

**Buchanan
Community
Schools**



**Athletic
Handbook
2020-2021**

BUCHANAN HIGH SCHOOL FIGHT SONG

GO YOU BUCHANAN,
BREAK RIGHT THROUGH THAT LINE.
WITH YOUR COLORS FLYING,
WE WILL CHEER YOU ALL THE TIME,
RAH! RAH! RAH!
GO YOU BUCHANAN,
FIGHT FOR VICTORY,
SPREAD FAR THE FAME OF OUR FAIR NAME,
AND GO BUCHANAN,
WIN THAT GAME!
GO BUCHANAN GO!
GO BUCHANAN GO!
HIT 'EM HIGH
HIT 'EM LOW
GO BUCHANAN GO!

ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF

Superintendent of Schools	269-695-8400
Mrs. Patricia Robinson	
High School Principal	269-695-8403
Mrs. Stacey DeMaio	
High School Assistant Principal	269-695-8403
Mr. Brian Pruett	
Middle School Principal	269-695-8406
Mrs. Shelby Beasley	
Athletic Coordinator	269-695-8403
Mr. Mark Frey	
Assistant Athletic Coordinator	269-695-8406
Mr. Ryan Frontczak	

Buchanan Community School District Statement of Assurance

Statement of Assurance of Compliance with Federal Law

The Buchanan Community Schools complies with all federal laws and regulations prohibiting discrimination and with all requirements and regulations of the U.S. Department of Education. It is the policy of the Board of Education that no person on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin or ancestry, age, gender/sex, height, weight, marital status, or disability shall be subjected to discrimination in any program, service, or activity for which it is responsible or for which it receives financial assistance from the U.S. Department of Education. Coordinators for Affirmative Action and review of Federal requirements are as follows: Section 504, Karin Falkenstein, (695-8401); Title IX, Title VI and Civil Rights, Brian Pruett (H.S. Assistant Principal, 695-8404).

PHILOSOPHY

Buchanan Community Schools' athletic programs will provide lifelong learning experiences to student-athletes while enhancing their achievement of educational goals.

SPORTSMANSHIP PHILOSOPHY

Buchanan Community Schools' believes participation in athletics to be a fundamental part of the overall educational experience. Participation in athletic programs provides opportunities for physical, mental, social, and emotional development. Student-athletes learn to strive for excellence, work as a member of a team, and demonstrate principals of good sportsmanship. Through competition, student-athletes will develop a positive winning attitude that will translate into their daily lives.

ATHLETIC ACTIVITY OFFERINGS

FALL	FEMALE	MALE
	Cheerleading	Cross Country*
	Cross Country*	Football*
	Swimming/Diving	Soccer
	Volleyball*	Tennis
WINTER	Basketball*	Basketball*
	Competitive Cheer	Swimming/Diving
		Wrestling*
SPRING	Soccer	Baseball
	Softball	Golf
	Tennis	Track*
	Track*	
*denotes Middle School athletic offerings in addition to High School offerings		

ELIGIBILITY RULES

Buchanan Community Schools are a voluntary member of the Michigan High School Athletic Association (MHSAA). The MHSAA establishes the minimum rules and regulations; however, local school districts are responsible for rule enforcement and may enact stricter rules and regulations. The MHSAA rules listed in this section are only a summary of some of the regulations affecting student's eligibility. All rules are found in the MHSAA handbook, which can be located in the athletic director's office. Please review the following rules and if you have any questions contact the athletic director.

1. In order to participate in interscholastic athletics at the middle school or high school level, student-athletes must comply with the following eligibility rules:
 - a. Age: High School student-athletes become ineligible if they reach their 19th birthday before September 1st of the current school year.
 - b. Physical examinations: Student-athletes must have on file in the Athletic office a physician's statement for the current school year. Physicals must be dated on or after April 15th certifying that the student-athlete is physically able to compete in

