Rowan-Salisbury School System

Middle School Athletic Handbook

2022 – 2023

China Grove RED DEVILS

Corriher Lipe JACKETS

Erwin EAGLES

Knox TROJANS

North Rowan MAVERICKS

Southeast PATRIOTS

West Rowan BULLDOGS

INTRODUCTION

The Rowan-Salisbury Schools middle school interscholastic athletic programs are governed by policies established by the Rowan-Salisbury Schools Board of Education, the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction and the North Carolina High School Athletic Association (NCHSAA). The NCHSAA handbook can be viewed at www.nchsaa.org.

This athletic handbook contains rules, regulations and other information necessary for athletic directors and coaches to run their programs effectively and efficiently. A complete knowledge of these rules and regulations is vital to ensure that the interscholastic athletic program shall be conducted in accordance with existing state and local policies.

This handbook is also designed to inform the student-athlete and his/her parent(s)/guardian(s) of the rules, regulations, and policies of the athletic department. The district's coaching staff believes that success in athletics is established and maintained through adherence to the principles outlined in this handbook. Although this handbook is not all-inclusive, it is the hope that it at least provides a foundation of information for athletes and their parents. There are many rules and regulations that are not included and, of course, each school and coaching staff has the right to make reasonable rules that are more stringent than those outlined in this document.

It is important to understand that all students will adhere to the Rowan-Salisbury Schools Code of Conduct and that consequences for violations will be given accordingly. Student-athletes are looked upon not only as representatives of the school, but as leaders among their respective student bodies. Any actions and behaviors that might compromise the efforts of good sportsmanship and ethical athletic practices are unacceptable and will not be tolerated. In an attempt to ensure open communication between all parties, parents and athletes must read and sign the Middle School Athletic Participation Requirement Form as a requirement prior to participating in any sport.

OBJECTIVES

- To provide our participants with the best possible administration, supervision and instruction available.
- To provide our participants with quality facilities and equipment that is both safe and student friendly.
- To provide our participants with safe, quality transportation to and from all competitions and activities.

SCHOOL CONTACT NUMBERS

China Grove Middle School..... 704-857-7038

Corriher-Lipe Middle School.....704-857-7946

Erwin Middle School..... 704-279-7265

Knox Middle School..... 704-633-2922

North Rowan Middle School.....704-639-3018

Southeast Middle School..... 704-638-5561

West Rowan Middle School..... 704-633-4775

ATHLETIC INFORMATION

6th GRADE PARTICIPATION

Local education agencies are authorized to determine whether and to what extent 6th graders may participate in interscholastic athletics, with the exception of football. In the fall of 2016, the Rowan-Salisbury Schools Board of Education approved that 6th graders would be allowed to participate in all sports (except for football), effective immediately.

ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY

If a student receives an F on their report card in a core class, he/she may not participate in athletic contests until adequate progress is shown. It is up to the school administration to determine if sufficient progress has been made in order to allow the student to continue playing. The student in question may still practice with the team during this time.

If a student receives 2 F's on their report card at the end of a semester, that student is ineligible to participate in athletics during the following semester.

If an athlete is "academically eligible" or "academically ineligible" at the beginning of any semester, that status is retained throughout the full semester.

DRESS

Athletes are to dress in an appropriate manner whenever they represent Rowan-Salisbury Schools in accordance to Rowan-Salisbury Schools Dress Code at practice and for all games. Coaches may stipulate game day dress code.

EXPENSES

Should student-athletes or guardian(s) choose to make purchases related to athletic participation (e.g. camps, clothing, equipment for personal use, etc.), the expenses will be the sole responsibility of that athlete and his/her parent(s)/guardian(s). Rowan-Salisbury Schools and/or the coaching staff will, in no way, cover or reimburse expenses of this nature at any time.

INSURANCE

By its nature, participation in interscholastic athletics includes risk of injury. Although serious injuries are not common in supervised school athletic programs, it is impossible to eliminate all risk. Participants have the responsibility to help reduce the chance of injury by obeying all safety rules and warnings, reporting physical problems to their coaches, following a proper conditioning program and inspecting their own equipment on a daily basis.

Each school carries catastrophic insurance on each individual athlete, but parents are required to provide adequate medical or accident coverage on their child as well. Additional insurance may be purchased through each school. Parents must complete the insurance information included on the "Middle School Athletic Participation Requirements" form.

