

## **BUFORD MIDDLE SCHOOL ATHLETICS**

### **SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY & GUIDELINES FOR STUDENT-ATHLETES**

Competing for Buford Middle School is a privilege. Student-athletes at Buford Middle School are held in the highest regard and are seen as role models in the community. As leaders you have the responsibility to portray your team, your family, your school and yourselves in a positive manner at all times. Sometimes this means doing things that are an inconvenience to you, but benefits the whole team.

Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, Vine, Snapchat and other social media sites have increased in popularity globally, and are used by the majority of student-athletes here at Buford Middle School in one form or another. Student-athletes should be aware that third parties, including the media, faculty, future employers and NCAA universities and coaches, could easily access your profiles and view all personal information. This includes all pictures, videos, comments and posters. Inappropriate material found by third parties affects the perception of the student-athlete, our team and Buford Middle School. This can also be detrimental to a student-athlete's future college and employment options.

Examples of inappropriate and offensive behaviors concerning participation in online communities may include depictions or presentations of the following:

- Photos, videos, comments or posters showing the personal use of alcohol, drugs and tobacco
- Photos, videos, and comments that are of a sexual nature. This includes links to websites of a pornographic nature and other inappropriate material.
- Pictures, videos, comments or posters that condone drug-related activity. This includes but is not limited to images that portray the personal use of marijuana and drug paraphernalia.
- Content online that is unsportsmanlike, derogatory, demeaning or threatening toward any other individual or entity (examples: derogatory comments regarding another school; taunting comments aimed at a student-athlete, coach or team at another school and derogatory comments against race and/or gender). No posts should depict or encourage unacceptable, violent or illegal activities (examples: hazing, sexual harassment/assault, gambling, discrimination, fighting, vandalism, academic dishonesty, underage drinking, illegal drug use).
- Content online that would constitute a violation of BOE rules, state board rules or GHSA rules.

- Information that is sensitive or personal in nature or is proprietary to Buford Middle School, which is not public information (examples: tentative or future team schedules, student-athlete injuries and eligibility status, travel plans/itineraries or information).

If a student-athlete's profile and its contents are found to be inappropriate in accordance with the above behaviors, he/she will be subject to the following penalties:

1. Written warning.
2. A meeting with Athletic Director and Head Coach.
3. Penalties as determined by the athletic department, including but not limited to possible suspension or dismissal from his/her athletic team.

For your own safety, please keep the following recommendations in mind as you participate in social media websites:

- Set your security settings so that only your friends can view your profile.
- You should not post your email, home address, local address, telephone number(s), or other personal information as it could lead to unwanted attention, stalking, identity theft, etc.
- Be aware of who you add as a friend to your site – many people are looking to take advantage of student-athletes or to seek connection with student-athletes.
- Consider how the above behaviors can be reflected in all Facebook applications.

If you are ever in doubt of the appropriateness of your online public material, consider whether it upholds and positively reflects your own values and ethics. Always present a positive image and don't do anything to embarrass yourself, the team, your family or Buford Middle School.

By signing below you affirm that you understand the Buford Middle School Social Media Policy and Guidelines for Student-Athletes and the requirements that you must adhere to as a Buford Middle School student- athlete.

Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_