

**BALDWIN MIDDLE SCHOOL  
ATHLETICS**



**INTERSCHOLASTIC  
ATHLETIC HANDBOOK  
FOR  
STUDENT ATHLETES  
AND PARENTS**

Dear Students and Parents:

Research indicates that students who are involved in co-curricular experiences manage their time more effectively and have higher grades than those who are not involved. In addition, they have a more serious sense of their own growth and development. After-hours commitments also teach organizational skills, collaborative skills, decision making skills and inter- and intra-personal skills and enhance opportunities for expanding creativity. Co-curricular activities are indeed the events of which positive school memories are made. It is for these reasons I am pleased that you have chosen to participate in the fine interscholastic athletic program in the Baldwin School District.

This handbook is written for students and their parents. It is an outgrowth of efforts made by the Athletic Department to provide you with the information you need to understand the rules which govern athletic participation and procedures which must be followed by athletes and their parents.

All the information in this handbook has been reviewed and endorsed by the Athletic Department and school administration. It is our hope that the handbook will answer many questions and serve as a resource as you engage in interscholastic athletics.

This handbook should be read by parents and students. **The acknowledgement must be signed by both the athlete and a parent and submitted to the coach before the first contest of the season in order to participate in that contest.**

Best wishes for a successful school year. If you have any questions, please call me at 377-9296.

Sincerely,

*Eduardo Ramirez*

Eduardo Ramirez

Director,  
Physical Education, Health, Health  
Services & Athletics

## PHILOSOPHY

In order to understand the philosophy of the Baldwin Middle School athletic program, it is important to understand the philosophy of Baldwin Middle School.

We believe that our middle school youngsters need to be safe, respected, recognized, independent and part of a group with whom they can identify and be accepted. In accordance with educational theory, we stress that these student characteristics and their corresponding educational needs be taken into account and addressed in all our middle school instructional programs, including athletic ones. Consequently, our athletic program strives to accomplish the following:

- To provide our students with the opportunities to explore a broad range of age-appropriate athletic activities both on an intramural and on an interscholastic basis.
- To enhance our students' self-esteem through the formation of heterogeneous ability teams.
- To provide recreational outlets for our middle school youngsters while building their general physical fitness, improving their cardiovascular strength and enhancing their athletic skills in developmental, age-appropriate ways.
- To regularly assess and take into account the physical safety, personal development, well-being and progress of every one of our middle school participants.
- To address the unique psycho-social needs of our pre-adolescents through effective athletic activities which encourage and reinforce cooperation, respect for student differences, team commitment, good sportsmanship, peer approval and task commitment.

We believe that middle school athletics should be a part of all our youngsters' educational programs. Our after school interscholastic program offers a wide range of physical activities which supplement and complement those offered through our physical education classes and our intramural programs. Interscholastic sports also provide a unique opportunity for parents, faculty and community members to come together to constructively celebrate, encourage and support the development of all our children. In addition to providing all of us with a forum in which adults and students can model appropriate ways to deal with and benefit from success and failure on the playing field, interscholastic activities provide an important vehicle through which our students can recognize and internalize the importance of personal responsibility, individual and group progress and commitment and responsibility to others. We believe that these lessons are not only essential to our children's development as athletes and effective team members, but are also critical to our youngsters growth as increasingly well-rounded, considerate and responsible individuals.

At times, however, the roster must be limited in order to insure proper instruction as well as adequate supervision for the safe participation of students. This situation traditionally arises when we do not have adequate indoor/outdoor facilities. In this case, the team selection process is based on tryouts. However, those students who are not selected are encouraged to choose other activities available to them that do not have roster limitations.

### **ATHLETIC CODE OF BEHAVIOR**

It is our desire that all individuals (athletes, coaches, officials, spectators and supervisors) involved with interscholastic athletics will display behavior that reflects the ideals of sportsmanship, ethical conduct and a sense of fair play. The benefits derived from playing the game fairly should be stressed and any actions which tend to destroy those values should be discouraged. Courtesy should be shown toward opponents, officials, supervisors, spectators and administrators. Efforts must be made to achieve a thorough understanding and acceptance of the rules of the game and standards of eligibility, as well as to respect the integrity and the judgment of sports officials. It is important for all to recognize that the purpose of athletics is to promote the physical, mental, moral, social and emotional well-being of the individual players. Most of all, it is the duty of all concerned with middle school athletics to remember that each individual athletic contest is only a game and should be kept in that perspective.