- athletic practices and contests. Physicals dated before April 15 of the current school year will not be valid by MHSAA mandate.
- c. Enrollment: Students must be enrolled in school prior to the fourth Friday after Labor Day (1st semester) or the 4th Friday of February (2nd semester). A student must be enrolled in the school for which he/she competes.
 - d. Semesters of Enrollment: Students cannot be eligible in the high school athletics for more than 8 semesters and the 7th and 8th semesters must be consecutive. Students are allowed 4 first semesters and 4 second semesters of completion and cannot compete if they have graduated from high school.
 - e. Semester Records: MHSAA requires student-athletes must have passed at least 66% of full credit load potential for a full time student in the previous semester of enrollment and must be currently passing at least 66% full credit load potential for a full time student. **See Buchanan Academic Eligibility**
 - f. Transfer students: A student in grades 9 through 12 who transfers to another high school is not eligible to participate in an interscholastic contest for one full semester unless the student qualifies for immediate eligibility under one or more of the 15 published MHSAA exceptions. **See School of Choice**
 - g. 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-athlete for athletic purposes will cause that student-athlete to become ineligible for up to 180 days.
 - h. Limited Team Membership: After practicing with or participating with high school teams, including tryouts, student-athletes cannot participate in an athletic competition not sponsored by their high school in the same sport during the same season. Exceptions include Ice Hockey and all individual sports, which apply the rule from the point of a student's 1st participation in a contest or scrimmage rather than practice. Student-athletes in individual sports may participate in a maximum of 2 non-school individual meets or contests during the school season while not representing their school.
 - i. Awards and Amateurism: Student-athletes cannot receive money or other valuable consideration for participating in MHSAA sponsored sports or officiating in interscholastic athletic contests, except as allowed by the MHSAA handbook. Student-athletes may accept, for participation in MHSAA sponsored sports, a symbolic or merchandise award that does not have a value over \$25. Banquets, luncheons, dinners, trips and admissions to camps or events are permitted in accepted "in kind." Awards in the form of cash, merchandise, certificates, or any other negotiable document are never allowed.

BUCHANAN ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY

Buchanan Community Schools requires that all student-athletes pass 5 of their 6 classes during the current semester. Once a student-athlete is failing 2 of 6 classes, they will be considered ineligible for the week. Other eligibility rules are as follows:

- Current Semester
 - Student-athletes must be passing five (5) ½ credit classes
 - Grades will be checked weekly, student-athletes will receive a warning on Wednesday if failing 2 or more classes, they will have until Friday to raise their grade. If the student does not resolve the grade issues, they will be ineligible to play Monday of the following week until the Monday after.
- Previous Semester
 - Student-athletes must pass the equivalency of four (4) ½ credit classes
 - Student-athletes must have earned five (5) full credits in the 2 previous semesters.
- Miscellaneous items
 - Student-athletes that are weekly ineligible can only practice after meeting with the coach and athletic director.
 - Student-athletes may not be in uniform for contests while ineligible.
- Eligibility will be determined by the Athletic Director every Friday during the school year.
- Buchanan Community Schools will enforce upon a transfer student-athlete any period of ineligibility.

SCHOOL OF CHOICE

The action of the Michigan Legislature to include School of Choice within intermediate school districts **does** affect the athletic eligibility of transferring student-athletes. Student-athletes who transfer by choice from one school to another and do not otherwise satisfy the transfer regulations as set forth by the MHSAA are ineligible for interscholastic athletics for one full semester.

ATHLETIC CODE OF CONDUCT

The purpose of this code is to establish and maintain high standards of conduct for Buchanan Community School student-athletes. The Athletic Department recognizes that pressures and problems can and do arise at home, school, social settings and among team members. The athletic code is intended to guide and help the student-athlete and parents understand the conduct that is expected of student-athletes at Buchanan Community Schools and also to understand the seriousness with which infractions of the code provisions are viewed. It is hoped that this code will avoid the need for disciplinary action.

Buchanan Community Schools will provide the best in coaching, equipment, facilities, and teams to help the student-athlete perform their best. In turn, the student-athlete is expected to respect and be responsible to those seeking to help them learn the skills to be a good member of the school and local community.

