

# District Policy

## **2431- ATHLETIC COMPETITION (BCIT)**

Section: Program

Date Created: October, 2013

Date Edited: July, 2015

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#### **Vocational School District of the County of Burlington**

The Board of Education recognizes the value of a program of athletic competition for both boys and girls as an integral part of the total school experience. Game activities and practice sessions provide opportunities to learn the values of competition and good sportsmanship.

The interscholastic program shall be conducted in accordance with existing Board of Education rules and regulation, considered as an educational activity, and shall support the integrity of the academic program for students. The athletic program shall always be in conformity with the general objectives of the district. Students will be encouraged to seek a variety of opportunities in sports, activities, and academics. We believe that the opportunity for participation in a wide range of student activities is a vital part of the student's educational experiences. Such participation is a privilege, not a right, which is extended to students who choose to fulfill the responsibilities that are required of members of interscholastic teams in the district. Every effort will be made to support the programs and teams with the best facilities, equipment, and the most qualified staff available.

#### Philosophy of the Athletics Programs

There is value in producing winning athletic teams, as this may result in an increase in school spirit, pride, and tradition. Winning shall never take priority over ensuring the well-being and development of students. Competitive extra- curricular activities shall focus on all of the following:

1. The development of athletic skills and abilities relevant to the particular activity;
2. The development of good sportsmanship;
3. The development of positive character traits, such as discipline, determination, dedication, confidence, concentration, consistency, respect, teamwork, service, and other positive character attributes;
4. The development of habits of life fitness;
5. Success in competition.

For purposes of this policy, the program of athletic competition includes all activities relating to competitive sports contests, games, or events or sports exhibitions involving individual pupils or teams of pupils of this district when such events occur within or between separate schools within this district or with any schools outside this district.

## **Sportsmanship**

Instilling habits of good sportsmanship is a primary goal of athletic programs; and, all district employees shall model sportsmanlike behaviors at all times. Board of Education Policy #5570, Sportsmanship, shall be strictly adhered to at all athletic practices and events.

Athletic Directors and coaches shall encourage and require young athletes to handle themselves in a sportsmanlike way. Adults working with students shall be models of self-control and dignity for players and spectators. Uncontrollable yelling and screaming or taunting of officials/referees shall be prohibited and not tolerated. Coaches are expected to coach and direct athletes in a positive and sportsmanlike manner.

Coaches shall engage in discussions on courtesy and sportsmanlike behavior at the beginning of and throughout each season. Pupil fans shall be expected to conduct themselves in an appropriate and sportsmanlike manner per Policy #5570; violations shall be subject to discipline. Parent(s) or legal guardian(s) and other adult spectators shall also be encouraged to act as models for young people by demonstrating self-control and dignity at all athletic events.

Per Policy #5570, unsportsmanlike behavior as exhibited through verbal abuse, rude gestures, taunts, obscenities, thrown objects, etc., shall not be tolerated in pupils, staff or any persons in attendance at district athletic events or competitions. Discipline may include, but not be limited to, eviction from the competition, prevention from attending further competitions, and/or appropriate discipline for students.

## **Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying (HIB)**

Acts of HIB are strictly prohibited per Policy #5512. This Policy applies at all times during athletic activities, practices, and events.

## **HAZING**

The hazing or initiation of students and/or athletes is strictly prohibited. Hazing is defined as follows:

- *To subject newcomers to abusive or humiliating ridicule, mental or physical discomfort, embarrassment, or harassment.*
- *An activity in which a high-status member coerces other members to do something that in some way humbles a newcomer who lacks the power to resist.*

Young students are the future of the school's programs, and should be mentored and developed with respect and caring. It is directed that each team/organization establish an atmosphere that develops, nurtures, and respects all students.

Coaches and advisors shall at the beginning of each season review the definition and prohibition on hazing with students. All athletes/participants shall be informed that if he/she experiences hazing, the athlete should immediately report the matter to the Coach and Athletic Director. If at any time a student, parent, or guardian feels a hazing concern has not been addressed

satisfactorily, the matter should be reported to the building principal. Concerns about hazing that a student, parent or guardian feels have not been addressed sufficiently by the principal should be reported to the Superintendent of Schools. Confirmation of such shall be documented in writing by each student and parent. The Athletic Directors are responsible to create a form documenting this with a sign-off for students and parents. Forms shall be maintained by the A.D.'s.