FINANCIAL OBLIGATIONS

If an athlete damages or loses their team uniform or school-issued equipment, the student-athlete is expected to make the appropriate restitution. All unpaid fees to the athletic department will be treated as

any other unpaid school fee and could keep the student in question from participating in other school functions as a result.

PHYSICALS

All athletes must have a current and valid physical on file at school before participating in a sport, including tryouts. The physical is valid for 395 days. All athletes must also have a signed Concussion Statement on file prior to participating. The Concussion Statement will be distributed to each athlete along with all other forms necessary for participation. Any student-athlete with a suspected concussion is not permitted to return to participation (practice or play) until the student-athlete receives written release from a duly licensed physician and completion of the concussion protocol.

TEAM SCHEDULES

Schedules will be available on your school's website and school calendar.

SELECTION OF TEAMS

Students are encouraged to try out for multiple sports. Each coach has his/her own policy on how he/she selects the team. Coaches will explain their process of selection to all candidates before practices begin. Once an athlete begins the in-season training period for a sport, he/she should not quit while that sport is in season. If an athlete quits a sport, then he/she will be withheld from participation in another sport until that season has been completed (including the playoffs). The in-season coach and athletic director have the ability to override this particular rule if he/she feels that there are extenuating circumstances that have caused the athlete to quit the team.

SKILL DEVELOPMENT

Skill Development sessions and open facilities are allowed, but shall not be held during any tryout period of an in-season sport, during exams, or during the last five days of each semester. All skill development sessions must be voluntary and open to all athletically eligible students. Insurance is required for all those involved in skill development and off seasons, including camps.

TRANSPORTATION

As per Rowan-Salisbury Schools' policy, the athletic department will provide transportation to and from athletic contests. All athletes must travel with the team to athletic events held away from the home school. After an away game, athletes will be allowed to travel home with a parent/legal guardian with prior written permission. A transportation waiver must be signed and given to the head coach prior to the game. The form is located in the packet of forms given to each athlete. Parents should understand that the Rowan-Salisbury Schools do not carry insurance applicable to any injury arising out of the student's transportation as requested.

WEATHER

Rowan-Salisbury Schools will follow the North Carolina High School Athletic Association rules related to athletic activity and heat. All schools will have a heat illness prevention and management policy for all sanctioned activities and under no circumstances will there be any deviation from its implementation. When schools are closed due to inclement weather conditions, all school activities shall be suspended. This rule applies to all games, practices, rehearsals, etc.

ATHLETIC ELIGIBILITY REGULATIONS

- Student must be properly enrolled in the 6th, 7th or 8th grade in the school district and properly assigned to the school offering the team in which he or she wishes to participate.
- Student must be less than 15 years of age on or before August 31 of the current school year.
- Student must meet the RSS attendance policy during the previous semester.
- Student must not practice or attend any meeting of the team or group on the day the student is absent from school.
- Student is eligible to participate at the school to which he or she is assigned by the local board of education, within the administrative unit of residence.
- Student must not falsify any official eligibility information, such as residency/address. Penalty for such acts will result in loss of eligibility for 365 days.
- Student must not have been convicted of a felony or of an offense that could be a felony if committed by an adult.
- Student may only accept prizes, merchandise, money or anything that can be exchanged for money as a result of athletic participation in accordance with NCHSAA rules and regulations.
- Student must meet local promotion standards.
- Students may only participate in one season per year; per sport, whether the sport is played in North Carolina or not.

STUDENT TRANSFER

The Rowan-Salisbury School System (RSSS) Board of Education shall assign students to schools based on their domicile. It is the intent of the Board of Education that a student attends the school that serves his/her domicile. Exceptions to this will be made in limited circumstances within the criteria set forth in Board Policy 4150 Student Assignment.

Please note that although a student may have multiple residences, they may only have one domicile. The parent/legal custodian's domicile is used to establish the school assignment. It is expected that the child reside with the parent/legal custodian.

ATHLETIC WAIT PERIOD

The 365-day athletic wait period for students transferring from one school to the other no longer applies to middle school students attending Rowan-Salisbury Schools. The athletic wait period is for high school student-athletes only. If a student's transfer request is approved from one RSS middle school to another, then that student is automatically eligible for athletic participation, providing he/she has met all of the other eligibility criteria.

