

BATTLE CREEK CENTRAL ATHLETICS

# ATHLETIC CODE OF CONDUCT



# BEARCATS

**2021-2022**

BATTLE CREEK PUBLIC SCHOOLS • BATTLE CREEK, MI

## MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of Battle Creek Public Schools' Athletic Department (Central High School and Middle Schools) is to support Battle Creek Public Schools' mission of "100% Success for Every Bearcat."

## VISION STATEMENT

It is the vision of Battle Creek Public Schools' athletic program to create, maintain and enhance an academic and athletic experience of excellence for all Bearcats.

## PHILOSOPHY STATEMENT

The goal of the BCPS athletic program is to offer a positive and meaningful experience that will enhance the growth and development of our young men and women. Athletics can be one of the most significant aspects of a student's education. The athletic program is an extension of, and is complementary to, the total education program. The program offers each student an opportunity for self growth, development of physical skills and fitness, sportsmanship, teamwork and the satisfaction found in competition.

## EQUAL OPPORTUNITY/NONDISCRIMINATION STATEMENT

The District will not discriminate against any person based on sex, race, color, national origin, religion, height, weight, marital status, handicap, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression or disability. The following department has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the School District's non-discrimination policies:

Human Resources  
Battle Creek Public Schools  
3 West Van Buren Street  
Battle Creek, MI 49017  
(269) 965-9476

In addition, the School District's complaint procedure may be obtained from Human Resources

### **For further information, you may also contact:**

Office for Civil Rights  
U.S. Department of Education  
600 Superior Avenue East, Suite 750  
Cleveland, OH 44114-2611  
Telephone: (216) 522-4970  
FAX: (216) 522-2573; TDD: 877-521-2172  
E-mail: OCR.Cleveland@ed.gov

## ELIGIBILITY

### **BATTLE CREEK PUBLIC SCHOOLS (GRADES 6-12) ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY**

It is much more likely that student-athletes will have a career outside of athletics. Therefore, it is expected that Battle Creek Public Schools' student-athletes excel in the classroom first before excelling on the field, court, or in the pool. A student-athlete is expected to pass all classes every grading period.

- A student-athlete may not fail more than two (2) classes during an academic semester (MHSAA standard-66.67%) to participate in athletics. Student-athletes who fail two or more classes during a semester are ineligible to participate in athletics for the next 60 school days (MHSAA consequence) and may only begin participating on the 61st day.

- During the season of participation, student-athletes' academic performance will be further monitored. The Athletic Director will conduct weekly eligibility checks for poor and/or failing grades by running Skyward grade reports. The grade checks will be done at 8:00 AM each Tuesday of the school year.
- A student-athlete who is failing two or more classes, must submit an Attendance and Grade Report by Friday to his/her coach. This report must be taken to all teachers whose classes are being failed for verification of current, up-to-date grades. The coach will submit the Attendance and Grade Report to the Athletic Office by 8:00 AM on the following Monday. If the student-athlete is failing more than one (1) course, the student-athlete will be ineligible for the next week of competition (Monday-Sunday).  
The Athletic Director/Athletic Secretary will notify ineligible students and their immediate coach of eligibility status.
- For a student to be able to participate in an extracurricular activity on a given day, the student/athlete must be in attendance for the full school day (defined as all blocks or scheduled periods of the school day), other than for documented reasons (such as medical appointments) with prior school exception, and/or approval by an Administrator. Coaches cannot authorize students' excused absences except for dismissals for team activities or contests. Parental excuses do not automatically cause a student-athlete to maintain eligibility.

Though it is the student-athlete's responsibility to improve grade(s) to a satisfactory level, the Athletic Director may initiate an intervention with the student-athlete, classroom teacher, and/or guidance counselor to develop a plan of assistance designed to enable the student-athlete to achieve academic success.

## **BATTLE CREEK PUBLIC SCHOOLS ATHLETIC CODE VIOLATIONS**

The Athletic Director, along with the high school or middle school administration, has the ability to review each violation on a case-by-case basis. It should be noted that the Athletic Director or administration will not go back more than one calendar year to review allegations of athletic code violations, nor will anonymous allegations be given credence.