Student-athletes are representatives of our school, their conduct on school property, home and away, in public places or elsewhere, shall comply with the highest standards of integrity and morality. The student-athlete shall obey the rules listed in this code and shall not commit any criminal infractions of the community, state or elsewhere. Any conduct that is not consistent with the conduct expected of our student-athletes as specified in this athletic code may result in suspension of the privilege to participate. Student-athletes are expected to exhibit a competitive spirit and show good sportsmanship in competition. The student-athlete has a responsibility to demonstrate loyalty to the school and to their teammates. If the student-athlete verbally or physically behaves in a manner that brings disgrace or disrespect to the school or his teammates, or that affects team morale, the student-athlete will face disciplinary action.

ATHLETIC RULES OF CONDUCT

The following rules are to be adhered to by all Buchanan student-athletes. These rules are in effect 12 months a year and begin when student-athletes enter the 6th grade and begin participating in MHSAA sanctioned contests through your last contest as a high school senior. Any infraction of these rules, or serious unethical conduct on the part of the student-athlete, may result in suspension or termination of athletic privileges for that particular student-athlete.

Rules of Conduct

1. Student-athletes shall not commit any theft of goods, equipment, or property belonging to the district or to others.
2. Student-athletes shall not commit any vandalism.
3. Student-athletes shall not engage in any serious unethical conduct.
4. Inappropriate use of the internet: inappropriate communication and/or pictures found on sites that show the student-athlete behaving inappropriately, will be considered a violation of the student code. Violations such as pictures of students holding alcoholic containers, tobacco products, illegal drugs or drug paraphernalia, or doing other inappropriate acts. Defenses such as the container was empty, etc. will not be a case of defense.
5. Student-athletes shall obey all laws of the community, state, or otherwise and shall not engage in illegal activities.
6. Social Media use by student-athletes shall not contain posts with offensive/inappropriate comments, photos, videos, and /or does not violate the athletic code of conduct. Social media shall not be used to promote behavior unbecoming to the team, athletic department and/or any other human being.
7. School Equipment: Athletes are responsible for the proper care and security of uniforms and equipment issued to them. School furnished uniforms and equipment may only be used for practice or contests unless expressly approved by the coach or by the Athletic Director for use at another time. **ALL FINANCIAL OBLIGATIONS FOR SCHOOL EQUIPMENT MUST BE FULLY PAID TO THE SCHOOL BEFORE THE STUDENT ATHLETE MAY BEGIN ANOTHER SPORT.**

PARENT CODE OF CONDUCT

Interscholastic sports programs promote the physical, social, and emotional development of student-athletes. Therefore, parents should encourage student-athletes to embrace the values of good sportsmanship, and should model good sportsmanship by demonstrating fairness, respect and self-control. For a child to participate in athletics at Buchanan Community Schools the child's parents must obey this Code of Conduct. Parents must be responsible for their words and actions while attending a Buchanan Community School athletic event, home or away, and obey this Code of Conduct. Parents must not engage in or encourage their child or anyone else to engage in:

1. Unsportsmanlike conduct with any coach, parent, participant, official, or other attendee;
2. Any behavior that would endanger the health, safety, or well-being of any coach, parent, participant, official, or other attendee;
3. The use of profanity;
4. Treating any coach, parent, participant, official, or other attendee with disrespect based on race, creed, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation or ability;
5. Verbal or physical threats or abuse of any coach, parent, participant, official, or other attendee;
6. Initiating a fight or scuffle with any coach, parent, participant, official, or other attendee;
7. Coaching any player from the sidelines or stands during practice or competition, as this may be distracting to the individual and the team, and may directly conflict with the coach's strategy;
8. Approaching a coach to discuss the coach's strategy or the playing time of a player immediately before, during or after a game. Please wait until the next day to contact a coach. Parents must address any concerns with the coach's approach directly with the coach, in respectful manner at an appropriate time (never on the same day as a game). If the concerns are then not addressed to the Parents' satisfaction, they may then contact the athletic director to schedule an appointment to discuss any concerns with the coach and athletic director.

Parents, who violate this Code of Conduct while attending a Buchanan Community School athletic event, home or away, will be subject to disciplinary action by authorized game or school officials, including but not limited to the following in any order or combination:

Verbal or written warning;
Suspension or immediate ejection from a sports event; and/or
Season suspension or multiple season suspension.

