

BLUE RIDGE

INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

ATHLETIC HANDBOOK

2020-2021



OBJECTIVES

School athletics have a tremendous potential for meeting the needs of our youth. Therefore, an intensive, well-balanced program of interscholastic sports should be offered to all students. Interscholastic athletics for the physically gifted represents an area of great potential for practicing the pursuit of excellence.

PURPOSE

The basic purpose of the BRISD Athletic Program and its operation is to help each student become the very best person that he or she can be. In order to accomplish this purpose, the coaches and directors of the program must work with the students and their parents to:

- Contribute toward a well-rounded maturation of the student academically, socially, physically, and emotionally.
- Develop an awareness of the vital importance attitude plays toward success in any endeavor.
- Encourage achievement to its greatest potential in academic areas.
- Encourage awareness with regards to mannerisms, behavior, dress, and general appearance.
- Teach, develop, and exhibit high moral and ethical values.
- Develop skills and attitudes of lifelong recreational values.
- Increase self-reliance and capacity for hard work.
- Emphasize and encourage self-discipline essential for adult life.

PARTICIPATION

It is the goal of the athletic program to offer the opportunity of participation to every student who has the ability and desire to do so. Interscholastic athletics fosters competition and cooperation. Therefore, no student is obligated to take part in athletics nor is participation in athletics required for graduation. It is stressed that participation in the BRISD Athletic Program is a privilege, not a right. Since it is a privilege, the coaching staff, in accordance with the BRISD Policy and Due Process Procedures, has the authority to suspend or revoke the privilege when the rules and standards of the Athletic Program are not followed.

REQUIREMENTS FOR PARTICIPATION

- Students must participate in one interscholastic athletic activity providing they conform to other adopted policies regulating participation and are found to be physically fit by a licensed physician.
- Participants in team sports must participate in the offseason training program for the student during the school year when they are not engaged in other sports.
- Students may represent BRISD in interscholastic athletics after they have participated in practice for a period of time specified by the head coach of the sport.
- Participation in a sport is a prerequisite for participation in the athletic period.



RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE ATHLETE

The privilege of representing the BRISD Athletic Program causes many things to be expected of you by your principal, coaches, teachers, parents, community, and most of all, by your teammates and classmates. Athletes are always on display. You are judged by the company you keep. Your actions in everyday life, both private and public, are a direct reflection on the athletic program, your teams, and your school. All athletes have the responsibility to play to win, give their best effort, strive for excellence, and exhibit good conduct at all times in a manner that is a credit to his/her school. The fact that an individual has chosen to participate in interscholastic athletics is indicative that each athlete has taken into consideration the rewards, privileges, and pleasure that can be obtained from participation. It is also indicative that each athlete understands the price that must be paid in meeting responsibilities, following rules and regulations, and meeting the demands that are placed on each individual athlete. Failure to follow guidelines and policies in this publication may result in your removal from athletics.

DURING COMPETITION, AN ATHLETE

- Learns that both winning and losing are part of the game and to accept both.
- Does not use illegal tactics in an attempt to defeat the opponent or to beat the rules of the game.
- Has complete control of himself/herself at all times. Clowning, displays of temper, use of profanity, disrespect of coaches or officials will result in disciplinary action from the head coach.

ON CAMPUS, AN ATHLETE

- Must maintain proper dress and appearance, good grooming, and personal cleanliness.
- Will not wear jewelry or earrings in athletic areas or during athletic events.
- Will refrain from fighting, scuffling, and juvenile behavior.

IN THE ATHLETIC PERIOD AND PRACTICE, AN ATHLETE

- Must notify the coach if he/she must miss a workout. This is the responsibility of the athlete. Failure to report your absence or excessive absences may result in disciplinary action or suspension.
- Will be prompt for roll call. Tardiness is unacceptable.
- Will maintain neat and clean dressing rooms.
- Will abide by the head coach's policies regarding more stringent guidelines to proper dress and attire, health and safety standards, and personal grooming habits that may be deemed necessary for the particular sport.
- Will give 100% to the sport that he/she is involved.
- Will refrain from using obscene language and gestures or any unsportsmanlike conduct of any manner.
- Will respect coaches and fellow teammates at all times.



- Will be responsible for the proper care of all issued clothing and/or equipment. The athlete will be required to pay for any clothing and/or equipment that is lost, damaged, or destroyed.