PRACTICE

A student may not practice or attend any meeting of the team or group on the day the student is absent from school. Team practice must not take place during an instructional day unless given special permission by the Superintendent. On teacher workdays, practice can only take place before the workday begins or after the workday ends. If schools are closed due to inclement weather, practices will be cancelled unless special permission is given by the Superintendent. Teams may not practice or assemble as a team with a coach on Sundays.

CONDUCT

Participation in extracurricular activities, including athletics, is a privilege, not a right. The Rowan-Salisbury Schools Board of Education expects all students who represent their school through

participation in extracurricular activities to be good representatives of their school community. Students should dress, act and conduct themselves in a way that reflects positively on their school. Each student is expected to display good citizenship at all times. Taunting is expressly prohibited. Taunting includes actions or comments, which are intended to bait, anger, embarrass, ridicule or demean others, whether or not deeds or words are vulgar or racist. Any student who fails to conduct himself or herself appropriately may have the privilege or participation limited or revoked. Students that are in in-school suspension (ISS) for an entire day will not be allowed to practice or participate in games. Students that have been suspended out-of-school (OSS) will not be allowed to practice or play.

HAZING

Hazing, Bullying or Intimidation of a Fellow Student – It shall be a violation of board policy for any student to engage in what is known as hazing or to aid or abet any other student in hazing. For the purpose of this policy, hazing is defined as follows: "to annoy any student by playing abusive or ridiculous tricks on him/her; to frighten, scold, beat, harass him/her; or to subject him/her to personal indignity." Furthermore, deliberate intimidation, bullying or harassment in any form is prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to, name-calling, teasing, physical abuse, written or oral messages or visual images that deliberately intimidate, harass, or embarrass another individual. Such messages or images may include direct conversation, telephone messages, text messages, instant messages, internet postings, e-mails, photographic images, posters, signs, and other means of disseminating hurtful, embarrassing, vicious, or scurrilous remarks or content (G.S. 14-36 and 115C-391). Refer to the Rowan-Salisbury Schools School's Student and Parent Handbook for consequences regarding hazing, bullying and/or intimidation.

EJECTION POLICY

The policy applies to all persons involved in an athletic contest, including student-athletes, coaches, managers and game administrators. The following examples include behavior or conduct which will result in an ejection from a contest:

1. Fighting, which includes, but is not limited to, combative acts such as:
    - An attempt to strike an opponent with a fist, hands, arms, legs or feet
    - An attempt to punch or kick an opponent, regardless of whether or not contact is made
    - An attempt to instigate a fight by committing an unsportsmanlike act toward an opponent that causes an opponent to retaliate
    - Leaving the bench area to participate in a fight (contact or no contact)
2. Biting observed by an official
3. Taunting, baiting or spitting toward an opponent
4. Profanity directed toward an official or opponent
5. Obscene gestures, including gesturing in such a manner as to intimidate
6. Disrespectfully addressing an official or physically contacting an official is subject to automatic expulsion and can result in ineligibility for remainder of career

Penalty for an ejection for the above reasons:

- Football – ejection from the contest and miss the next contest at that level and contests in the interim (EXCEPTION: fighting equals 2 missed contests)
- All other sports – ejection from that contest; miss the next two contests at that level and all contests in the interim (EXCEPTION: fighting equals 4 missed contests)

When an ejection occurs, an athlete must participate in the NFHSlearn.com Sportsmanship Course before they will be allowed to return. Athletes receiving two ejections for unacceptable behavior as defined above will be suspended from all sports for the remainder of the season. Receiving a third ejection in a school year will result in suspension from athletics for one calendar year (365 days from the date of the third ejection).

SUBSTANCE ABUSE

The NCHSAA and Rowan-Salisbury Schools emphatically oppose the possession or use of tobacco, alcohol and other drugs by student-athletes. The possession or use of alcohol, tobacco, performance enhancing substances, and illegal drugs is prohibited. Medical research clearly substantiates the fact that the use of these or any mood modifying substances produce harmful effects.