ATHLETIC DISCIPLINE REVIEW BOARD

Every two years (beginning in the fall 2017), the Athletic Director will appoint 4 members to the Athletic Discipline Review Board (ADRB). The membership will consist of the Athletic Director, 2 faculty and 2 athletic coaches. At least 3 of the 5 members of the ADRB must be present to determine an appropriate penalty that is commensurate with the seriousness of the infraction, giving due consideration to the nature of the offense and the student-athletes past record. Penalties may include reprimand, suspension from athletic participation, or termination of athletic privileges altogether. The ADRB will make a decision within 72 hours regarding the penalty within to be handed out. A student-athlete will not be able to participate during the time the ADRB is making their decision, but this time of suspension will count towards the athlete's overall suspension time.

Substance use, Abuse, or Misuse

1. Student-athletes shall not smoke, chew, or possess tobacco products, including electronic paraphernalia such as e-cigarettes.
2. Student-athletes shall not consume, possess, conceal, distribute, sell, purchase or abuse any product or substance containing alcohol (refusal of a student-athlete to take a portable breath test, will be considered an admission of guilt);
3. Student-athletes shall not illegally use drugs or possess drugs. This includes the misuse of legal drugs, stimulants, steroids, counterfeit drugs, the possession, concealment, distribution, sale or purchase of these substances.
4. Use, possession or distribution shall be determined by assessment of objective evidence such as a police report, sworn affidavits, or similar evidence deemed by the ADRB to be both credible and relevant.

Penalties for violation of the substance rules:

First-Offense:

In or Out of Season Infraction: Once the season has begun a sport season (defined as the first official practice) the will be suspended for 1/3rd of the season, a more severe penalty maybe invoked if necessary. A suspended player may continue to practice with the team during the period of suspension if the coach and athletic director wish the student-athlete to do so. In circumstances where at least 1/3rd of the season cannot be enforced, the penalty will be carried over to the next season the student-athlete participates.

Off-Season Infraction: Suspension from the scheduled athletic events for 1/3rd of the season, a more severe penalty maybe invoked. The penalty may only be applied to a sport in which, during the past year, the athlete has participated. A freshman athlete may apply their suspension to the next sport in which they participate.

In-Season Infraction: Once the student-athlete has begun a sport season (defined as the first official practice) they will be suspended for the entire season. A suspended athlete may continue to practice with the team during this period of suspension if the coach wishes the athlete to do so. In circumstances where at least 1/3rd of the season cannot be enforced, this penalty will be carried over to the next season the student-athlete participates.

Penalty for Second Offense:

Ineligible for one (1) calendar year from the effective date of the decision. During this suspension the athlete may, with the coach's permission, practice until the suspension has been lifted. Before a student-athlete can become eligible, they must show evidence of counseling to eliminate their self-defeating behavior.

Minimum Penalty for Third Offense:

Termination of athletic privileges at Buchanan Community Schools until the conclusion of the student-athlete's high school career. If there are extenuating circumstances, the penalty may be less than termination.

Self-Referral

Student-athletes who:

1. Has voluntarily sought assistance for a substance abuse problem and has been admitted to a hospital-based substance abuse program; and
2. Has voluntarily notified a member of the Board of their admission to such a program prior to being charged with a violation of the athletic code, maybe exempt from any penalty.

Any violation following the admission to a substance abuse program will result in an athletic penalty.

RULES FOR PARTICIPATION

1. If a student-athlete is suspended from school, they will not be eligible to participate in athletics during the suspension. When a student who is suspended has been placed back into the classroom before the end of that day, they are eligible to practice or play in games.
2. A student-athlete is expected to set an example of responsibility. When school is in session the day following an evening athletic contest, the student-athlete is expected to be in school. If a student-athlete misses the next day, the student-athlete may not be allowed to practice.
3. When school is in session, it is mandatory that a student-athlete be in attendance the day an athletic contest or practice is scheduled in which the athlete will participate. "Skipping" class or being unexcused on a game day will disqualify the student-athlete from participation.
4. In order for an athlete to be eligible to practice or play in a game when ill from home, they must be in attendance at school for the final 3 hours of the day. If a student-athlete cannot be in attendance for the final 3 hours of the day due to an appointment, the absence must be cleared ahead of time with either the coach or the athletic department.