DURING TEAM TRAVEL, AN ATHLETE

- All students making the trip on the bus will return on the bus unless there is an emergency situation or when parents are present with good reason for returning with parents. Requests should be made to the head coach in advance when possible. Parents must sign-out the athlete with the head coach prior to departing the athletic event. Junior High athletes may ride home with a parent on school nights only with proper sign-out and personal contact with the head coach BEFORE leaving the athletic event. By law, athletes are not allowed to leave an event with anyone other than the parent/guardian. No athlete will be allowed to ride home with anyone but parents unless approved by campus principal in advance.
- Will dress neatly and properly on all trips. Coaches will specify the attire.
- Will conduct himself/herself properly in any school vehicle.
- Will conduct himself/herself with dignity and proper manners.
- Will be on time for departure. The bus will not wait.
- Will not be allowed to bring family members or friends on bus trips.
- Will keep all cell phones turned off prior to any athletic competition and practice and be aware that the Athletic Department may take up their cell phone if in violation.

*Team meals may be provided for any athletic competition which requires traveling a distance of two or more hours. Any team or individual that advances past district play will have meals, lodging, and transportation provided by the school.

SELECTION OF TEAMS

The head coach of each sport will determine the teams. The selection of teams will include, but is not limited to: skill level, knowledge of sport, attitude, and experience in the sport. Jr High “B” teams, Freshman, and JV teams will have an opportunity for playing time. It is our belief that these teams need to develop skill, knowledge and gain experience through playing. Jr High “A” team and the Varsity teams are **not** guaranteed equal playing time. Discussions will focus on ways to improve in those areas that may be affecting playing time.

ELIGIBILITY/GRADES/TUTORIALS

The BRISD coaches and administration shall determine each student’s eligibility according to UIL rules and regulations as specified in the UIL Constitution and Contest Rules. Blue Ridge ISD strictly adheres to these rules and regulations. UIL and the State Board of Education “No Pass-No Play” rules are strictly enforced. In addition, BRISD wants its athletes to be top academic students. Each athlete must realize that he/she is a student first, and an athlete second. The student must give sufficient time and energy to his/her studies to ensure acceptable grades to meet the UIL requirements for participation. Students who do not maintain



passing grades or who are missing assignments due to unacceptable reasons may be subject to suspension from athletic competition at any time. Coaches will regularly check student averages in all courses. Students may be required to attend tutorials if their grades are not acceptable.

Any student failing one grading period during the school year will be placed on a contract, and required to meet an academic plan. Any student failing two consecutive grading periods in a row or a semester may be removed from team/individual competition and placed on an academic plan. If standards are not met on the contract, the athlete may be removed for the remainder of the year.

ISS/DAEP/CODE OF CONDUCT

Any athlete who is placed into alternative education arrangement (DAEP or home suspension) will not participate in practices and/or competitions for any extracurricular activity for the duration of the alternative education arrangement. Extended time (3 days or more) may result in dismissal from any season sport at the discretion of the Athletic Director. Any athlete disciplined under the student code of conduct could be subject to suspension or dismissal from the athletic program at the Athletic Director's discretion. Athletes in violation of code of conduct will be placed on a contract. **All player suspensions by a coach must be with the Athletic Director's approval.** Any athlete receiving ISS on the day of an athletic competition is ineligible to participate in that competition. An athlete receiving ISS on the days prior to an athletic competition is subject to loss of playing time based on the head coach's discretion. An athlete that receives ISS or DAEP due to tardiness will not automatically be dismissed from an in-season sport. Disciplinary action will be taken and will be at the discretion of the head coach and Athletic Director.

ATTENDANCE/ABSENCES/TARDIES

Athletes are expected to be at all practices and all competitions on time and remain for the duration. It is the athlete's responsibility to notify the coach/athletic office if he/she must miss a practice or competition. By becoming a member of the Blue Ridge Athletic Program, you are making a commitment to the program. **An unexcused absence from a game will result in suspension of the next scheduled game. Playing time will be at the head coach's discretion for an absence on the day before or the day of a scheduled game.**

An excused absence is that of an illness, emergency, school related function, or at the coach's discretion. In such cases, the athlete must present the coach and/or Athletic Director a written note from the parent/guardian, immediately following the incident or a note from school personnel prior to the game. Three consecutive absences necessitates a doctor's excuse. As with any other activity, please be aware that excessive tardiness or absences decrease practice/instructional time. This loss of time could subject the athlete to loss of playing time or



even dismissal from the team. Make up conditioning will be required for any tardy or absence at the discretion of the head coach.

PARTICIPATION WHEN ILL OR INJURED

Any athlete who is injured during the course of the season or has an illness of a minor nature and is unable to participate due to this injury or illness must continue to follow all expectations, rules, and regulations if the athlete wishes to remain a part of the team. The athlete will not participate but will be required to dress out and attend all practice sessions and sit with the team during competitions. Failure to attend practices and competitions while injured can result in dismissal from the team. Athletes learn from each practice session, whether they are actually working out or simply observing.

