



BRANDON ACADEMY
ATHLETIC
HANDBOOK

Mission, Philosophy, Expectations, and Definitions of Success and Winning

Mission Statement:

The mission of Brandon Academy is to educate young people in an environment of respect coupled with commitment to quality education in a challenging program to prepare students to be leaders in the global community.

Philosophy:

We believe interscholastic athletics is an integral component of a student's education. Our program provides an environment where the student-athlete may develop and refine athletic skills; test these skills through suitable competition while promoting leadership and sportsmanship.

Expectations:

Interscholastic sports are an important part of our athletic program. Athletes should support the school mission and be dedicated to the sport they choose to play. Team membership requires an additional commitment beyond the normal school schedule. Athletes are expected to be at all practices and games unless excused beforehand. Mastery of certain skills, specific to a sport, is important. Therefore, not all team members will receive the same amount of playing time. Athletes are also expected to give 100% of their efforts in the representation of our school. It is expected that all students will conduct themselves in a positive manner on the fields and off during athletic events. It is also expected that the coaching staff will conduct themselves in a positive manner at all events and at all practices. The coaching staff is further reminded that they are the prime role models for young athletes and should strive to set a positive atmosphere and example.

Definition of Success:

The willingness, perseverance and commitment to go through a process that allows one to achieve team and personal goals with character and integrity regardless of outside pressures.

Definition of Winning:

To exceed what you thought you were capable of doing by continually giving your best effort, being proud of your accomplishments, learning from your mistakes, dealing with adversity, and not blaming others for your failures.

Athletic Program Goals:

Elementary/Middle School Sports Goals:

1. Introduce young student-athletes to interscholastic competition.
2. Introduce and develop the skills and rules of the sport.
3. Gain the experience of playing in games, assuming that athletes have attended practice, worked to their potential, have the proper attitude and have made a full commitment to the team.
4. Emphasis of social and emotional growth and on healthy competition.

High School Sports Goals:

1. Develop a student-athlete's skills and knowledge to their highest level.
2. Allow student athletes and their teams the chance to excel and prepare them for future competitions; compete for League, Sectional and State Championships.
3. Expect all members to be role models and mentors for younger students.
4. The Varsity teams are the culmination of the other sports programs, where student athletes move up through the course of grade levels.
5. The number of participants on any given team is a function of those needed to conduct an effective and meaningful practice and to play competitively in the contest.
6. Continued development of social and emotional growth

Requirements for Participation

Academics:

The athletic department recognizes that the primary responsibility of student-athletes is educational. Therefore, the athletic department supports the concept that student-athletes should work to their potential in the classroom and be committed to achieving maximum academic success. While scholastic achievement is determined on an individual basis, the administration and the athletic department reserve the right to determine a student-athlete's eligibility to participate in athletic contests and practices.

Physical Examination:

All athletes must turn in a signed Permission/Hold Harmless Agreement. In addition, all required FHSAA forms must be completed and turned into the school each year, including the annual athletic physical form to be completed by your child's physician. If an athlete is absent from school from more than two days in a row, they must have written permission from their parent to resume participation in after school sports and contact the Front Office

When a student has been injured during the season and has received medical treatment they will not participate again until they have submitted a doctors' note to the Athletic Director that verifies they are cleared for competition.

Attendance in School:

Students must be in attendance at school all day and attend all classes to be eligible for participation in games or practices on that day. Exceptions can be made for extenuating circumstances with the approval of the Athletic Director and building administrator.

FHSAA Bylaws & Eligibility Standards:

The link below will bring you to the FHSAA handbook. This handbook will help you understand the rules that govern high school athletic competition. Including the number of individual and team practices a student-athlete must participate in order to be eligible for a scrimmage and regular season game for the modified and high school level.

<http://www.fhsaa.org/rules/fhsaa-handbook>

Athletic Department Rules**Uniforms and Equipment:**

At the beginning of every season, all student athletes are given uniforms and equipment necessary for their sport. It is the responsibility of every athlete to take care of the equipment. If there are problems and equipment needs to be repaired or is lost, it should be brought to the attention of the coach immediately.

The student-athlete is ultimately responsible for all equipment issued to them. At the end of the season, all equipment/uniforms that were provided must be returned. If there are any items missing the student will be required to pay to replace them.

Religious Obligations:

Every effort will be made by the coach and athletic department to avoid conflicts with the religious obligations of the student-athlete. The student-athlete must notify coaches well in advance of potential conflicts. Coaches will continue to be sensitive to these special circumstances.