PROCEDURES FOR VIOLATIONS OF SCHOOL WIDE ATHLETIC RULES

Student-athletes and parents/guardians are expected to display honesty and integrity and, whenever a violation of these rules is suspected, they are expected to cooperate with coaches and administrators who investigate the charges. Whenever a violation of these rules is suspected, the athletic director and the coach will conduct an investigation and will notify the student-athlete of the nature of the charges and provide them an opportunity to discuss the matter. Where it is determined that an offense has occurred, the coach and athletic director will assess the penalty. Parents/guardians will be notified within 2 days after the penalty is imposed.

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 athlete will follow these steps:

1. Appeal the decision to the principal of their building with 4 calendar days of receiving the penalty.
2. A second appeal may be made to the Superintendent within 4 calendar days of the principal's response
3. A final appeal may be made to the Board of Education within 4 calendar days of the Superintendent's response, this decision is 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 meeting will be informal and will be attended only by those immediately affected.

COACHES RULES

The Athletic Code of Conduct is a set of minimum standards of responsibilities for all student-athletes in Buchanan Community Schools. Coaches may set additional rules or standards for athletes in their respective sports. Additional rules by coaches will be shared with the Athletic Director. Once set, these rules are binding and student-athletes must follow these in addition to general athletic rules. In the event that a student-athlete is disciplined by a coach for violations of coach's rules, the coach will notify parents by phone or mail within 5 school days. The student-athlete and parents/guardians may appeal a coach's decision to the Athletic Director. The Athletic Director's decision is final.

Tryouts/Cuts: Some athletic programs can only carry so many student-athletes on their rosters. These programs will have tryouts and make cuts, coaches will provide criteria of what the student-athlete will be evaluated on. Once cuts have been decided by the Head coach, he/she will let the athletes know their status by either a one on one conversation or posting a list in an appropriate locker room.

Vacations: Vacations that occur during the season and which cause a student-athlete to miss practice in preparation of that sport must be cleared in advance through the coach. Any student-athlete who does not follow this procedure jeopardizes the athlete's position on the team.

DUAL PARTICIPATION

A student-athlete may typically participate in only 1 sport per season. A student-athlete that wishes to compete in more than 1 sport per season must receive permission in writing from the Athletic Director with concurrence of the coaches involved. The student-athlete must choose a primary sport and a secondary sport. The primary sport receives full attention unless the coach and Athletic Director allow the student-athlete to miss a primary sport practice for a secondary sport contest.

AWARDS

The athletic awards are given by the Buchanan Athletic Department in special recognition for athletic performance. To qualify for this honor, each coach will inform team members before the season begins of the requirements and standards for earning an award in the particular sport. The student-athlete must be recommended by the coach of the sport in which the student-athlete is participating. Any special awards which are not listed must be approved by the Athletic Department. Currently, Buchanan Community Schools awards student-athletes the following: Varsity letter, JV letter and numerals.

INSURANCE

Buchanan Community Schools does not provide any type of health or accident insurance for injuries incurred during participation in athletics. As a service to students and their families, the High School has available a student accident insurance plan at a very nominal cost provided by a 3rd party. Application forms for the accident plan are available in the Athletic Office.

The MHSAA provides all of its member schools with a Catastrophic Accident Medical Insurance Policy which pays up to \$500,000 for medical expenses left unpaid by other insurance after a deductible of \$25,000 per claim in paid medical expenses has been met. All students enrolled in grades 7th-12th grades at MHSAA member schools that are eligible under MHSAA rules and participating in practices or competition in sports under the MHSAA jurisdiction are covered by this policy for injuries related to their athletic participation.

The MHSAA also provides additional insurance that is intended to pay accident medical expenses benefits resulting from a suspected concussion. The injury must be sustained while the athlete is participating in a MHSAA covered activity. Policy limit is \$25,000 for each accident. This program intends to assure that all eligible student-athletes in MHSAA member schools in grades 7th-12th, male or female, in all levels of all sports under the jurisdiction of the MHSAA, receive prompt and professional attention for head injury events if the student-athlete is uninsured or under-insured. Accident medical deductibles and co-pays left unpaid by other policies are reimbursed under this program to the limits of the policy.

