



Student-Parent Guide To Interscholastic Athletics In Baltimore County Public Schools

Purpose

This brochure is designed to be an informational tool and guide for student-athletes and parents to understand the regulations and policies that enhance the student-athlete's participation in the Interscholastic Athletic Program of the Baltimore County Public Schools. The regulations and policies are set forth under the auspices of the State Department of Education and the Baltimore County Public Schools.

Philosophy

The Baltimore County Public Schools support the philosophy that the 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 county, region, and state levels.

Overview

The Baltimore County Interscholastic Athletic Program is organized within the framework of the Maryland Public Secondary School Athletic Association (MPSSAA) which is an affiliate of the National Federation of State High School Associations. A total of 28 sports are available to our students within Baltimore County's twenty-four high schools.

Varsity teams compete in four different classification levels—"4A", "3A", "2A", and "1A" - in a schedule built around a core of intra-county competition. At the conclusion of each sport season, varsity teams have the opportunity to qualify for county, regional, and state level tournaments. The majority of schools offer ten boys', ten girls', and nine coeducational teams.

Junior varsity level competition is also available in 19 of the 28 sports offered, along with opportunities for additional post-season play at the county level.

In addition, Baltimore County provides an Allied Sports Program which affords students with and without disabilities an equal opportunity for participation in extracurricular sports. Allied Sports is a totally inclusive program designed for students interested in playing a sport, but who do not necessarily possess the skill or desire to play on a varsity or junior varsity team.

Baltimore County boasts one of the largest athletic programs within the state of Maryland with over 1,500 coaches and 14,000 student-athletes participating yearly.

Fall Season

Badminton Football
Cheerleading Golf
Cross Country Soccer
Field Hockey Volleyball
Allied Soccer

Winter Season

Basketball
Cheerleading
Indoor Track
Wrestling
Allied Bowling

Spring Season

Baseball Softball
Cheerleading Tennis
Lacrosse Track & Field
Allied Softball

SECTION A GENERAL ELIGIBILITY STANDARDS

Enrollment/Residency/Transfers

Students must be officially registered and attending a Baltimore County Public School. Students may represent only the school in which they are enrolled and attending, and at which it is anticipated they will complete their graduation requirements.

Any student attending a Baltimore County Public Schools' high school without the benefit of residing within the school's attendance area and/or without the written authority of the superintendent's designee or the pupil personnel worker will be declared ineligible for participation in interscholastic athletics. Legal residence is determined by where a student is domiciled with his/her parent(s) or court ordered guardian.

Students entering a Baltimore County high school after September 30, and before November 15, shall be ineligible to represent the school in interscholastic athletic competition during the first semester unless such late entrance shall be by transfer from a school which the student has attended regularly during the current school year. Cases involving students who enter after November 15 will be decided by the principal and coordinator of the Office of Athletics .

If a student transfers during a sport season and the transfer is not a result of a parental change of address or court-ordered guardianship, the student is not eligible to participate in the same sport in which he/she participated at the previous school for the remainder of the sport season. (Note: Participation in a sport begins with the first day of team try-outs.)

The use of undue influence by anyone to cause a student to transfer from one school to another for an athletic purpose will cause the student to be ineligible for a one-year period from the official date of transfer.

Age

Students who are 19 years old or older as of August 31 are ineligible to participate in the interscholastic program.

Scholastic Requirements

Students are academically ineligible if they have less than a 2.0 grade point average with no more than one failing, incomplete, or medical grade in the preceding quarter. Fall academic eligibility is determined by the fourth quarter grading period from the preceding school year. This provision does not apply to incoming 9th grade students for initial fall eligibility.

Physical Examination

A student shall be examined and certified to the high school principal as being physically fit to participate in any tryout, practice, or contest of a school team. The examination shall be performed by a licensed-physician; physician's assistant under the supervision of a licensed, certified physician; or certified nurse practitioner.

The medical evaluation form must be signed and dated by parent/guardian and medical personnel, must be completed prior to any participation, and must be on file in the school. The medical is valid for a one-year period from the date of examination.

Athletic Permit Blank

A student is required to file a signed and completed "Baltimore County Public Schools Athletic Permit Blank" before being permitted to practice for interscholastic competition.

Accident Insurance

Each student is required to have accident insurance coverage (school insurance, Blue Cross/Blue Shield, or any commercial accident policy) before being permitted to practice for interscholastic competition. Insurance provider and policy number must be included on the Athletic Permit Blank.