#### **ATHLETES ARE EXPECTED TO:**

- conduct themselves in a mature fashion at all times
- not engage in the hazing, initiation or bullying of any students or staff members
- demonstrate self-control and mutual respect at all times
- avoid the use of profanity, abusive language or gestures in dealing with opponents, officials or spectators
- accept victory with grace and defeat with dignity; poor winners or losers do a disservice to themselves
- set an example in word and deed, both on and off the playing area; remember that athletes assume a leadership role and that younger students emulate their behavior
- observe training regulations and requirements of physical fitness for better personal performance and greater contribution to the team effort
- place athletic competition in its proper perspective; it represents only one part of the learning process and should not be pursued to the exclusion of everything else

## **SPECTATORS ARE EXPECTED TO:**

- conform to accepted standards of good sportsmanship and behavior
- not engage in the hazing of any students or staff members
- respect officials, coaches and players and extend all courtesies to them
- refrain from feet stomping, disrespectful remarks and the use of noisemakers
- remain silent when players require total concentration, i.e., a free throw in basketball or a serve in volleyball
- obey the regulations of the school; those who do not conform will be brought to the attention of the building authorities
- understand that schools are responsible for the conduct of their respective spectators **whether home or away.**

**Violators of this code are subject to eviction from the area.**

All Baldwin school community members are expected to behave responsibly while in school and while participating in the interscholastic programs. During the season, student athletes must conform to several Athletic Department policies as outlined in this handbook.

## **HAZING, INITIATION, BULLYING**

The coach will review with the entire team the definitions of hazing, initiation and bullying. The student athletes will understand the seriousness of participation in any activity that is considered hazing, initiation or bullying and that Baldwin has zero tolerance. There are serious consequences should this occur.

**Violators of this code are subject to suspension/dismissal from the team along with discipline from the middle school administration.**

### The Team Respect Pledge

We pledge to commit to respect, safety and inclusion for all members of our team and school community.

We pledge to take a leadership role by setting an example of respectful interactions for all.

We pledge to:

- Avoid using language, name-calling or slurs that put others down because of such differences as race, sexual orientation, gender identity/expression or religion.
- Remind teammates who use “put down” language that “that’s not ok on our team.”
- Treat all teammates with respect.
- Believe that “Team Respect” is a winning strategy: when each team member feels safe and respected, they can play their best for the team.
- Leadership sets an example of respect for students in our school as well as opposing teams and fans.

### PROCEDURE FOR AWAY EVENTS

All members of athletic teams must travel to and from athletic contests in transportation provided by Baldwin Public Schools. We do understand that there are rare occurrences in which an emergency comes up necessitating the need to take a child home. Such occurrences would be: school functions, religious obligations and medical emergencies. Every attempt should be made to schedule any medical or dental appointments on non-game days. Parents are never permitted to take home any child other than their own, even with a signed note from both parents. If your child must be picked up from a game due to attendance at their religious school, please provide the coach with a copy of their schedule from the school and the dates that you will need to pick them up. Part of being on a team is the comradery of being together. Traveling to and from games helps to promote this and allows the coach to speak with their athletes about what transpired during the game. While we do understand that this may be an inconvenience to some, it is the district policy.

In the rare occasion that you have a situation that falls within these guidelines, a Transportation Waiver must be submitted to the Athletic Director’s office prior to 12:00 PM on the day of the event for approval. It is the coach’s responsibility to ensure that athletes behave responsibly and in accordance with the school district’s bus safety guidelines. Athletes should be reminded that as team members they are representing Baldwin and their behavior and decorum will reflect on their team, coach and school. Late buses leave at 4:30 PM and 5:00 PM on school days. When our athletic bus arrives at school after the 5:00 PM late bus has departed, the students will need to be picked up by parents.

## ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

In order to participate on an interscholastic athletic team, a student **must** satisfy the following minimum eligibility rules. These standards are established by the New York State Public High School Athletic Association.

**Bona fide students:** an athlete must be a bona fide middle school student and must be taking at least five subjects and physical education.

**Health Examination:** a student who engages in interscholastic competition must submit completed parental permission forms with their medical history signed by the parent/guardian and a physical examination screening form completed by a physician. The forms are available online at [www.baldwinschools.org](http://www.baldwinschools.org) "District Forms." Misrepresentation or falsifying data on medical forms will result in immediate suspension from participation pending a hearing with the Athletic Director and the Principal.

Athletic physicals are valid for one calendar year from the date in which they were administered. If a physical expires during the course of a season, the athlete will be permitted to complete the season, but will not be eligible to try-out for subsequent teams until they complete a new physical with their physician.