Should you have a need to make a claim under this program, contact terri.bruner@kandkinsurance.com or phone 800-237-2917 toll free.

THE BCS ATHLETIC CONFERENCE

The Berrien/Branch, Cass and St. Joseph County league (BCS) was originated in 2014 and is commonly known as the BCS. Charter Members (2014) schools are Brandywine, Bridgman, Bronson, Buchanan, Lake Michigan Catholic, and New Buffalo. The membership has varied since 2014. The conference is broken into 2 or 3 divisions depending on the sport offering and school's size. Buchanan is in the Red division on all sport offerings, a copy of the divisions is available if needed in the athletic office.

Buchanan Community Schools are a voluntary member of the BCS Conference. The value of membership in the conference is the aid it renders in the arranging of schedules, equalizing competition, conducting league championships, and generally upgrading the program of member schools through the establishment of conference standards and goals. Membership in the conference provides schools the opportunity for local competition without excess travel and aids in inter-school relationships and the promoting of good sportsmanship.

ATHLETIC ACKNOWLEDGEMENT & TRANSPORTATION FORM

(Please return this completed page, front & back side to your head coach)

We have received, read and understand the Athletic Handbook outlining the following points:

- Buchanan Athletic Mission Statement & Sportsmanship Philosophy
- Athletic Activity Offerings
- Eligibility Rules
- Academic Eligibility
- School of Choice Statement
- Athletic Code of Conduct and Rules of Conduct
- Parent Code of Conduct
- Substance use, Abuse, or Misuse
- Penalties for violation of the substance rules
- Self-Referral
- Rules for Participation
- Appeal Process
- Coaches Rules
- Dual Participation
- Awards
- Insurance
- BCS Conference

As a student-athlete and as a parent in the Buchanan Community Athletic Program, we understand and support the points listed above, as well as the listed in the Athletic Handbook

Student-Athlete Name (print): _____

Student-Athlete Signature & date: _____

Parent Name (print): _____

Parent Signature & Date: _____

PLEASE COMPLETE BACK PAGE REGARDING TRANSPORTATION THROUGHOUT THE SEASON
(Both sides must be completed before returning the is form to your coach)

TRAVEL PERMISSION FORM

When it is necessary for a team to travel away for an athletic contest, school transportation (buses or vans) is used whenever feasible. However, it is recognized that, in some cases, it may be in the best interest of the student to be driven by his/her parents to and from the contest, or driven by the parent of another student-athlete on the team to and from the contest.

In regards to the above cases, please check the line you approve for your son/daughter.

_____ **Parent/Guardian Volunteer Driver Acknowledgment and Release**

I acknowledge that my participation as a driver of Buchanan Community Schools student-athletes from the school to contests, and returning student-athletes from contests, is an independent, voluntary act. Neither Buchanan Administration nor Athletic Department requires my participation as a volunteer driver of student-athletes in consideration of my son's/daughter's participation in the sports program.

I have also provided the Athletic Department with a signed volunteer form and a copy of my personal 100/300 liability automobile insurance before driving.

_____ **Parental Permission to Travel with Other Parents**

Transportation to contests may be provided by parents of other student-athletes. These parents will be driving their own private vehicles. Buchanan Community Schools assumes no responsibility for the driving performance of these parents. The parent driver is responsible for all automobile insurance coverage in case of accident while driving student-athletes to and from contests.

I hereby agree to indemnify Buchanan Community Schools, its employees, agents, representatives, and volunteers from any and all liability, loss or damage, costs, or judgments against Buchanan Community Schools asserted as a result of this transportation agreement.

I have read this release and waiver of liability and indemnification agreement. I fully understand its terms, understand I have given up substantial rights by signing it, and have signed it freely and voluntarily. And I intend my signature to be complete and unconditional release of all liability to the greatest extent allowed by law.

Student-Athlete's Name: _____

Parent/Guardian's Name: _____

Parent/Guardian's Signature & Date: _____