#### Supervision of athletes/activity participants

Athletes shall be properly supervised at all times, including in locker rooms.

#### Process for Try-Outs and Cuts

1. When try-outs and cuts are utilized, selections of athletes must be based upon each candidate's skills, abilities, work ethic, and attitudes.
2. Process and criteria for try-outs and decision regarding cuts MUST be clearly documented by coaches and approved by the Athletic Director.
3. The Athletic Director and/or Principal are responsible to hear parent complaints/appeals. The Principal's determination is final. The Superintendent shall not consider appeals regarding athletic cuts, provided District policy has been followed.

#### **Behavior of Coaches and Advisors**

Consistent with Policy #5570. Sportsmanship, Coaches and advisors shall be positive role models for young people, and; therefore, shall display respect, poise, and self-control at all times. This includes the respectful treatment of others, refraining from the use of inappropriate or foul language, and demonstrating self-discipline by remaining in control in all situations.

Coaches shall provide positive support, care, and encouragement for all student athletes according to the following. Coach shall:

1. Encourage and require sportsmanship from players, fellow coaches, officials, parents, and spectators at every practice and athletic contest
2. Model good sportsmanship in all circumstances, according to Board of Education Policy \$5570.
3. Place the emotional and physical well-being of student athletes ahead of a personal desire to win.
4. Treat each player as an individual, remembering the large range of emotional and physical development for young athletes.
5. Provide a safe physical and emotional playing environment for athletes.
6. Provide a learning environment with the belief that the practice field/court is a classroom.
7. Not argue or complain about an official's decision; never taunt an official.
8. Consistently seek to expand professional knowledge regarding principles of coaching and best practices.
9. Plan and prepare for practices and competition, just as a teacher prepares for effective classroom lessons. Maintain effective management and organizational practices; maintain detailed records, and consistently communicate important information to the student athletes and parents/guardians.

## **Athletic Codes of Conduct**

All athletes, coaches, and parents/guardians shall each season be required to review and sign an *Athletic Code of Conduct*, which reflects the following. The Athletic Director shall be responsible to maintain such records.

### Expectations for Athletes:

1. Train consistently as advised by the coach and athletic trainer.
2. Abide by team rules.
3. Maintain academic responsibilities.
4. Demonstrate consistent willingness to learn and progress.
5. Abide by the rules and regulations of the school and district.
6. Demonstrate good sportsmanship at all times during practices and athletic contests, consistent with Board of Education Policy #5570.

### Expectations for Coaches:

Coaches shall provide positive support, care, and encouragement for all student athletes according to the following. Coach shall:

1. Encourage and require sportsmanship from players, fellow coaches, officials, parents, and spectators at every practice and athletic contest
2. Model good sportsmanship in all circumstances, according to Board of Education Policy #5570.
3. Place the emotional and physical well-being of student athletes ahead of a personal desire to win.
4. Treat each player as an individual, remembering the large range of emotional and physical development for young athletes.
5. Provide a safe physical and emotional playing environment for athletes.
6. Provide a learning environment with the belief that the practice field/court is a classroom.
7. Not argue or complain about an official's decision; never taunt an official.
8. Consistently seek to expand professional knowledge regarding principles of coaching and best practices.
9. Plan and prepare for practices and competition, just as a teacher prepares for effective classroom lessons. Maintain effective management and organizational practices; maintain detailed records, and consistently communicate important information to the student athletes and parents/guardians.

### **Expectations for Parents/Guardians as Spectators:**

Parents/Guardians as spectators shall provide positive support, care, and encouragement for all student athletes participating in athletic programs.

Parents/Guardians as spectators shall:

1. Encourage sportsmanship from players, coaches, officials, other parents, and spectators at every practice and athletic contest.
2. Exhibit sportsmanship and positive support for everyone involved in athletic contests.

3. Not place a burden on athletics to win games/matches. The primary purpose of interscholastic athletics is to promote the physical, emotional, and social development of student athletes.
4. Not argue or complain about an official's decision; not taunt officials.
5. Refrain from being a sideline coach or referee; provide positive support for all players on all teams; never taunt or engage in disrespectful behavior toward a coach.
6. Support efforts to provide an environment that is free from drugs, tobacco, and alcohol; refrain from their use at all school-related events.
7. Provide consistent guidance and direction to student athletes to treat all other players, coaches, fans, and officials with respect.

### **Parent Consent**

No pupil may participate in a school-sponsored physical activity outside the regular physical education curriculum without a signed consent form from a parent(s) or legal guardian(s) naming the activity and acknowledging that the activity may be hazardous.