Informed Consent

Parents should be aware that various injuries may occur while students are participating in athletics. Each student participant and the parent/guardian must sign a sport specific form entitled "Informed Consent" before the student can participate in interscholastic sports in Baltimore County.

SECTION B POLICIES

Team Membership

The step from a recreation team to an interscholastic team is indeed a big one. Whereas the emphasis in recreation is participation, playing time is earned, not guaranteed, in interscholastic sports. Student-athletes earn playing time in practice by displaying a good work ethic, sportsmanship, skill development, and the ability to work as a team player. Not adhering to state, county, school, and team rules will definitely affect playing time.

The coach of each team is responsible for the determination of squad membership. Once athletes become a member of a team, they become ineligible to participate in another school-sponsored sport during that season. Juniors and seniors are not eligible for junior varsity competition in any sport.



Student-Athlete _____
 Date of injury _____
 Sport _____
 Parent/guardian name _____
 Home Phone _____

Notification of Probable Head Injury

Dear Parent:

Based on our observations and/or incident described below, we believe your son/daughter exhibited signs and symptoms of a concussion while participating in _____. Since your son/ daughter has not been evaluated by a physician at school, it is important that you seek a physician's care as soon as possible.

It is important to recognize that blows to the head can cause a variety of injuries other than concussions (e.g., neck injuries, more serious brain injuries). Please be sure to see your doctor as soon as possible for any other medical concerns.

Description of Incident/ Injury: _____

When to Seek Care Urgently. If you observe any of the following signs, call your doctor or go to your emergency department immediately.

Headaches that worsen	Very drowsy, can't be awakened	Can't recognize people or places
Seizures	Repeated vomiting	Increasing confusion
Neck pain	Slurred speech	Weakness/numbness in arms/legs
Unusual behavior change	Significant irritability	Less responsive than usual

Common Signs & Symptoms. It is common for a student with a concussion to have one or many symptoms.

Physical		Cognitive	Emotional	Sleep
Headache	Visual Problems	Feeling mentally foggy	Irritability	Drowsiness
Nausea/Vomiting	Fatigue/ Feeling tired	Feeling slowed down	Sadness	Sleeping less than usual
Dizziness	Sensitivity to light/ noise	Difficulty remembering	More emotional	Sleeping more than usual
Balance Problems	Numbness/Tingling	Difficulty concentrating	Nervousness	Trouble falling asleep

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions. I can be reached at: _____

 Employee Name and Title

 Date

TO BE COMPLETED BY THE AUTHORIZED HEALTH CARE PROVIDER:

Name: _____ Signature _____ Date: _____

Diagnosis: _____

Please be advised that your son/daughter will not be allowed to return to play until they have no symptoms and have been cleared in writing by an authorized health care provider (physician, neuropsychologist, nurse practitioner, physician's assistant) for this type of injury.

Distribution: Parent AAM School Health Room

**BALTIMORE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
ATHLETIC PERMIT BLANK**

Name: _____ High School: _____

_____ Home Street Address City State Zip

_____ Date of Birth Age Grade

Parent/Guardian's Name _____ Home Phone: _____ Work Phone: _____

Parent/Guardian's Name _____ Home Phone: _____ Work Phone: _____

In an Emergency, If Parents Cannot be Contacted:

Notify: _____ Phone: _____

Family Doctor: _____ Doctor's Phone: _____

Preferred Hospital: _____ Known Allergies: _____

The team physician, trainer, and coach may apply first aid treatment until the family doctor can be contacted.

_____ Yes _____ No. We give our consent for coaches, trainers, and team physicians to use their own judgment in securing medical aid and ambulance service in case the parents cannot be reached.

_____ Yes _____ No.

In order to participate in interscholastic athletics, the student must have accident insurance coverage.

_____ Student is covered by school insurance _____ Blue Cross/Blue Shield _____
Policy Number

_____ Other commercial insurance _____
Company and Policy Number

To the Parent or Guardian:

In order that your son, daughter, or ward may participate in various school athletic activities, it will be necessary for you to give your written consent.

Permission is given for son, daughter, or ward to participate in _____
Name of sport

It is understood that time after school will be required for practice and competition. The school will provide proper and reasonable supervision at practice and games and travel to and from such practice and games. Beyond this point of proper supervision, the school cannot assume responsibility for injuries.

A student is financially responsible for the replacement cost of athletic equipment uniforms which are not returned within ten (10) days after the close of a given season.

In addition, it is recognized that the student must comply with the eligibility regulations governing Baltimore County school athletics as approved by the County Superintendent and legislative committee.