PRACTICE TIMES/SCHEDULES

According to UIL rules, school teams shall be prohibited from practicing team skills before or after school except during specified practice dates, set forth by the UIL, and during the one allowable period during the school day. Practice schedules for each sport will be arranged by the respective coach in conjunction with the Athletic Director and other coaches of in-season sports. Attempts will be made to insure that practice times for one sport will not interfere with practice times for a coinciding sport. To accommodate for growing athletic programs, some practice sessions may be held before the school day begins.

OFFSEASON PROGRAM

The purpose of the offseason program is to improve the athletic program by enhancing each athlete's abilities. Drill and activities to improve speed, strength, and agility will be utilized. **It is mandatory for all athletes to participate in an offseason program if they wish to participate in athletics the following year.** An offseason program will be used for those athletes that do not wish to participate in a sport.

NON-SCHOOL PARTICIPATION (SUMMER PARTICIPATION)

Non-school participation is limited by the UIL; however the purpose of non-school participation is to allow all athletes an equitable opportunity to participate in the sports of their choice outside of the season and throughout the summer. Coaches will provide students and parents a menu of opportunities based on the athlete's abilities and experience with the sport. Some activities will not be suitable for all athletes due to some events being for varsity level play. In those instances other participation options will be provided to students but may not be at the same time as the exclusive event.

The UIL states the following rules for non-school participation. Students must arrange transportation to all events. Students must provide their own equipment, uniforms, and first aid supplies. Students must pay for all fees associated with the event. Non-school participation is



not a requirement to be selected for a team. Because coaches cannot coach during non-school participation, parents and former students may be selected to coach the team.

Parents/Students are welcome to create their own select group of athletes to participate in tournaments, re leagues, and/or camps. The requirements under non school participation do not apply because this is not considered a school-sponsored activity that would be governed under UIL rules.

SELECT/CLUB SPORTS

In the case of a non-school related athletic event conflicting with a school related athletic event, priority will be given to the school athletic event. Consequences for violation this rule will be at the discretion of the head coach of the in-season sport and/or the Athletic Director.

DROPPING/QUITTING A SPORT

There will be times when an athlete finds it necessary to quit playing a sport before, during, or after the season has begun. **An athlete may not quit one sport to play another sport.** The following procedures should be followed in order to drop/quit a sport:

- Examine the situation before a decision is made
- Talk to the coach to see if a solution can be reached (A parent conference may be required)
- If the decision to quit is made, the athlete must check out of the sport through the Athletic Director. All clothing/equipment issued to the athlete must be returned in the same shape as it was when it was issued to the athlete. Payment for any lost or damaged clothing and equipment will be required.
- An athlete who decides to quit one sport to join another must wait until the first sport has completed its season before he/she will be allowed to join the new sport.

Coaches, in conjunction with the Athletic Director, reserve the right to prohibit any athlete from joining a team or sport if that athlete has routinely failed to complete seasons in other sports which they have started. Failure to participate in the mandatory offseason program also constitutes dismissal from the athletic program. Routinely quitting sports may result in dismissal from the athletic program.

LETTERING POLICIES

Athletes may receive from the school only one major award during their high school career. In order to letter in a sport, the athlete must be on a varsity team and satisfy the requirements stated below. Coaches must consider the following before nominating an athlete for a letter:

- Conduct as explained in this handbook.
- Attendance to all activities in which the athlete is required to attend.
- Completion of the season eligible and in good standing.
- Participation in a minimum of 50% of varsity athletic competitions or a district meet.



- Discretion of the head coach and/or Athletic Director.

ATHLETIC DRESS CODE

In addition to following regular school rules regarding dress code (found in the student handbook), athletes have additional expectations in regard to hairstyle and jewelry. The length of male athlete's hair may not be longer than the top of the collar. Ponytails on male athletes are not acceptable. Female athletes, who have long hair must wear hair, including long bangs, pulled back from the face during all athletic practices and competitions. In accordance with UIL rules and regulations, for safety reasons, athletes are not allowed to wear jewelry of any kind during any athletic competition. For the same reason, jewelry will not be allowed during athletic practices. Male athletes are not allowed to wear earrings at any time while a student at Blue Ridge ISD or while representing a Blue Ridge ISD athletic team at another location, either as a spectator or participant. This includes traveling to and from athletic competitions and practices.

UNIFORMS/PRACTICE

Every athlete will be issued a set of offseason practice clothes. **These clothes will be worn at practice only and should be worn at every practice.** Athletes may be allowed to purchase practice clothes from the school. Consequences for not being dressed out in proper practice attire will be at the discretion of the head coach.