Conflict with Other School Activities:

An individual student who attempts to participate in several extracurricular activities may encounter a conflict of obligations. The athletic department recognizes that each student should have the opportunity for a broad range of experiences. Attempts to schedule events will be made to minimize conflicts. Students have a responsibility to do everything they can do to avoid conflicts. This includes being cautious about belonging to too many activities where conflicts are bound to happen. It also means notifying the faculty sponsors/coaches involved immediately when a conflict does arise. The Athletic Director, club/activity advisor, and coaches will attempt to work out a solution with the student. If a decision cannot be agreed upon, the Principal will make a decision based on the relative importance of each event to the individual, the team, and the school. Once a decision has been made, and the student abides by the decision, they will not be penalized. If it becomes obvious that a student cannot fulfill the obligation of both activities, they should withdraw from the sport or activity.

Participation:

A student may participate in only one sport per season.

Team Selection Guidelines:

As a general guideline, Brandon Academy has a “No-Cut” policy for Middle School Sports (High School sports is depending on availability).

Playing Time:

At this level, playing time must be earned. This can happen through effort and involvement in pre-season programs and demonstration of skill during the season. An important point to remember is that the less time an individual spends on skill development usually translates into less playing time.

On the middle and high school levels, there is a little more emphasis towards winning the interscholastic contest especially as a student athlete progresses up to the Varsity High School level. This does not mean that winning takes precedence over sound educational values and integrity.

Pre-Season, Practice, and Fees

Pre-Season Procedures:

Prior to each sports season there will be a meeting with each coach. If a coach has not been appointed, there will be sports sign-up where information pertaining to upcoming tryouts will be distributed. Attendance at these meetings is required.

At the first meeting if possible, practice and game schedules will be distributed. Games and practices, which will occur on weekends and/or over vacations, will be discussed, as well as procedures for practices and games. Coaches will make every effort to give players a schedule of practices (times and dates) that outlines schedules at least two weeks in advance. Players should inform coaches of any conflicts, which will make it impossible to attend any practices or games. These communications should occur before the tryout phase is completed.

The student-athlete's priority is to the sport in season rather than the preparation for a sport out of season. Students may not try out after the specified tryout period without approval from the Athletic Director. In addition, the athlete's first priority must be to the school's athletic program.

Students should be encouraged to participate in a variety of athletic programs. Students should never feel pressured into participating in an out-of-season practice or program that prohibits their participation in a sport they desire to participate in.

Practice:

The Florida High School Sports Athletic Association sets start dates for team practices. Student-athletes are required to attend ALL tryout/practice sessions. If a student-athlete is unable to attend, they will not start in the next scheduled game.

When a student athlete accepts a position on a team, they are making the commitment to attend all practice sessions and games and to invest energy toward the development of skill and team building goals.

Fees:

All players will be responsible for paying a fee for each sport in which they participate. This fee must be paid prior to the first game. The Athletic Director determines fees for each sport. For Elementary/Middle School Sports the fee will be **\$100**. For High School the fee will vary for each sport depending on the costs and needs for each sport's season.

Code of Conduct**Student Regulations:**

The Interscholastic and Extracurricular programs are privileges provided to the students of Brandon Academy. In return for the privilege of participation, it is expected that all students will accept the necessary responsibilities with regard to the following:

- I. Academic Responsibilities
- II. Conduct
- III. Team Rules
- IV. Personal Discipline
- V. Attendance at Meetings, Activities, Practices, Games, and Team Affairs
- VI. Care of Equipment and Facilities

It is expected that students will put forth an honest effort to make their best personal contributions to the team, club, or program. Students are responsible for their behavior and choices. Students in violation of the Code of Conduct and those who do not demonstrate good character will be held accountable for their behaviors, choices, and decisions.

I. Academics Responsibilities:

Brandon Academy recognizes that the primary responsibility of all students is education. Therefore, Brandon Academy supports the concept that students involved in athletics and the extracurricular program should work to their potential in the classroom and be committed to achieving maximum academic success. The administration reserves the right to determine a student's eligibility to participate in the athletic and extracurricular program based on the individual student's academic status. All athletes must have a minimum GPA of 2.0 on report cards to be eligible to play. Conduct in the classroom or on the playing field can result in ineligibility. Administration will check on each athlete's conduct regularly. The expectation is that all athletes will conduct themselves in a respectable fashion at all times. Conduct can cost you playing time, a game, or an entire season.

II. Conduct:

1. All students, including team managers, are expected to conduct themselves in a manner consistent with the behaviors outlined in the student handbook - Code of Conduct. All team/club/activity participants have a particular obligation to conduct themselves as good citizens in and out of school. Misconduct will result in disciplinary action and possible suspension from the team/club/activity.
2. A student who is suspended either in or out of school for any reason will not be permitted to attend a meeting, event, practice, game, after-school, or school-related activity on the day of the suspension as a participant or a spectator. If the suspension does not fall on a game day, club meeting day, or day of an extracurricular activity, the student will be suspended from participation on the date of the next scheduled game or extracurricular activity.
3. The administration reserves the right to suspend an individual for additional games/activities/meetings if the severity of the offense warrants such a consequence.