By evidence of the signatures below, you are testifying that you:

- Have read and understand the Athletic Permit Blank
- Have read and understand the eligibility standards and policies contained in the Student-Parent Guide to Interscholastic Athletics in Baltimore County Public Schools
- Have read and understand the Concussion Education protocol and the Return to Play protocol.
- Legally reside in the attendance area of the above listed high school as defined by Section A in the Student-Parent Guide to Interscholastic Athletics in Baltimore County Public Schools.

Failure to complete, sign, and return this form to your student's coach will result in his/her exclusion from participation in the Interscholastic Athletic Program of the Baltimore County Public Schools.

Student's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____



Student-Athlete _____
 Date of injury _____
 Today's Date _____
 Sport _____

**Medical Clearance for Gradual Return to Sports Participation
 Following Concussion**

To be completed by the Authorized Health Care Provider (AHCP)

The above-named student-athlete sustained a concussion. The purpose of this form is to provide initial medical clearance before starting the Gradual Return to Sports Participation, as directed by current medical evidence (2010 AAP Sport-Related Concussion in Children and Adolescents, 2008 Zurich Concussion in Sport Group Consensus).

Criteria for Medical Clearance for Gradual Return to Play (Check each)

The student-athlete must meet all of these criteria to receive medical clearance.

- 1. No symptoms at rest/ no medication use to manage symptoms (e.g., headaches)
- 2. No return of symptoms with typical physical and cognitive activities of daily living
- 3. Neurocognitive functioning at typical baseline
- 4. Normal balance and coordination
- 5. No other medical/ neurological complaints/ findings

Detailed Guidance

1. Symptom checklist: None of these symptoms should be present. Assessment of symptoms should be broader than athlete report alone. Also consider observational reports from parents, teachers, others.

Physical		Cognitive	Emotional	Sleep
Headaches	Sensitivity to light	Feeling mentally foggy	Irritability	Drowsiness
Nausea	Sensitivity to noise	Problems concentrating	Sadness	Sleeping more than usual
Fatigue	Numbness/ tingling	Problems remembering	Feeling more emotional	Sleeping less than usual
Visual problems	Vomiting	Feeling more slowed down	Nervousness	Trouble falling asleep
Balance Problems	Dizziness			

2. Exertional Assessment (Check): The student-athlete exhibits no evidence of return of symptoms with:
 ___ Cognitive activity: concentration on school tasks, home activities (e.g. TV, computer, pleasure reading)
 ___ Physical activity: walking, climbing stairs, activities of daily living, endurance across the day

3. Neurocognitive Functioning (Check): The student's cognitive functioning has been determined to have returned to its typical pre-injury level by one or more of the following:
 ___ Appropriate neurocognitive testing
 ___ Reports of appropriate school performance/ home functioning (concentration, memory, speed) in the absence of symptoms listed above

4. Balance & Coordination Assessment (Check): Student-athlete is able to successfully perform:
 ___ Romberg Test OR SCAT2 (Double leg, single leg, tandem stance, 20 secs, no deviations fr proper stance)
 ___ 5 successive Finger-to-Nose repetitions < 4 sec

I certify that: I am aware of the current medical guidance on concussion evaluation and management; The above-named student-athlete has met all the above criteria for medical clearance for his/her recent concussion, and as of this date is ready to return to a progressive Gradual Return to Sports Participation program (lasting minimum of 5 days).

AHCP Name _____

Signature _____

Date: _____

Distribution: ___ Parent ___ Athletic Director ___ School Health Room

Team members are expected to attend all practices and games. Practice is held daily. The athletic week runs from Monday through Saturday, including evenings.

Student-athletes are issued equipment and uniforms at the beginning of the season. The student is financially responsible for the replacement cost of athletic equipment and uniforms which are not returned within ten days after the close of a given season.

Students, while participating on a school team, are permitted to participate in the same sport or other sports outside of school during a sport season. However, the outside participation shall not conflict with the practices or contests scheduled by the school, including district, regional, and state championship play.

Transportation

All teams must travel in bonded carriers to and from all athletic events. All team members must travel as a group to and from all athletic contests. If approved by the local school principal in advance, a team member may be released to the custody of a parent or legal guardian at the conclusion of an away contest. Approval must be requested in written form prior to the specified event and signed by the student-athlete's parent or legal guardian. The principal or principal's designee shall sign all authorized requests. Any other exceptions to this mode of travel must be approved in advance by the local school principal. Parents should not expect coaches to provide transportation for team members.