### **Tier 1: Use or Possession of Alcohol, Tobacco or Drugs, Hazing, and Misdemeanor Offenses of School Policy or Law**

The use or possession of alcohol, tobacco or drugs (including performance enhancing drugs) will not be tolerated at any time. Students who use marijuana for medicinal purposes are not eligible to participate in athletics.

Hazing is defined as any activity that recklessly or intentionally endangers the mental or physical health or safety of a student for the purpose of initiation, membership, or affiliation with any athletic team. Any hazing activity, whether by an individual or by a group, shall be presumed to be a forced activity even if a student-athlete willingly participates. Battle Creek Public Schools does not condone any form of initiation or harassment, known as hazing, as part of any school sponsored activity. No student-athlete, coach, volunteer, or district employee shall plan, direct, encourage, assist, or engage in any hazing activity.

Nor will acts that result in the student-athlete being arrested by law enforcement be condoned. As it has been determined that athletic participation is a privilege and not a right, it is to be understood that there will be no obligation on the part of the administration, in response to the arrest of a student-athlete, to wait for the judicial process to run its course. Therefore, even while misdemeanor charges are pending and adjudicated, the athlete will be suspended and participation will be denied.

Offenses other than those related to drug and/or alcohol use or possession include, but are not limited to: Excessive absenteeism, in/out of school suspension, fighting, vandalism, academic fraud, technology misuse (including derogatory posts or content on social media)

**Strike 1** — The student-athlete will be ineligible for the next scheduled contest. Scrimmages are not considered scheduled contests. Exclusion will carry over to the next season or concurrent sport the student-athlete participates in should the penalty not be completed during the initial season of ineligibility. The student-athlete is expected to continue to practice with his or her team while serving this penalty. If a student-athlete is ineligible for any part of the MHSAA tournament series, they shall be ineligible for the entire series. Referred for drug/alcohol assessment.

**Strike 2** — The student-athlete will be ineligible for the next two scheduled contests. Scrimmages are not considered scheduled contests. The exclusion shall be consecutive, starting with the first scheduled event of exclusion. Exclusion will carry over to the next season or concurrent sport the student-athlete participates in should the penalty not be completed during the initial season of ineligibility. The student-athlete is expected to continue to practice with his or her team while serving this penalty. If a student-athlete is ineligible for any part of the MHSAA tournament series, the student-athlete shall be ineligible for the entire series. Referred for drug/alcohol assessment.

**Strike 3** — The student-athlete will be ineligible for 50% of the scheduled contests. Scrimmages are not considered scheduled contests. The exclusion shall be consecutive, starting with the first scheduled event of exclusion. Scrimmages are not considered scheduled contests. The exclusion shall be consecutive, starting with the first scheduled event of exclusion. A restorative conversation will be held with administration, coaches, parent, and student-athlete(s). Referred for drug/alcohol assessment. May not be reinstated until successful completion of drug and alcohol counseling.

**Strike 4** — The student-athlete is ineligible to participate in athletics in the Battle Creek Public Schools for the equivalent of one full season, at which time the student-athlete will meet with administration to discuss if and why eligibility should be reinstated. Any further violations will result in a repeat of strike 4 corrective expectations. Referred for drug/alcohol assessment. May not be reinstated until successful completion of drug and alcohol counseling.

## **Tier 2 – Distribution of Alcohol or Drugs and Felony Offenses**

The distribution or sale of alcohol or drugs (including performance enhancing drugs) is viewed as more serious than the use or possession of those substances. As stated in Tier 1, athletic participation is a privilege and not a right (supported by many court decisions); it is to be understood that there will be no obligation on the part of the administration, in response to the arrest of a student-athlete, to wait for the judicial process to run its course. Therefore, even while felony charges are pending and adjudicated, all forms of participation will be denied.

A student-athlete who is charged with a felony offense is ineligible to participate in athletics in the Battle Creek Public Schools for the remainder of his or her high school career. The ineligibility status may be reviewed should the student-athlete be exonerated of such charges. Distribution of Alcohol or Drugs (non-felony level)

**Strike 1** — Using the number of regular season contests scheduled, the student-athlete will be ineligible to participate in 25% of that sport's regular season contests. Scrimmages are not considered scheduled contests. The exclusion shall be consecutive, starting with the first scheduled event. Exclusion will carry over to the next season or concurrent sport the student-athlete participates in should the penalty not be completed during the initial season of ineligibility. The student-athlete is expected to continue to practice with his or her team while serving this penalty. If a student-athlete is ineligible for any part of the MHSAA tournament series, they shall be ineligible for the entire series.

