForms - Complete all athletic forms online at https://bowlinggreen-oh.finalforms.com/.
- Academic Eligibility Requirements - See below.

State and District Eligibility Requirements

All incoming 7th graders are academically eligible to participate in fall sports. Thereafter, in order to be eligible, a student in grade 7 or 8 must be currently enrolled and must have been enrolled in school the immediately preceding grading period. They must also earn passing grades during that grading period in a minimum of five courses. Quarterly grades are used to determine eligibility.

In addition, student-athletes must maintain a minimum 2.0 Grade Point Average (GPA) for the current grading period while participating in the sport. If a student's GPA falls below 2.0, the following steps will apply:

- **Academic Watch**
  - The student-athlete may continue to practice and compete.
  - The student has two weeks to raise their GPA to 2.0 or higher.
  - If the GPA does not improve to 2.0, the student moves to Academic Suspension.
- **Academic Suspension**
  - The student-athlete may continue to practice but may not compete in games.
  - The student has two weeks to raise their GPA to 2.0 or higher.
  - If the GPA does not improve, the student will be removed from the team.

Academic eligibility for the fourth quarter of an athlete's eighth grade year determines their eligibility for the first quarter of their freshman year of high school. Athletes who are 15 years old prior to August 1 are ineligible to participate in junior high athletics. In addition, junior high athletes are only permitted to participate in four semesters of athletics during their junior high career.

Medical Examinations

OHSAA requires a physical examination before practice begins. Coaches ensure all athletes submit a completed form, recording the information and forwarding it to the athletic director. No athlete may practice or compete until the physical and parent authorization forms are submitted. Physicals are valid for one calendar year; if one expires mid-season, a new physical is required before further participation.

Parent and Coach Meetings

OHSAA mandates an informational meeting after squad selection to discuss costs, game routines, practices, and related items. Attendance is required.

Risk of Participation

Athletes and parents must acknowledge the risk of serious injury in interscholastic activities. Bowling Green City School District uses these safeguards to minimize injury:

1. Continuous coach education on up-to-date techniques and skills.
2. Instruction for athletes on the dangers of their sport.

Injury Procedure

If a trainer is absent, coaches follow these steps for an injured athlete:

- For non-serious injuries, call the family.
- For serious or life-threatening injuries, call 911, then the family as soon as possible.
- If the family is unavailable, contact the family physician.
- If the family physician is unavailable, contact any available physician.
- Take Emergency Medical Forms to the hospital with the athlete.
- Complete an injury report and notify the principal and athletic director promptly.
- Require a physician's release if participation was denied by a physician; no coach, parent, or athlete can override this.

Summer Moratorium Week

While the Athletic Department greatly values students learning the valuable lessons taught by hard work through athletics, we also believe that students should be given the opportunity to just be kids during the summer. Each summer during the week of July 4th, Bowling Green Athletics will observe a moratorium week in which no team activities should be scheduled. The superintendent will announce exact dates prior to the school year starting.

Attendance

Day of a Practice, Scrimmage, or Event: To participate on a school day, an athlete must attend at least half the day. Exceptions for extenuating circumstances may be granted by the Athletic Director or Principal.

Athletes Changing/Quitting Teams

If an athlete resigns, the head coach will attempt to meet with them, collect equipment immediately, and notify the Athletic Director to remove the athlete's name from the roster. An athlete who quits is ineligible for another sport until the original sport's season ends.

Scheduling Conflicts and Interscholastic Activities

Students participating in multiple activities may face conflicts. The district aims to minimize these by scheduling thoughtfully, but students and parents must avoid overcommitment and notify faculty sponsors of conflicts promptly. If obligations cannot be met, withdrawal from an activity is advised. Guidelines for conflicts:

1. School-sponsored activities take precedence over non-school activities.
2. Competitions or performances take precedence over practices or rehearsals.
3. For two competitions or a performance and competition, all parties will seek a mutually agreeable resolution.

Financial Obligations and Equipment

No student adhering to rules should be denied participation due to finances. Parents facing financial difficulty should complete a confidential financial aid form from the principal's office.

1. Uniforms - In some activities, students purchase part of the game uniform, which becomes their property.
2. Equipment - Students are responsible for the care and security of issued equipment, worn only for contests and practices unless authorized otherwise. Equipment must be returned clean and in good repair within one week of the season's end. Coaches will communicate with athletes and parents if equipment isn't returned. Prolonged failure may result in:
    a. A letter detailing replacement costs sent to parents.
    b. Withholding school-sponsored awards.
    c. Denial of equipment for subsequent sports.
    d. Administrative follow-up to ensure return.