III. Team Rules:

All students are expected to observe all rules as prescribed by the coach/advisor with regard to curfew and other pertinent considerations and to refrain from the use of tobacco, alcoholic beverages, illegal substances, or any other substance that may cause impairment.

IV. Personal Discipline:

1. First Violation: This will result in an immediate two-week suspension from all extracurricular and interscholastic meetings, activities, practices, and games. Students may not attend school functions as a participant or spectator during this two-week period. Due to health and safety issues the student athlete will need to participate in five conditioning practices prior to becoming reinstated to the interscholastic team.
2. Second Violation: This will result in suspension from the team or extracurricular activity for the remainder of the season or until the end of the semester. In addition, the student may not attend any extracurricular activities or after school activities as a participant or a spectator for one month.

V. Attendance at Meetings, Activities, Practices, Games, and Team Affairs:

1. Students are expected to attend all meetings, activities, practice sessions, games, or other team/club or activities unless excused. Failure to do so may result in possible exclusion from one or more of these listed activities.
2. It is the responsibility of the student to notify the coach/advisor in advance of his/her anticipated absence from any activity. If a student is detained for disciplinary or academic reasons, he/she must bring a note signed by the person detaining him/her stating the time he/she was released. On non-school days, it is the obligation of the student to notify the coach/advisor, directly if possible, if he/she will be absent from a practice, contest, or extracurricular activity.
3. A student who is absent from school will not be eligible for participation in or to be a spectator at any interscholastic or extracurricular program on the day that he/she is absent.

The only exception to this rule will be when such absence is with prior consent of the school principal for reasons of family emergencies, special appointments or similar activities which are beyond the control of the student.

Leaving the Team/Extracurricular Program:

1. Any student who joins an interscholastic squad or extracurricular club is expected to remain a member until the season, or extracurricular program is completed.
2. If a student would like the transfer to another team or leave an extracurricular program at some point during the school year, he/she should discuss the change with his/her current coach/advisor. This conversation should take place before requesting membership on the other team/club and must have permission from both coaches/advisors before he/she may change.
3. Hazing for any sport or extracurricular program will not be tolerated.

VI. Care of Equipment and Facilities:

1. It is the student's responsibility to care for any uniforms, equipment, or other school property during the course of the athletic season or school sponsored extracurricular activity.
2. It is the responsibility of the student to return all school property at the conclusion of the season or extracurricular activity.

Parent/Coach Communication

Parent/Coach Relationship:

Parenting and coaching are extremely difficult vocations. By establishing an understanding of each position, we are better able to accept the actions of the other and provide greater benefits to our children. As parents, when your children become involved in our program, you have a right to understand what expectations are placed on your child. This begins with clear communication from the coach of your child's program.

Communication you should expect from your child's coach:

1. Philosophy of the coach.
2. Expectations the coach has for your child as well as all the players of the squad.
3. Locations and times of all practices and contests.
4. Team requirements, i.e. fees, special equipment, off-season equipment.
5. Procedure should your child be injured during participation.
6. Discipline that results in the denial of your child's participation.

Communication coaches expect from parents:

1. Concerns expressed directly to the coach.
2. Notification of any schedule conflicts well in advance.
3. Specific concern in regard to a coach's philosophy and/or expectations.

As your children become involved in programs at Brandon Academy, they will experience some of the most rewarding moments of their lives. It is important to understand that there also may be times when things do not go the way you or your child wishes. At these times, discussion with the coach is encouraged.

Appropriate concerns to discuss with coaches:

1. The treatment of your child, mentally or physically.
2. Ways to help your child improve.
3. Concerns about your child's behavior.

It is very difficult to accept your child not playing as much as you may want. **However, playing time is earned in the estimation of the coaches and is not an entitlement.** Coaches are professionals and they make judgment decisions based on what they believe to be the best for all students involved. As you have read from the list above, certain things can be and should be discussed with the coach.

Issues not appropriate to discuss with coaches:

1. Playing time
2. Team strategy
3. Play calling
4. Other student-athletes
5. The direction of the team/program

There are situations that may require a conference between the coach and the parent. It is important that both parties involved have a clear understanding of the others' position. When these conferences are necessary, the following procedure should be followed to help promote a resolution to the issue of concern.

Procedures to follow to discuss a concern with a coach:

1. **Wait 24 hours** before you make initial contact with the coach.
2. **After you have waited 24 hours, call** or email the coach to set-up an appointment.
3. If the coach cannot be reached, call Walter Perkins, the Athletic Director at (813) 689-1952 ext. 124, and a meeting will be arranged for you.
4. Please do not attempt to confront a coach before or after a contest or practice. These can be emotional times for both the parent and the coach. Meetings of this nature do not promote resolution. This is why waiting 24 hours before the initial contact with the coach is such a crucial step in the resolution process.