CRIMINAL CHARGES

Any athlete legally accused of, arrested for, or convicted of a felony or misdemeanor (other than a traffic violation) will be subject to suspension from all athletic competitions, or other disciplinary action if not an in-season sport, until the matter has been cleared through the courts or punishment has been served. The athlete will be expected to participate in all practices during that time in order to remain in the athletic program. Depending on the severity of the charges and the outcome of the case, an athlete may be suspended for one or more games, dismissed from that sport for the remainder of the year, or dismissed from the athletic program for the remainder of the year. If the athlete is not found guilty or all charges are dropped, then the athlete will be reinstated in the athletic program at the Athletic Director's discretion. An athlete who is placed on probation may be allowed to compete in athletic competitions after a conference between the parent/guardian, the athlete, the head coach, and the Athletic Director; at which time a contract will be drawn up establishing the behaviors expected of the athlete.

RANDOM DRUG TESTING

All Blue Ridge ISD athletes will be subject to random drug testing throughout the school year. Parental consent is required for testing to be done. Any student who does not obtain parental consent **will not** be allowed in the athletic program. The main reason for drug testing is to get help for those athletes who might be experimenting with drugs. Any and all results will be kept confidential.



RANDOM TESTING

Random tests shall be conducted on as many as ten dates throughout the school year. No less than ten percent and no more than 50 percent of the students participating in the program shall be randomly selected for each random test date. The drug-testing laboratory shall use a random selection method to identify students chosen for random testing. Students shall not receive prior notice of the testing date or time.

REFUSAL TO TEST OR TAMPERING

A student who refuses to be tested when selected or who is determined to have tampered with a sample shall be deemed to have a positive test result and shall be subject to the appropriate consequences depending on previous positive test results, if any. If a student is absent on the day of the random test, a sample shall be collected within seven days of the original test date.

POSITIVE TEST RESULTS

An initial positive test shall be confirmed by a second test of the same specimen before being reported as positive. Upon receiving results of a positive drug test, the district shall schedule a meeting with the student, the student's parent if the student is under the age of 18, and the coach or sponsor of the extracurricular activity to review the test results and discuss consequences. The student or parent shall have three school days following the meeting to provide a medical explanation for a positive result.

CONSEQUENCES

Consequences of positive test results shall be cumulative through the end of the current school year. A student who has a confirmed positive drug test shall be subject to the following consequences:

FIRST OFFENSE

The student shall be suspended from any extracurricular activity for 30 school days following the date the student and parent are notified of the test results. During the period of suspension, the student may participate in practices but not in any competitive activities.

RETESTING

If the student wishes to return to participation in extracurricular activities, the student must be retested at the end of the period of suspension and have a negative test result; the student shall be retested on all remaining random test dates for that school year.

DRUG ABUSE PREVENTION

The District shall notify the parent and student of drug and alcohol abuse prevention resources available in the area.

SECOND OFFENSE

The student shall be suspended from any extracurricular activity for 45 school days following the date the student and parent are notified of the test results. The District shall again notify the parent and student of drug and alcohol abuse prevention resources available in the area.

THIRD OFFENSE

The student shall be suspended from participation in any extracurricular activity for 90 school days following the date the student and parent are notified of the test results.

END OF SEMESTER SUSPENSIONS

If a student's suspension from participation is not completed by the end of the semester, the student shall complete the assigned period of suspension during the following semester or during the first semester of the following school year.

APPEALS

A student or parent may appeal a decision made under this policy in accordance with FNG(LOCAL). The student shall be ineligible for participation in extracurricular activities while the appeal is pending.

TESTING POSITIVE AND FOLLOW UP DRUG TESTING

Students testing positive on the drug test will have to take 5 consecutive follow up drug tests.

MOVING FROM THE DISTRICT DUE TO POSITIVE DRUG TEST

If a student moves from the district to avoid the consequences from testing positive on the drug test and then returns to the district, he/she will then be held accountable for all consequences and regulations concerning testing positive.

OTHER DRUG ALCOHOL, TOBACCO, VAPING, E-CIGARETTES, & STEROID USE CONSEQUENCES

All regular school rules of conduct apply, including strict enforcement of rules regarding alcohol, tobacco, vaping, and drugs (found in the student handbook and the Blue Ridge ISD discipline management plan). All offenses and disciplinary actions are at the discretion of the Athletic Director and the head coach of the sport in compliance with district policies. In addition, state law provides that body-building, muscle enhancement, or increasing muscle bulk or strength through the use of an anabolic steroid or human growth hormone by a person who is in good health is not a valid medical purpose. Only a medical doctor may prescribe an anabolic steroid or human growth hormone for a person.