Bowling Green City Schools Pay-to-Participate Policy

The Board of Education has set criteria for activities involving district transportation or paid staff, including a participation fee. Fees may be waived in cases of exclusion due to financial hardship.

Participation Fee Schedule

1. High School: $75 per sport, cheerleaders will pay $50 per season.
2. Middle School: $50 per sport.
3. High/Middle School co-curricular with paid adviser (e.g., quiz bowl, drama): $25 per season/year/play.
4. Family maximum: $375 for extracurricular and co-curricular activities.

Rules and Regulations

1. Fees must be paid by the established due date by participant or sponsor; participation will be denied (including practice and scrimmages) if not paid by the due date.
2. Coaches/advisers/directors must provide a list of student participants to the athletic director or Principal at the Middle School and/or High School as soon as such list is determined.
3. Students must return fees and signed form to the High School main office prior to the due date or within two weeks of the start of the club, organization, rehearsal.
4. Pay to Participate does not guarantee playing time or equal playing time.
5. Designated secretaries must maintain communication to determine when maximum amount for an immediate family has been reached.
6. Designated secretaries must provide a list of students for whom the maximum family cap has been reached to each coach/adviser/director.
7. Payments resulting in nonsufficient funds will be reported to the Treasurer and handled according to district policy/process.
8. Fees will be waived for students who provide verification of qualification for free or reduced lunch prices on or before the due date for fees.
9. Fees will be waived for students who provide verification of a temporary or long-term hardship or extenuating circumstance which renders parents/guardians unable to pay on or before the due date for fees.
10. Students denied participation for disciplinary reasons will not be reimbursed their fee.
11. Participants who 'quit' will not be reimbursed their fee.
12. Participants who suffer a season-ending injury, as verified in writing by a physician and submitted to the coach/adviser/director, will be reimbursed their fee.
13. Participants who are team managers, trainers, statisticians, equipment managers and/or hold other voluntary support roles for teams are exempt from the fee.
14. These and other rules and regulations to enforce this resolution are to be provided to student participants and parents/guardians in print form.
15. Parent/guardian acknowledgement of such print material will be maintained in the main office of the Middle School and/or High School.

Travel and Transportation

Only student participants, coaches/advisors, chaperones, and authorized personnel may ride district buses. Athletes must use school transportation to and from away contests unless a parent submits a prior written request (see Student Release from District Transportation form). All bus rules must be followed.

Summer and Off-Season Programs

Sports camps, clinics, and training programs are offered voluntarily by coaches and organizations during the off-season and summer. Participation is not a condition for team membership or placement the following season.

Middle School Awards

Awards

A certificate of participation is awarded to team members who complete the season. Additional awards are determined by coaches and participants. Eligibility requires good standing, meeting attendance requirements, and fulfilling team obligations.

Clayton Cook Award

Presented annually to one boy and one girl per grade level, recipients must exhibit a positive attitude, good sportsmanship, exemplary conduct, team contribution, and participation in at least two interscholastic teams. Winners receive a certificate, their names on the Clayton Cook plaque, and a modest trophy or plaque.

Interscholastic Code of Conduct

Athletes influence the community and student body, providing opportunities to demonstrate positive leadership. A firm, fair policy upholds competition standards. The community, administrators, and coaches emphasize high conduct and citizenship to maintain a sound program.

Athletes must abide by the school's and interscholastic codes of conduct, earning honor and respect. Acts like theft, vandalism, disrespect, or law violations dishonor the athlete, team, and school and will not be tolerated.

This code applies 24/7 during a sport's season (per OHSAA rules, from practice start to awards assembly). For overlapping seasons, the second sport's season begins when practice starts. Infractions accumulate across the academic year's sport seasons (e.g., fall to spring).

Philosophy

Athletes' conduct is scrutinized in many areas:

- **On the Field** - Avoid profanity or illegal tactics, accept defeat graciously, and congratulate opponents courteously.
- **In the Classroom** - Strive academically, respect peers and faculty, and maintain good attendance without horseplay.
- **Outside the Classroom** - The community expects athletes to avoid harmful drugs, tobacco, and alcohol, committing fully to competition and training rules.

Unacceptable Behavior and Consequences

Athletes must follow the Student Code of Conduct or face penalties, including non-participation, as determined by administration and staff, who may deny participation with just cause. Additional disciplinary actions apply for:

1. Possession, use, or sale of drugs, alcohol, tobacco (including vaping), paraphernalia, or steroids.
2. Willful destruction of athletic, personal, or school property at home or away.
3. Stealing athletic, personal, or school property at home or away.