What can a parent do if the meeting with the coach did not provide a satisfactory resolution?

1. Call the Athletic Director to set up an appointment. The parent/guardian, coach, and Athletic Director will meet to discuss the problem. At this meeting, the appropriate next step can be determined.
2. Parents are encouraged to discuss issues and problems with the Athletic Director. However, if a parent has specific complaints regarding a coach, then the coach must have the opportunity to be present to meet with the parent.

Student-Athletes & College Competition/NCAA Clearinghouse

If a student-athlete plans to compete at the Division I or II collegiate level, they should make their guidance counselor aware of these intentions so they can begin the NCAA clearinghouse process. Student-athletes who may have intentions of competing at the Division III collegiate level only do not have to go through the NCAA clearinghouse process. However, the athletic department strongly recommends that any student-athlete who has any intentions of competing at the collegiate level go through the process.

Student-athletes should find out if they will meet the academic eligibility and core-course requirements for the college they may be attending. The guidance counselors will assist student-athletes in NCAA Clearinghouse procedures, if necessary, towards the end of their junior year.

Once a student-athlete has decided that they would like to play at the collegiate level, it is suggested that the student-athlete contact the coaches about these intentions. The Brandon Academy athletic department and the coaches will assist all prospective collegiate student-athletes to the best of their ability.

NCAA Clearinghouse Website: www.ncaaclearinghouse.net

Game Day Procedures

1. The coach informs the parents when to arrive on campus to transport their child.
2. Athletes may ride with other parents if parental permission is granted.
3. Athletes are allowed to ride home with parents after the contest has ended.
4. *Parents must wait for the coach to dismiss the team before they can leave the building.*
5. Will discuss procedures for each season. (Coach's discretion)
6. Keep the locker room clean. (Home or Away)
7. The entire team will sit together in the same area – focus should be on the game.

Student-Athlete Expectations

The student-athletes of Brandon Academy will be committed to representing the Brandon Academy Athletic Department and the Brandon Academy community by displaying acknowledging the following expectations:

1. Recognizing that participation in athletics is a privilege and not an entitlement.
2. The team goals and achievements take precedence over individual recognition.
3. Take pride in your success and do not blame others for your failures.
4. Set high academic standards.
5. Be a positive role model for other students.
6. Support all Brandon Academy athletic teams.
7. Win with dignity and lose graciously.
8. Play by the rules and exhibit proper sportsmanship.

Parent Expectations

The parents of student-athletes of Brandon Academy will be committed to representing the Brandon Academy Athletic Department and the Brandon Academy community by acknowledging the following expectations:

1. Parents will display positive support for the student-athletes and coaches of Brandon Academy. Nothing erodes team morale faster than parents doubting the capabilities of student- athletes and their coaches.
2. Parents will be good role models and demonstrate positive behavior and sportsmanship as fans.
3. Parents will work with the coaching staff to maintain positive open lines of communication.
4. Parents will partner with school officials in promoting, understanding and monitoring the athletic handbook.
5. Parents will have realistic expectations of their student-athletes in the classroom as well as on the field and encourage their son or daughter to give his or her best effort physically, mentally and emotionally.
6. Parents will make an effort to understand the rules and nuances of the game.
7. Parents will make every effort to support their student-athlete through attendance at athletic contests and awards nights.

Spectator Expectations

The Brandon Academy Athletic Department asks that you model and enforce the following rules at all Brandon Academy sporting events:

1. Cooperate with referees and school officials.
2. Avoid objectionable cheers, unsafe, or inappropriate behavior.
3. Direct all energy towards encouraging your team.
4. Avoid actions that offend visiting teams or individual players.
5. Show appreciation of good play by both teams.
6. Learn the rules of the game in order to be a more informed spectator.
7. Treat all visiting teams in a manner in which you would expect to be treated.
8. Accept the judgment of coaches and officials.
9. Encourage other spectators to participate in the spirit of good sportsmanship.

Coach Expectations

The coaches of Brandon Academy will be committed to representing the Brandon Academy Athletic Department and the Brandon Academy community by acknowledging the following expectations:

1. Exemplify the highest moral character for their players and the community.
2. Strive to develop qualities of leadership, initiative, and good judgment for each team member.
3. Communicate and interpret program goals and objectives to the parents and community.
4. Provide a safe environment for practice and games.
5. Build and maintain ethical relationships with the community.

6. Keep it positive and fun.
7. Have respect for the athletic program and its place in the student athletes' overall education.
8. Encourage the student-athletes to do their best every day and play a variety of different sports.