## TRYOUTS AND TEAM SELECTION

Tryouts and team selection will be held in a closed environment with only the coaches and the athletes permitted. In accordance with our philosophy of athletics and our desire to see as many students as possible participate in the athletic program while at Baldwin, we encourage coaches to keep as many students as possible on each team. Time, space, facilities, equipment and other factors may place limitations on team size for any particular sport. Choosing the members of athletic teams is the sole responsibility of the coaches. Selections are made according to the skill level of the athletes. All positions are open for any athlete to fill on an annual basis. At the pre-season orientation meeting, the coach shall provide the following information to all candidates:

- extent of try-out period
- criteria used to select the team member
- number of students to be selected
- practice commitments of team members
- game commitments of team members

- requirements for participation

When a squad cut becomes necessary, the coach will discuss alternative possibilities for participation in the sport or participation in other areas of the athletic program.

### **PRACTICE SESSIONS**

All required practice sessions shall be organized and planned from Monday - Friday and shall include activities specific to the sport. Depending on the sport and level of play, each team and team member is required to participate in a minimum number of practice sessions prior to the first team scrimmage and/or contest. There may be times in which the coach might need to hold a Saturday practice. Practice sessions are sport specific, so that practices in one sport would not apply to another sport in the event an athlete changes teams. The athlete must be engaged in rigorous activity in order for the practice to be counted toward the minimum number. A practice on the same day of a game may not be counted towards the minimum number. Athletes must have an approved medical examination and health update before being cleared in writing by the nurse to practice.

### **CONFLICTS IN EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**

Baldwin Middle School provides numerous opportunities for its students to participate in extracurricular activities. These activities are conducted according to an overriding philosophy that is consistent with the academic program.

Students are encouraged to take advantage of these opportunities; however, students should not be allowed to sacrifice the quality of their academic program to participate in athletics.

The Athletic Department recognizes that students should have the opportunity to engage in a broad range of learning experiences. However, a student who attempts to participate in too many extracurricular activities will, undoubtedly, be in a position of conflicting responsibilities. Students are cautioned not to overextend themselves.

Parents and student athletes have a responsibility to notify a coach immediately whenever a conflict arises and should attempt to resolve the conflict. If it becomes apparent that conflicts will continue on a regular basis and a student cannot fulfill his/her obligation, he/she should withdraw from one of those activities.

### **OBSERVANCE OF RELIGIOUS HOLIDAYS**

The Baldwin Athletic Department recognizes the right of all students to practice the teachings of their religion and observe religious holidays. All requests to be excused from practice and/or games to attend religious services will be honored without penalty. The scheduling of



scrimmages or games shall be prohibited on the following religious holidays: Rosh Hashanah (beginning at sunset of the previous day), Yom Kippur (beginning at sunset of the previous day), Christmas Day, Holy Thursday (evening), Good Friday and Easter Sunday.

### **CHANGING SPORTS**

Whenever students enlist in the athletic program by joining or trying-out for a specific team, they assume a responsibility and commitment to that team and coach. Dropping out of a sport is discouraged. On occasion, however, an athlete may find it necessary to drop a sport for a good reason. Dropping a sport and the subsequent transfer to another sport shall be governed by the following guidelines:

- No changing of teams will be allowed after the official team roster has been submitted to BOCES, or after the final cut has been made on the team being dropped or the team to be joined without approval from the Athletic Director.
- An athlete, who wishes to leave a team and/or transfer to another, may do so provided he/she leaves while in good standing and only after discussing the reason for leaving with the Athletic Director and the coach. There must be room on the other team. All issued equipment must be returned.
- **The athlete then must meet the minimum number of practices for the new sport before he/she may participate in an athletic contest.**
- An athlete who is dismissed from a squad for disciplinary reasons (i.e.: violation of the code of conduct, insubordination, excessive unexcused absences, suspension, etc.) shall not be allowed to participate in another sport for the remainder of the sport's season or until the period of suspension expires.

### **SELECTION/CLASSIFICATION PROGRAM**

The Board of Education has approved the selection/classification program to be used in the Baldwin Public Schools. This program is regulated by the New York State Education Department and allows for the selection classification of students in grades 7 and 8 for Senior High School interscholastic athletic competition through the use of physical and emotional maturation, physical fitness and skill criteria. Middle School students can become eligible to try out for varsity level participation through this program only if they are a highly skilled athlete with superior skills in a particular sport.