### **Eligibility Standards**

A pupil who wishes to participate in athletic competition must submit, on a form provided by the district, the signed consent of his/her parent(s) or legal guardian(s). The consent of the parent(s) or legal guardian(s) of a pupil who wishes to participate in interscholastic athletics must include an acknowledgment of the physical hazards that may be encountered in the sport.

Pupil participation in athletic competition shall be governed by the following eligibility standards:

1. Pupil must be under nineteen years of age on September 1.
2. Pupil must satisfactorily undergo a physical exam by a physician and turn in permission/medical form.
3. Pupil athletes must have attained **30** credits required by the State of New Jersey for graduation during the immediately preceding year to be eligible for athletic competition.
4. A one time probationary period will be available to pupils who are in one of the following situations prior to the end of the semester:
  - a. Lower than sixty percent but not failing career major area;
  - b. Failed one subject with overall passing average.

The probationary period will last three weeks (fifteen school days). During this time, the pupil athlete will be expected to complete homework assignments, pass tests

and quizzes and participate in class to the best of his/her ability. The pupil athlete should seek additional help such as tutoring or extra credit assignments.

The pupil will be monitored weekly by the coach. If failure status continues, probationary opportunity will be over. If at the end of the probationary period the pupil athlete is still in a failure situation, he/she will no longer be eligible for athletics.

5. Pupils must abide by all other articles set down by NJSIAA constitution, bylaws, and rules and regulations.
6. A pupil in grade 10, 11, or 12 who in the previous school year earned twenty-five percent of the total number of credits required by the State for graduation is eligible for participation in sports in the fall and winter seasons. A pupil in grade 9, 10, 11, or 12 who in the fall semester earned twelve and one-half percent of the total number of credits required by the State for graduation is eligible for participation in sports in the spring season.

Notice of these eligibility requirements shall be given to pupils.

### **Attendance Standards**

Attendance standards shall be those set in Board Policy. In particular, a pupil shall not participate in a performance, exhibition, practice or athletic event unless he/she has been present in school that day or has been absent for an excused reason other than for sickness.

### **Disciplinary Standards**

Disciplinary standards are based on Board Policies. Pupils on disciplinary suspension may not practice, perform or compete. The Superintendent and the Building Principal shall decide at the end of a suspension whether the pupil may return to practice and competition.

### **Special Education Pupils**

To participate in interscholastic competition, special education pupils must meet the same requirements listed above in conformity with IEPs.

Home-schooled pupils are not eligible to participate in the high school interscholastic athletic program of this district.

### **Health Requirements**

Good physical condition, freedom from injury, and full recovery from illness are prerequisites to participation in athletic competition and practice for such competition. HIV status shall not be screened as a part of athletic physicals or reported in school health records.

An examination of each candidate for a school athletic squad or team shall be conducted within 365 days prior to the first practice session with examinations being conducted at the medical home of the pupil. The "medical home" is defined as a health care provider and that provider's practice

site chosen by the pupil's parent(s) or legal guardian(s) for the provision of health care. Since the school physician is a "health care provider", the parent(s) or legal guardian(s) may choose either the school physician or their own private physician to provide the medical examination.

The medical examination shall be conducted in accordance with N.J.S.A 6A:16-2.2(h)1 and 2 and Regulation 2431.2. The medical report shall include a determination concerning the pupil's participation on an athletic team or squad from the examining physician, nurse practitioner/clinical nurse specialist, or physician's assistant. The medical report shall be provided to the school physician if the school physician did not provide the medical examination.

If the pupil's medical examination was completed more than ninety days prior to the first practice session, the pupil must provide a health history update of medical problems experienced since the last medical examination in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:16-2.2(h)4. This health history must be completed and signed by the parent(s) or legal guardian(s).

The school district will provide written notification to the parent(s) or legal guardian(s), signed by the school physician, stating approval of the pupil's participation in the athletics, based solely on the medical report, or the written reasons for the school physician's disapproval of the pupil's participation. The school physician's signature on the notification indicates the medical report complies with the requirements of N.J.A.C. 6A:16-2.2(h)5.

The health findings of this medical examination shall be maintained as part of the pupil's health record.

The medical examination conducted to determine the fitness of a candidate for athletic competition and the health history update must include, as a minimum, the respective medical history information and physical assessments set forth in rules of the State Board of Education and incorporated in their entirety in regulations implementing this policy.