**Strike 2** — Using the maximum number of regular season contests scheduled, the student-athlete will be ineligible to participate in 50% of that sport’s regular season contests. Scrimmages are not considered scheduled contests. The exclusion shall be consecutive, starting with the first scheduled event. Exclusion will carry over to the next season or concurrent sport the student-athlete participates in should the penalty not be completed during the initial season of ineligibility. The student-athlete is expected to continue to practice with his or her team while serving this penalty. If a student-athlete is ineligible for any part of the MHSAA tournament series, the student-athlete shall be ineligible for the entire series.

**Strike 3** — The student-athlete is ineligible to participate in athletics in the Battle Creek Public Schools for the equivalent of one full season, at which time the student-athlete will meet with administration to discuss if and why eligibility should be reinstated. Any further violations will result in a repeat of strike 3 corrective expectations.

### **Special Circumstances and Greater Magnitude of Consequences**

The Athletic Director has, at his or her discretion, the ability to impose a greater magnitude of consequences if feeling a student-athlete has been belligerent or defiant, shows no remorse, or has behaved in ways to significantly hinder the investigation of a violation.

### **Self-Reporting Clause**

If a student-athlete self-reports a violation of the athletic code, the consequence may be reduced by, but not less than one contest.

### **Appeal Process**

Even though participating in athletics is a privilege and not a right, a process of appeal is available when a student-athlete feels that an unfair decision has been made concerning a violation of the athletic code. The student-athlete will follow these steps:

1. Appeal the decision to the high school principal within four (4) calendar days of receiving the penalty.
2. A second appeal may be made to the superintendent of schools within four (4) calendar days of the principal’s response.
3. A final appeal may be made to the Battle Creek Public Schools Board of Education. The request must be made within four (4) calendar days of the superintendent’s response. The Board’s decision will be final.

Failure to appeal within the time limits will result in a waiver of any further appeal. The purpose of each step in the appeal process is to provide the responsible and affected parties with a full disclosure of the facts and a full opportunity to discuss the issues involved. All meetings will be informal and will be attended only by those immediately affected.

## **MHSAA ELIGIBILITY**

The Michigan High School Athletic Association (MHSAA) has been the governing body of high school athletics in our state since 1924, and the Battle Creek Public Schools is part of more than 700 public, parochial and private schools that have agreed to follow the rules and regulations MHSAA helps enact. The following is a summary of the high school MHSAA Ten-Point Checklist for Student eligibility:

### **AGE**

High school students become ineligible if reaching the nineteenth (19th) birthday before September 1 of a current school year.

### **UNDERGRADUATE STANDING**

Students involved with high school sports are NOT to be a high school graduate.

### **PHYSICAL EXAMINATION**

Students must have on file, in the Athletic Office, a physician’s statement for the current school year (after April 15th) certifying that the student-athlete is physically able to compete in athletic practices and contests.

### **ENROLLMENT**

Students must be enrolled in school prior to the fourth Friday after Labor Day or the fourth Friday of February. A student must be enrolled in the school for which the student-athlete competes.

### **SEMESTERS OR TRIMESTERS OF ENROLLMENT**

Students cannot be eligible in high school for more than eight semesters or twelve trimesters and the seventh and eighth semesters or the tenth, eleventh and twelfth trimesters must be consecutive. Students are allowed four first semesters and four second semesters or trimester equivalents of competition and cannot compete if they have graduated from high school. When two seasons leading to a state championship of the same sport are offered, a student-athlete may participate in only one.

### **TRANSFER STUDENTS**

A “sport-specific” transfer rule proposal has been adopted by the MHSAA Representative Council for 2019-20. It has two major components:

- 1. More Lenient** — Students in grades 9 through 12 who have not participated in an interscholastic scrimmage or contest on a school-sponsored team in Michigan or elsewhere in an MHSAA sport one season may transfer from one school to another with no delay in eligibility at any level in that sport the next season. No MHSAA action is required.
  
