

Belmont Middle School

Student Athletic/Co-Curricular Handbook

2023-2024 School Year



Belmont Middle School athletics focuses on learning athletic skills, game rules, fundamentals of team play, socio-emotional growth, and sportsmanship.

Dear Parents/Guardians and BMS Students:

Welcome to Bulldog Nation! The purpose of this handbook is to provide students and parents/guardians of Belmont Middle School Athletics a comprehensive collection of policies and protocols regarding participation in Belmont Middle School Athletics. Its production and distribution is just one of many avenues of communication along with the daily bulletin put out by the main office that the middle school will employ to keep you informed of current procedures and provide a safe and enjoyable middle school athletics career.

Our athletics programs provide students opportunities to engage in collaborative efforts with teammates, our coaches/advisors, and to represent both Belmont Middle School and our community in a positive manner. Please let the information that follows serve as a resource to help answer some of the questions you might have about participation in athletics.

Please note the athletics sign ups will be done through [FinalForms](#).

Students at Belmont Middle School are responsible for understanding and following all rules outlined in this handbook as well as the 2023-2024 Student and Parent Handbook.

All Shaker Regional School District policies can be found on the district web page: [SAU 80](#) or by contacting Belmont Middle School. Access to the handbook and all other necessary forms can be found on the Big Teams website [Belmont Athletics](#) under the files and links section.

Thank you and Go Bulldogs!

Mr. Cayman Belyea
Athletic Director, Belmont Middle School

** Please be advised that policies may be amended or new policies may be adopted during the school year. For the recent amendments or new policy adoptions, please go to the Shaker Regional School District website at www.sau80.org.*

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BMS Mission Statement

Belmont Middle School athletics focuses on learning athletic skills, game rules, fundamentals of team play, socio-emotional growth, and sportsmanship. BMS provides its students with a variety of interscholastic athletic opportunities. Students in grades five thru eight at Belmont Middle School are encouraged to participate in as many of the interscholastic programs as they can. Students may choose from the following programs:

Fall Season: Cross Country, Boys Soccer (A+B), Girls Soccer (A+B), Volleyball, Golf

Winter Season: Boys Basketball (A+B), Girls Basketball (A+B), Alpine Skiing, Unified Basketball

Spring Season: Baseball, Softball, Track & Field

Program Goals

1. The goal of the Belmont Middle School Athletic program is to provide students with opportunities to participate in an athletic program.
2. Coaches at Belmont Middle School are expected to incorporate a “playing time” approach that allows students to have meaningful athletic experiences.
3. Athletic programs at Belmont Middle School encourage continued development of *fundamental skills* while providing opportunities to explore improving student abilities in competitive game formats with students from other schools.
4. Belmont Middle School encourages parents and members of our community to become involved in its athletic programming. Becoming involved can take several forms such as volunteering to be an assistant coach of an intramural team, coaching an interscholastic team, becoming a team volunteer to help provide support for coaches, becoming a team parent or just encouraging your child to reach their athletic potential.
5. Athletic programs at Belmont Middle School encourage athletes to see their choice to participate in athletics as a part of a healthy lifestyle. Students are encouraged to view their participation as a healthy way to develop good lifestyle habits, a sense of discipline and commitment, and as a means to improving one’s self-esteem.

Sportsmanship

In conjunction with all Shaker Regional School District athletic programming, Belmont Middle School places an emphasis on the importance of sportsmanship while participating in athletic competition. Parents, players, fans and the community are encouraged to place positive sportsmanship before winning. Student athletes are expected to treat teammates, officials, opponents and fans with both courtesy and respect. While certain individuals in the middle level years begin to display exceptional abilities in athletics, Belmont Middle School focuses on the importance of teamwork and sportsmanship.

Academic Expectations

Students who participate in the athletic program are expected to strive to do their best to be academically successful. Students participating on an interscholastic athletic team will have their academic progress reviewed at 5 checkpoints during the school year.

- If a student is assessed below a 2.0 proficiency level on any learning standard and in any Habits of Work, the student will be declared ineligible until they demonstrate evidence of reaching this minimum level of proficiency.
- Students who have been declared ineligible may not participate in practices for a period of 5 school days from the date they were declared ineligible. After the 5th school day, students may only participate if the minimum eligibility expectations of a 2.0 is reached.
- Students who have been declared ineligible may not participate in interscholastic travel competition and may not sit on the bench during competition for a period of 5 school days from the date they were declared ineligible. Participation may resume after the 5 days if the classroom teacher is satisfied with the evidence to meet minimum proficiency.

Grade Reporting Dates

<i>Progress 1: October 17th, 2023</i>	<i>Progress 2: December 5th, 2023</i>
<i>Progress 3: January 25th, 2024</i>	<i>Progress 4: March 15th, 2024</i>
<i>Progress 5: May 3rd, 2024</i>	<i>Report Card: June 14, 2024</i>

Student Conduct

Student's assigned teacher or administrative detentions are required to fulfill those obligations before being released to participate in the athletic program. Students who are assigned In School or Out of School suspension are not eligible to participate in the athletic program on the dates they are suspended.

Attendance

Students who are absent, tardy or dismissed early from school may not be allowed to attend school-sponsored events after school, on the day of their absence, tardiness or dismissal. Exceptions will be made for students who produce a note from a medical/mental health professional providing evidence of the student's need to be out of school.