The medical examination to determine the fitness of a pupil to participate in athletics shall include, as a minimum, the following:

A medical history questionnaire, completed by the parent(s) or legal guardian(s) of the pupil, to determine if the pupil:

1. Has been medically advised not to participate in any sport, and the reason for such advice;
2. Is under a physician's care and the reasons for such care;
3. Has experienced loss of consciousness after an injury;
4. Has experienced a fracture or dislocation;
5. Has undergone any surgery;
6. Takes any medication on a regular basis, the names of such medication and the reasons for such medication;
7. Has allergies including hives, asthma and reaction to bee stings;

8. Has experienced frequent chest pains or palpitations;
9. Has a recent history of fatigue and undue tiredness;
10. Has a history of fainting with exercise; and
11. Has a history of family members dying suddenly.

A physical examination which shall include, as a minimum, no less than:

1. Measurement of weight, height, and blood pressure;
2. Examination of the skin to determine the presence of infection, scars of previous surgery or trauma, jaundice, and purpura;
3. Examination of the eyes to determine visual acuity, use of eyeglasses or contact lenses, and examination of the sclera for the presence of jaundice;
4. Examination of the ears to determine the presence of acute or chronic infection, perforation of the eardrum and gross hearing loss;
5. Examination of the nose to assess the presence of deformity, which may affect endurance;
6. Assessment of the neck to determine range of motion and the presence of pain associated with such motion;
7. Examination of chest contour;
8. Auscultation and percussion of the lungs;
9. Assessment of the heart with attention to the presence of murmurs, noting rhythm and rate;
10. Assessment of the abdomen with attention to the possible presence of hepatomegaly, splenomegaly, or abnormal masses;
11. Assessment of the back to determine range of motion and abnormal curvature of the spine;
12. Examination of extremities to determine abnormal mobility or immobility, deformity, instability, muscle weakness or atrophy, surgical scars and varicosities;
13. Examination of the testes to determine the presence and descent of testes, abnormal masses or configurations, or hernia;
14. Assessment of physiological maturation; and
15. Neurological examination to assess balance and coordination and the presence of abnormal reflexes.

All students participating on an interscholastic athletic team must submit the following completed forms to the school nurse prior to the designated deadline date for each athletic season:

- PARENTAL CONSENT FOR PARTICIPATION IN INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETICS FORM (for each season of participation)
- NJSIAA PRE-PARTICIPATION QUESTIONNAIRE & PARTICIPATION FORM
- NJSIAA STEROID TESTING POLICY CONSENT TO TESTING FORM (once per year)
- NJSIAA SPORTS-RELATED CONCUSSION AND HEAD INJURY FACT SHEET AND PARENT/GUARDIAN ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FORM (once per year)
- NJSIAA SUDDEN CARDIAC DEATH IN YOUNG ATHLETES ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FORM (ONCE PER YEAR)

## **Emergency Procedures**

Athletic coaches shall be trained in first aid and in the identification of pupil athletes who are injured or disabled in the course of any athletic activity.

The Superintendent shall prepare and present to the Board for its approval procedures for the emergency treatment of injuries and disabilities that occur in the course of any athletic activity. Emergency procedures shall be reviewed by the Board not less than once in each school year and shall be disseminated to appropriate staff members.

## **Interscholastic Standards**

The Board shall approve annually a program of interscholastic athletics and shall require that all facilities utilized in that program, whether or not the property of this Board, properly safeguard both players and spectators and are kept free from hazardous conditions.

The Board adopts as Board policy the rules and regulations of the New Jersey State Interscholastic Athletic Association and shall review such rules annually to ascertain that they continue to be in conformity with the objectives of this Board.

The Superintendent shall annually prepare, approve, and present to the Board for its consideration a program of interscholastic athletics that includes a complete schedule of athletic events and practices and shall inform the Board of changes in that schedule as they occur.

The Superintendent shall prepare rules for the conduct of pupils participating in interscholastic athletics that will conform to rules of the State Board of Education, the New Jersey State Interscholastic Athletic Association, and the Burlington County Interscholastic League.

N.J.S.A. 2C:21-11;

N.J.S.A. 18A:11-3 et seq.

N.J.A.C. 6A:7-1.7; 6A:16-1.4; 6A:16-2 et seq.

Adopted: 28 August 2007

Revised: 21 October 2014

Revised: July 21, 2015