Violations of items 1-3 above result in the following minimum punishments, with coaches supported in imposing stricter penalties:

First Offense = Suspension

1. Drugs, alcohol, paraphernalia, or steroids: 40% of scheduled contests.
2. Tobacco, nicotine, or paraphernalia: 25% of scheduled contests.
3. Stealing athletic, personal or school property at home or away: 20% of scheduled contests
4. Willful destruction or theft: 20% of scheduled contests.

Suspensions round up to the next whole number (e.g., 40% of 19 games = 8 games). Athletes must finish the season in good standing, or the suspension applies to the next sport. If too few contests remain, the balance carries over. Suspended athletes may practice but not dress for contests. Drug/alcohol/tobacco violators must complete a school-approved rehabilitation course before returning.

Second Offense = Suspension

50% suspension of each sport for one calendar year, served in the first half of each season. A second rehabilitation course is required before participation. Practice is allowed, but athletes may not dress for contests.

Third Offense and Beyond = Suspension

One-year suspension from all athletic activities. Practice is allowed with head coach approval, but athletes may not dress for contests. During investigations, if reasonable suspicion of drug/alcohol/nicotine use exists, the athletic director, with principal approval, may request a urine test at district expense.

General Misconduct Policy - Activities

Ineligibility may result from behavior reflecting negatively on the student, sport, activity, or school (e.g., misdemeanor offenses outside team activities). Ineligibility lasts up to 50% of the season or a set number of events, with longer denial possible based on severity. Administration is informed of all actions.

Criminal Offenses – Activities

A felony conviction denies participation for remaining eligibility. Intensive professional assistance may reduce this to one year from notification, with school cooperation with courts.

Theft Policy - Activities

Theft under school authority carries the same penalties as drug/alcohol violations.

Athletes and School Suspension

Athletes under in-school or out-of-school suspension are ineligible for practice or competition during the suspension, including Friday suspensions affecting Saturday events.

Unsportsmanlike Conduct – Player Ejection

A player ejected for unsporting conduct or a flagrant foul is ineligible for all contests that day and until two regular season/tournament contests (one in football) are played at the same level. In wrestling, ineligibility lasts until two contest points or event days pass.

Ineligible players may be on the sidelines but cannot participate in warm-ups or wear uniforms/team warm-ups. Basketball illegal substitution ejections are exempt from the two-contest rule.
Scrimmage/preview ejections result in ineligibility for that day's events and the next regular season contest (or first contest if pre-season). Late-season ejections carry over to the next sport.
A second ejection in a season suspends the player for the remainder of that sport's season. A second ejection in the final contest affects the next sport, at the Executive Director's discretion. Schools must enforce this, and ineligible participation results in forfeiture. Officials' decisions are final per OHSAA Bylaw 8-3-1.

Supplemental Team Rules

Coaches may establish sport-specific rules on attitude and cooperation, provided in writing at season start. Non-compliance results in disciplinary action per those rules.

Due Process and Chain of Communication

Students' due process rights are protected, exercised by parents/guardians, not students alone. Most concerns should resolve between parents, students, and coaches, who deserve the first chance to address issues. If unresolved, follow this chain:

1. Head Coach
2. Athletic Director
3. Principal
4. Superintendent
5. School Board

Additional OHSAA Policies

The OHSAA has additional regulations that athletes must abide by:

Participation in Non-School Sports: The OHSAA prohibits the participation of athletes in participating in recreational or club teams during the same season as their school team. For example, a volleyball player cannot participate on both the BGMS volleyball team and a club volleyball team at the same time. Once an athlete tries out or participates with a club team, they have become ineligible to participate for BGMS for that season.

School Choice: Students who are enrolled in a private school, community school, online school, or who are homeschooled and are bona fide residents of the Bowling Green City School District are eligible to try out for or participate on a BGMS team if their school does not offer their desired sport. Students wishing to participate under this option should contact the athletic director. Those students must provide proof of residency in the Bowling Green City School District and proof of academic eligibility.

Bowling Green School District
Student Release from District Transportation

It is my request that Bowling Green School District release my child into my custody immediately **Before/After** the following activity.

Name of Student _____

Name of Activity _____

Date of Activity _____

Please initial all that apply

_____ I do not want my child to return to school by district transportation

_____ I wish to personally take my child to this activity

I hold the Bowling Green School District, its officers, employees, and agents harmless from all liability and claims as a result of my request for the removal of my child from transportation to or from School by District Transportation.

Signed: _____ **(Parent/Guardian)**

Date_____