MISCELLANEOUS

ATHLETIC BANQUET

In the Fall, the Athletic Department will host a high school athletic banquet honoring all students who participated in athletics during the Fall Semester as well as a Spring Sports banquet for all athletes who participated in athletics during the Spring Semester. Athletes will be informed of appropriate dress. All athletes are expected to attend the banquet.

ATHLETIC PASSES

All student athletes will be issued an athletic pass for home competitions only. Students must present their student ID pass to enter all home events. **No exceptions!** In the event of a lost or stolen card, the athlete must pay \$10.00 (ten dollars) to receive a new one. **DO NOT** let other athletes, other students, parents, or community members borrow your card - if this infraction occurs, it will be taken up and you will have to pay to enter any activity.

FUNDRAISING

While any sports do not need fundraising campaigns, some sports may ask athletes to participate in various fundraisers for specific intents. All rules regarding fundraisers are the same for regular school fundraising (found in the student handbook).

HAZING

The district prohibits hazing. Hazing means any intentional, knowing, or reckless act directed against a student, by one person alone or acting with others, that endanger the mental or physical health or safety of a student for the purpose of being initiated into, affiliating with, holding office in, or maintaining membership in any organization whose members are or include other students.

SOCIAL MEDIA

It is important that students not use social media inappropriately. Examples of inappropriate use of social media include: bullying, threats, demeaning comments, references to alcohol/drugs, posting inappropriate pictures, etc. Although it is not the duty of the sponsor to monitor student's social media, when inappropriate posts are brought to their attention, they will use the following procedures:

- 1st Offense Sponsor directed consequences
- 2nd Offense Suspended for 1 contest/game/performance
- 3rd Offense Suspended for the remainder of the semester

PARENTS AND FANS CAUSING A DISTURBANCE OR REMOVED FROM A SCHOOL RELATED CONTEST OR EVENT

An individual causing a disturbance, ejected, or removed from a contest or event by any school official will be subject to further disciplinary action at the discretion of the school Superintendent.



PARENT COMMUNICATION PROTOCOL

Parents are encouraged to partner with the athletic coaches by encouraging their student to bring concerns directly to the coach. If the parent feels that the concern is not resolved, the parent must follow the chain of command to resolve the concern:

1. The coach or assistant coach
2. Boys or Girls Coordinator
3. Athletic Director
4. Superintendent
5. Board of Trustees

It is preferred that the parent wait 12 hours following a game to contact the coach to schedule a conference as coaches have been directed to not hold a parent meeting immediately before or after a game or practice. As listed in the appeals section of the handbook, parents must follow BRISD Board Policy FNG (LOCAL) to resolve the problem. Please note that all parent concerns will remain confidential and will not be shared in order to protect the confidentiality and dignity of the student and parent.

PERSONAL BELONGINGS

Athletes should not leave personal items, especially jewelry or money, in areas unsupervised. Each athlete is issued a locker and a combination lock to secure personal property. **Blue Ridge ISD and the Blue Ridge Athletic Department is not responsible for lost or stolen items.**

NECESSARY DOCUMENTATION

Prior to participation, an athlete must have the following on file:

- Required medical examination form (UIL form only)
- Parent permission form
- Parent acknowledgment of UIL rules form
- Eligibility forms (Varsity)
- Transfer papers (if applicable)
- Foreign exchange student forms (if applicable)
- Blue Ridge Athletic Handbook Acknowledgment
- Steroid Use Form

Blue Ridge ISD, in conjunction with board policy, requires that the student provide proof of medical insurance which remains current and in effect. Any student not covered under a parent/guardian's major medical insurance, will be provided information on student insurance coverage. However, the school does not pay any premiums or compensation for insurance. *In no way does the school district at any time assume any liability for any injury incurred at any time and in no event shall be responsible for any payment above and beyond the limits of the insurance policy in force at the time of the injury.*



CONSEQUENCES FOR HANDBOOK VIOLATIONS

Each coach shall have the authority, with the concurrence of the Athletic Director, to suspend or place on probation any athlete for major or minor infractions of the standards set forth in this athletic handbook. By signing the acknowledgement form you are agreeing to the terms and conditions set forth by the Blue Ridge Athletic Department.

Acting either upon the recommendation of the coach, or in his best judgment, the Athletic Director may suspend or place on probation for the duration of the term, duration of the seasonal activity or the duration of the school year any athlete for a major infraction of the standards set forth in this athletic handbook.