Out-of-Season Practice

OUT-OF-SEASON PRACTICE

.04G(1) "Member schools and coaches of member schools shall confine all organized or formal practice for a contestant or a team to the seasonal limitations as defined in Regulation .03."

Interpretation: Any individual, group, or team gathering that has assembled for the purpose of instruction and is under the direction of any member of the school coaching staff would constitute a violation.

.04G(2) "A coach may not coach a team representing his/her school beyond the sports season as defined in Regulation .03."

Interpretation: Any paid or volunteer coach at a member school may coach a non-school team provided the following criteria is observed:

- A. The team may not use a name connected with the school.
- B. The team may not use school uniforms or equipment.

C. The team is participating in a league, clinic, or similar activity sponsored by an educational or non-profit organization outside of the school system. (Individual teams may be supported by businesses, individuals, or other entities as long as the student's amateur standing is not compromised.)

D. Timeframe

1. From the start of the fall sports season as defined in Regulation .03, to the last state championship game of the spring season, the outside teams roster does not exceed 80% of the returning players of what would constitute a starting lineup in that sport OR a modified version thereof. i.e., 7-on-7 football, 3-on-3 basketball, indoor soccer, indoor lacrosse, etc.

2. From the last state championship game of the spring season to the first day of fall practice, the outside team roster is unrestricted on the number of returning players.

All-Star Events

By State Rule 13A.06.03, the MPSSAA stipulates that individual students may participate in two All-Star games per sport, upon completion of their eligibility in the sport in which this participation occurs.

Amateur Status

Student-athletes lose amateur status by using athletic skill as players for financial gain or by competing under an assumed name. Students shall also lose amateur status in a particular sport if they sign a professional contract in that sport. Students who have ceased to be amateurs in a particular sport may not represent a school in interscholastic athletics in that sport.

Awards

In order to qualify for post-season awards, the student-athlete must complete the season in good standing and fulfill all team-related obligations. Each school is responsible for developing its own policy for achievement and distribution of athletic awards.

SECTION C ADDITIONAL POLICIES

Schools and coaches may establish additional rules and requirements with the approval of the athletic director and principal.

Any further questions or concerns should be addressed to the coach or the athletic director.

SECTION D ROLE OF THE PARENT

The amount of time and effort that parents/guardians give to support their son's and daughter's interscholastic endeavors is readily apparent. Parents and guardians should continue to encourage their student-athletes to be the best they can be in all activities. Parents/guardians are also asked to demonstrate good sportsmanship, being mindful that their behavior reflects on their team and school. Your paid or complimentary admission to an athletic event entitles you to enjoy a competitive contest in an educational setting. Booing, taunting, or intimidating the players, officials, coaches, or other spectators is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. This type of behavior could result in you being asked to leave an event and may jeopardize your attendance at future athletic events within the Baltimore County Public Schools' program.

SECTION E SPORTSMANSHIP

The development of productive citizens for society through demonstrated acts of sportsmanship shall be the top priority of interscholastic activities. Good sportsmanship is best described as commitment to fair play, ethical behavior, and integrity. Sportsmanship is characterized by generosity, genuine concern for others, and a view of the opponent as a competitor, not an adversary.

All athletes shall abide by a code of ethics which will earn them the honor and respect that participation and competition in interscholastic athletic affords. Any conduct that results in dishonor to the athlete, the team, or the school will not be tolerated. Acts of unacceptable conduct tarnish the reputation of everyone associated with the school, community, and athletic program. These acts include, but are not limited to the following: theft, vandalism, taunting, baiting, and fighting.

The Baltimore County Public Schools Interscholastic Athletic Program supports high standards of good citizenship and propriety, along with regard for the rights of others. Student-athletes are expected to represent themselves in a positive manner at all times. Unsportsmanlike behavior will result in disciplinary action. A student-athlete who is ejected from a contest for unsportsmanlike conduct or fighting will not be allowed to participate in or attend the next contest. Subsequent conduct of this nature leading to a third disqualification in the same sport, or any other sport, during the school year shall result in immediate dismissal from the team for the remainder of the season. In addition, the offending student-athlete shall be prohibited from participation in the interscholastic athletic program for the remainder of the school year.

School authorities have the right to establish and maintain minimal standards of student achievement and conduct for participation in interscholastic athletics in compliance with State and County Board of Education regulations. A firm and fair policy of enforcement is necessary to uphold the regulations and standards of the athletic department. High standards of conduct and citizenship are essential in maintaining a sound athletic program. The welfare of the student-athlete is of major consideration and transcends any other consideration.

Please retain this guide for your records and information.
Only the **permit blank should be returned** to the school.