- 2. More Restrictive** — Unless one of the 15 stated Exceptions applies, students in grades 9 through 12 who have participated in an interscholastic scrimmage or contest in an MHSAA sport on a school sponsored team in Michigan or elsewhere during the previous season for a sport, and then transfer to an MHSAA member school, are ineligible at all levels of that sport at that school through the next complete season in that sport, including the MHSAA tournament. Students who transfer during a season in which they are participating, and do not meet one of the 15 stated Exceptions, are ineligible at all levels of that sport for the remainder of that season, including the MHSAA tournament; and the student-athlete remains ineligible at all levels of that sport through the next complete season in that sport, including the MHSAA tournament.

The revised rule means a transfer student has . . .

- immediate eligibility in a sport not played the previous season for that sport and (if one of the 15 Exceptions applies)
- no eligibility for the upcoming season in a sport actually played the previous season in that sport (participated in an interscholastic scrimmage or contest).

If the administration of the student’s new school requests in writing on a timely basis, the MHSAA Executive Committee may approve a waiver that reduces the period of ineligibility to 90 scheduled school days at the new school. The Executive Committee also has authority to approve immediate eligibility.

\*The effective date is Aug. 1, 2018, with implementation felt during the 2019-20 school year. **That is, what students do during the 2019-20 school year will determine their eligibility for 2020-21 should they transfer schools and not meet one of the 15 stated exceptions.**

### **UNDUE INFLUENCE**

The use of undue influence by any person directly, or indirectly, associated with a school to secure or encourage the attendance of a student for athletic purposes will cause the student to become ineligible for a minimum of one semester.

### **LIMITED TEAM MEMBERSHIP**

After practicing with, or participating with, high school teams, students cannot participate in any athletic competition sponsored by the student-athlete's school in the same sport during the same season. Students in individual sports may participate in a maximum of two non-school individual meets or contests during the school season while not representing their school.

### **ALL-STAR COMPETITION**

Students shall not compete at any time in any sport under MHSAA jurisdiction in All - Star Contests or national championships regardless of the method of selection. Participation in such a contest shall cause that student to become ineligible for a maximum period of one year of school enrollment.

### **AWARDS AND AMATEURISM**

Students cannot receive money or other valuable considerations for participating in MHSAA sponsored sports or officiating in interscholastic athletic contests, except as allowed by the MHSAA HANDBOOK. Students may accept, for participation in MHSAA sponsored sports, a symbolic or merchandise award which does not have a value over \$50.00. Banquets, luncheons, dinners, trips and admission to camps or events, are permitted if accepted "in kind". Awards in the form of cash merchandise, certificates, or any other negotiable document are not allowed. Any other specific rules or regulations can be found in the Athletic Office.

## **COMPLAINT PROCEDURE AND GUIDELINES**

### **PARENTS AND STUDENT-ATHLETES**

Unfortunately, complaints do occur in the coaching profession. Many are mere misunderstandings. They are usually resolved with communication between the two individuals involved. However, there are times when the complaint cannot be resolved at this level. Then, the complaining party should begin Step #2 in the process. Keep in mind when going through the process, whether the complaint is small or large, the mediation process is very important and will be handled in a manner which treats the individual with fairness and concern. No coach shall treat a student-athlete differently as a result of a parent's complaint, opinion, or action.

When a complaint is brought to any level of the administration, it shall be processed in the following manner:

**Step 1** The student-athlete at the center of the complaint shall discuss the issue with the coach to resolve the issue.

**Step 2** The student-athlete at the center of the complaint and the parent/guardian shall discuss the issue with the coach to resolve the issue.

**Step 3** If the complaint is not satisfactorily resolved, the complaint shall be investigated by the Athletic Director to be resolved.

**Step 4** If the complaint is not satisfactorily resolved, at the Athletic Director level, the complaint shall be investigated by the building principal or their designee.

**Step 5** If the complaint is not satisfactorily resolved at this level, the superintendent of schools or designee may hear the complaint and take whatever action is determined to be prudent.

**BELIEVE**  
*in the*  
**CHANGE**<sup>SM</sup>