Varsity coaches are charged with overseeing their specific program and seeking out those individuals who may qualify for this process. Towards the end of May, the year prior, the Athletic Office will ask varsity coaches for the names of any student athletes whom they feel meet the criteria for Selection/Classification. They will be asked to provide his/her relative merits based on the athletes demonstrable advanced skill level. If it can be established that the student is highly skilled, and it is determined that the student is academically, socially and emotionally mature enough, then the student may begin the process. The Athletic Director will then seek parental permission, medical approval and arrange for fitness testing. This program only grants the student a tryout. It does not guarantee the student will make the team.

### **RISK FACTOR IN SPORTS**

In the event an athlete sustains an injury which is serious enough to require a physician's examination and treatment, the athlete must obtain written permission from the attending physician and parent before being allowed to resume practice/competition. All such injuries must be reported to the coach **and** the Health Office by the athlete and coach as soon after the injury as possible, but no later than the next school day.

All doctor's notes regarding an athlete's fitness to resume athletic competition must be submitted to the Health Office to be noted on the student's health record. In the event a question arises regarding an injury/illness, the Health Office should be contacted immediately.

In all cases, when a question regarding the health, fitness or ability of an athlete to return to athletic participation is raised, the decision of the Chief School Physician will be final.

### **HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE**

In order for coverage to be in effect, it shall be the responsibility of the student to report the injury to the Health Office within 30 days of the date of injury. Claims must first be filed with the family's private health insurance carrier. After settlement of that claim, the District's coverage is intended to reimburse the family for a portion of the unpaid balance. Information and forms regarding claims can be obtained from the Health Office.

### **LOCKERS**

Lockers are school property on loan to students. Students are assigned a locker and are responsible to see that the locker is returned in the same condition in which it was when assigned. Any malfunction of lockers must be reported to the coach immediately. Each student is encouraged to make sure that the locker is kept securely locked at all times and to share neither the combination, nor the locker with any other student. The locker should not be used

to store valuable items or large sums of money, as the school and district is not responsible for lost or stolen items.

### MIDDLE SCHOOL SPORT SEASONS

#### FALL

Cheerleading  
Field Hockey - Girls  
Football  
Soccer - Boys  
Soccer - Girls  
Tennis - Boys

#### WINTER II

Basketball - Girls  
Wrestling

#### SPRING

Baseball  
Lacrosse - Boys  
Lacrosse - Girls  
Softball  
Tennis - Girls  
Track – Boys & Girls

#### WINTER I

Basketball – Boys  
Volleyball – Girls

### ATHLETE/PARENT/COACH COMMUNICATION PROCESS

It is our expectation that communication will be encouraged and maintained between and among parents, athlete and coach. Parents are entitled to answers to legitimate questions regarding their child's performance and/or status. During the season, concerns may arise. The following communication process should be followed:

- Player meets with coach to discuss concerns/issues, if unresolved...
- Player, parents meet with coach for further discussion, if unresolved...
- Player, parent, coach meet with Athletic Director for further discussion, if unresolved...
- Player, parent, coach, Athletic Director meet with Building Principal

We encourage all parents to attend games and to model constructive support and guidance when students experience either success or failure in game situations. Most importantly, we ask parents to help us reinforce the inherent values of striving for individual and team progress, good sportsmanship and commitment to maintaining team morale. **All practice sessions are closed to parents.** Our athletic staff welcomes the opportunity to speak with parents about specific concerns and ideas. Discussions on the field tend to be fragmented, incomplete and are, unnecessarily, public. Consequently, the most productive conversations can and should take place at scheduled times, in more private settings. In order to discuss concerns with coaches, we encourage parents to call the Athletic Office at 377-9296 to arrange a meeting with the appropriate coach.

**WEBSITE :**  
**ALL GAME SCHEDULES & SCHOOL DIRECTIONS**

Please go to: <http://www.nassauboces.org/athletics> for game schedules & and directions. Click on "School Schedules" and there will be a menu with pertinent information.

**CONCLUSION**

We realize that no handbook can anticipate and comprehensively answer every question. Our Athletic Director, Eduardo Ramirez, is available to discuss any concerns or questions about any of our athletic programs or about the progress of specific children. Mr. Ramirez can be reached at 377-9296.

**Concussions**

A concussion is a mild traumatic brain injury. Concussions occur when normal brain functioning is disrupted by a blow or jolt to the head. Recovery from concussion will vary. Avoiding re-injury and over-exertion until fully recovered are the cornerstones of proper concussion management.

Any student demonstrating signs, symptoms or behaviors consistent with a concussion while participating in interscholastic athletic activity will be removed from the game or activity and be evaluated immediately and will not return to play that day. The Baldwin School District will notify the student's parents or guardians and recommend appropriate action.