Transportation Expectations

Student Athletes are required to ride in school transportation to and from contests. In rare cases, students may travel home from an away athletic event with their parent/guardian, only by signing their student out with the coach.

- An email from parent/guardian must be sent to the Coach and Athletic Director stating their request for transportation a minimum of 24hrs before an event.
- Student athletes will not, under any circumstances, travel with a parent or guardian other than their own.
- Parents must physically sign the [Contest Travel Release](#) Form from coaches in order to transport their own children from athletic contests.
- In accordance with the NHIAA and Shaker Regional School Policy EEBB, **under no circumstances** is any student to transport himself or herself to away athletic contests. If this occurs, the Athletic Director is to be notified immediately and appropriate action will be taken.
- On away trips, students represent both the school and town. Any disrespectful behavior during an away activity/event may result in an eligibility review for the student(s) involved.

FinalForms Registration

This is the new requirement for athletic participation and will allow for all information to be in a protected place and will allow coaches to quickly access important information. A parent/guardian must have registered the student-athlete through FinalForms, which will include a Medical Release, Medical History, Emergency Contact info and both Student & Parent/Guardian acknowledgement of handbook.

You can locate it here: [Belmont Athletics](#)

Team Tryouts/Evaluations

Every student has the opportunity to play on an athletics team at BMS. Students in grades 5-8 will be able to “try-out” for all athletics for both the A and B teams (when applicable). Students in grade five are only able to make the B team in all sports. The A and B team coaches will choose their teams depending on numbers and skill level.

Team Reductions

There will be a maximum number of athletes on each team in order to ensure the safety and wellness of all student-athletes. If students do not make the cut sport they tried out for, students will have the opportunity to join a non-cut sport (depending on numbers).

Coaches and Volunteer Training

As more people become involved with the care and supervision of our student athletes, Belmont Middle School will continue to explore and implement strategies to inform volunteers and coaches about developmentally appropriate practices for coaching students in the athletic program.

Dress Code

All team members are expected to dress in accordance with team rules on all road trips and abide by the Belmont Middle School dress code. Failure to abide by dress code can result in not being able to attend the event and/or potential future punishment.

Player-Parent-Coach-AD Communication Guide

While a student is involved in athletics at Belmont Middle School, he/she will experience some of the most rewarding and inspiring moments of their lives. It is important to understand that there might also be times when things do not go the way the student-athlete wishes. At these times, appropriate communication between the coach and athlete is encouraged. In order to help foster these important interpersonal skills, as well as the ability to resolve conflict, when appropriate, the chain of communication over an issue between the student-athlete and the coach should be as follows:

1. Student-athlete and coach meet to discuss the issue
2. Student-athlete, coach, and parent meet
3. Student-athlete, parent, and Athletic Director meet

By establishing communication of each position/perspective, we are better able to understand the actions of the other(s) and provide greater benefit to our student-athletes.

Communication You Should Expect from Our Belmont Middle School Coach

1. Individual and team expectations
2. Location and times of practices and games
3. Team requirements (i.e., practices, special equipment, off-season conditioning, etc.)
4. Procedure to be followed should the student-athlete become injured during a practice or game
5. Any discipline that may result in the denial of the student-athlete's participation

Communication Coaches Expect from Parents

1. Concerns expressed directly to the coach
2. Notification of scheduling conflicts well in advance
3. Specific concerns with a coach's philosophy and/or expectations
4. Support for the program and the attributes of commitment and responsibility that are essential ingredients for success and excellence. We encourage and support every student-athlete to excel.

Appropriate Concerns to Discuss with Coaches

1. The treatment of the student-athlete, mentally and physically
2. Ways to help the student-athlete improve and develop
3. Concerns about the student-athlete's behavior

While it can be difficult to accept a student-athlete's not playing as much as he/she or a parent/guardian would hope, **coaches are knowledgeable and trained in their sport.** They make judgment decisions based on what they believe is best for the team and all athletes involved. There are certain areas and issues that can and should be discussed with your child's coach.

Please do not confront the coach directly before, directly after, or during a practice or game. This can be an emotional time for the parent, the student-athlete(s), and the coach; this scenario promotes neither a collaborative resolution nor objective analysis.

It is the coach's responsibility to consider playing time, team strategy, play-calling, and the well-being of other student-athletes. If a parent is not satisfied with a resolution after meeting with the coach, he/she can call to set up a meeting with the Athletic Director to discuss the situation.

Team Rules

Players may be required to also sign a team contract, which is a binding contract. These must be approved by the Athletic Director prior to being given to student-athletes.

Requirements to Start Practice:

1. Athletic Participation Physical Examination Form
2. Fill out FinalForms registration and sign required documents.

Meet the Coaches Night

At the beginning of each season coaches will hold a meeting for both students and parents. This is a required meeting where coaches will discuss expectations/team rules for the upcoming season and answer any questions parents or students may have.

Medical Examination

All students are required to have on file with the school nurse a medical statement provided by a health care provider certifying that the student athlete has passed a [Pre-Participation Physical Examination](#) and is able to participate in athletics. Belmont Middle School rules require that a student athlete will provide documentation of a physical once per calendar year to participate in middle school athletics. Any student athlete who is significantly ill or injured after their pre-participation physical examination must have a written medical clearance by their healthcare provider before being allowed to participate in athletics.