**Return-to-Play Protocol and Clearance**

Once a student-athlete is diagnosed with a concussion, they can only be cleared back to athletics by the Baldwin School District's Chief Medical Officer. Clearance by an athlete's personal physician is needed to begin return-to-play protocols.

No student may return to full athletics before going through a return-to-play protocol. This is a 5 day supervised program that is overseen by the Baldwin Health Staff. Return-to-play following a concussion involves a step progression once the individual is symptom free. There are many risks to premature return to play including: a greater risk for a second concussion because of a lower concussion threshold, second impact syndrome (abnormal brain blood flow that can result in death), exacerbation of any current symptoms, and possibly increased risk for additional injury due to alteration in balance. No student athlete will be permitted to return to

play while symptomatic. Students are prohibited from returning to play the day the concussion is suspected. If there is any doubt as to whether a student has sustained a concussion, it will be treated as a concussion. (When in doubt sit them out.)

The following criteria will be utilized before any athlete is cleared to return to play:

- Asymptomatic during rest
- Asymptomatic during exertion
- Completion of return-to-play protocols

The nurse will oversee return-to-play protocol with final approval made by the Chief Medical Officer.

Detailed information on concussions can be found on the websites of the New York State Education Department (“SED”) and the New York State Department of Health (“DOH”).

<http://www.p12.nysed.gov/sss/schoolhealth/schoolhealthservices/ConcussionManageGuidelines.pdf>.

All coaches, physical education teachers, and certified athletic trainers are required to be trained to recognize the symptoms of a concussion and to seek proper medical treatment for such injuries.

**Baldwin Middle School Interscholastic Athletic Handbook Acknowledgement**

Must be returned to your coach prior to the first scheduled contest.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Athlete's name (please print)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Grade

\_\_\_\_\_  
Sport

\_\_\_\_\_  
Home Phone

\_\_\_\_\_  
Cell Phone

I acknowledge that I have read and understand the guidelines, procedures, training rules and commitment necessary for athletic participation. I give my son/daughter permission to participate. I have reviewed the rules and regulations with my child.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

I acknowledge that I have read and understand the guidelines, procedures, training rules and commitment necessary for athletic participation. I agree to comply with the terms and conditions set forth in order that I may participate.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Athlete's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date



**BALDWIN MIDDLE SCHOOL  
CODE OF CONDUCT FOR ATHLETICS**



Dear Student and Parent:

Participation in extracurricular and co-curricular activities is an important part of the educational process, both academically and socially, in our school district. Such participation is a privilege and brings with it a responsibility which requires an extra commitment, both academically and otherwise, when representing the school district. Standards of behavior are necessarily high and a willingness to adhere to such standards is a condition for participation in athletics. Consistent with these standards, and as a continuing condition of eligibility, students participating in extracurricular and co-curricular activities, as well as parent(s)/guardian(s), are required to sign this contract which was developed by the Director for Interscholastic Athletics, the Middle School Principal, Board of Education and the Superintendent of Schools.

**SCHOOL DISTRICT CODE OF CONDUCT**

The student acknowledges that he/she will abide by and be bound by the rules and regulations found in the Code of Conduct of Baldwin Middle School, as well as the terms of this contract. Any violation of the District's Code of Conduct will result in disciplinary action and may also extend to a student's participation in extracurricular and co-curricular activities.

**ATTENDANCE REQUIREMENTS**

A student must attend class/school for a minimum of five (5) periods in order to participate in that day's practice, event, and/or meeting. Student must also abide by the school's attendance eligibility policy to be eligible for participation.

**OTHER ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS**

Students who participate in extracurricular and co-curricular activities should recognize that they have an obligation to themselves, their teammates, and the school community to strive for excellence. As recognized representatives of their school, such students are expected to exhibit appropriate behaviors during the season (activities) and during the off season in uniform or out of uniform, on campus or off campus. Thus, such students are expected to:

1. Students dress in a manner consistent with the school Code of Conduct regarding appropriate dress.
2. Understand and abide by the rules and regulations of the game, activity, respect the integrity and judgment of the officials, and exercise proper conduct; sportsmanship, citizenship, behavior, self-control and mutual respect for others at all times.
3. Use only appropriate and acceptable language, and refrain from using crude, abusive or vulgar language or gestures in dealing with other students, officials and spectators.
4. Attend scheduled practices, games and meetings, arrive on time, and participate in a cooperative and acceptable manner with respect to the coach/teacher/supervisor's expectations, training or other requirements.
5. Respect, properly care for and return all school property, lockers, equipment and uniforms issued by the school and personally return all items to the