An athlete shall not at any time, during school or out of school, and regardless of quantity:

1. Have in possession, use or consume a beverage containing alcohol, performance enhancing drugs or illegal drugs
2. Use or consume, have in possession, buy, sell, or give away any other controlled substance or drug paraphernalia

It is not a violation for a student to be in possession of a controlled substance specifically prescribed for the student's own use by his/her doctor. Rowan-Salisbury Schools Code of Conduct rules are followed for prescribed medications.

TOBACCO/E-CIGARETTES/VAPES

Possession of or use of tobacco products, lighters, matches, pipes, or any other related items including e-cigarettes, vapes and all lighted and smokeless tobacco products are against the Rowan-Salisbury Schools Code of Conduct. Athletes are prohibited from the use and/or possession of tobacco products and shall not possess, smoke, dip, chew or otherwise use any tobacco products at any time while on school premises, off school property or at any school-sponsored activity or event. Rowan-Salisbury Schools Code of Conduct consequences will be followed for all athletes breaking this rule.

PARENT/COACH RELATIONSHIP

Parenting and coaching are both extremely difficult vocations. By establishing an understanding of each position, we are better able to accept the actions of the other and provide a greater benefit to children. As parents, when your child is involved in our program, you have the right to understand what expectations are placed on him/her. This begins with clear communications from the coach of the sport.

<u>COMMUNICATION YOU SHOULD EXPECT FROM YOUR CHILD'S COACH</u>

1. Philosophy of the coach
2. Expectations and goals the coach has for your child as well as for the team/season
3. Locations and times of all practices and contests
4. Team requirements, special equipment, strength and conditioning programs
5. Procedure if your child is injured during participation
6. Team rules, guidelines and consequences for infractions
7. Lettering criteria
8. Team selection process

COMMUNICATION COACHES EXPECT FROM ATHLETES & PARENTS

1. Concerns should be expressed directly to the coach
2. Parent's contact number, both home and emergency
3. Notification of any schedule conflicts in advance
4. Notification of special medical conditions
5. Notification of illness or injury as soon as possible

It is important to understand that there may be times when things do not go the way you and your child wish. At these times, discussion with the coach is encouraged. It is the first and most integral step to understanding and resolution.

APPROPRIATE CONCERNS TO DISCUSS WITH COACHES

1. The treatment of your child
2. Ways to help your child improve
3. Concerns about your child's behavior
4. Concerns about your child's academic performance
5. Safety of your child

It is very difficult to accept your child not playing as much as you had hoped. Coaches are professionals. They make decisions on what they believe to be the best for all student-athletes involved. As you have seen from the list above, certain things can be and should be discussed with your child's coach. The five items below should be left to the direction of the coach.

1. Playing time
2. Team strategy
3. Play calling
4. Offensive/defensive philosophies
5. Other student athletes

There are situations that may require a conference between the coach and player, or coach and parent. These conferences are encouraged. It is important that all parties involved have a clear understanding of the other's position. Be willing to accept opinions and/or knowledge that you may not want to hear.

When a conference is necessary, the following procedure should be used to help resolve any concerns.

1. Student-Coach – open-door policy for all coaches
2. Parent-Coach – done by appointment

IF YOU HAVE A CONCERN TO DISCUSS WITH A COACH, THE PROCEDURE YOU SHOULD FOLLOW IS:

1. Do not attempt to confront a coach immediately before or after a contest or practice. These can be emotional times for both the parent and the coach. Meetings of this nature usually do not promote positive resolutions.
2. Call the coach to schedule an appointment. The phone number for the middle school will be posted at parent meetings.
3. If the coach cannot be reached, call the school athletic director, he/she will set up a meeting for you.

THE NEXT STEP:

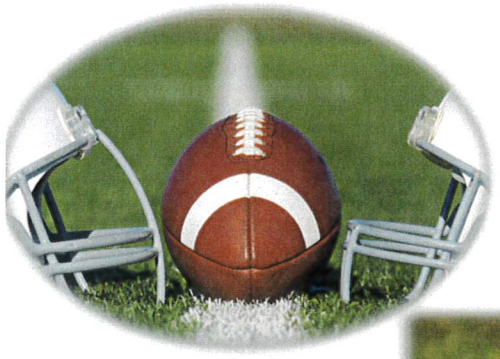
What can you do if the meeting with the coach did not provide a satisfactory resolution?

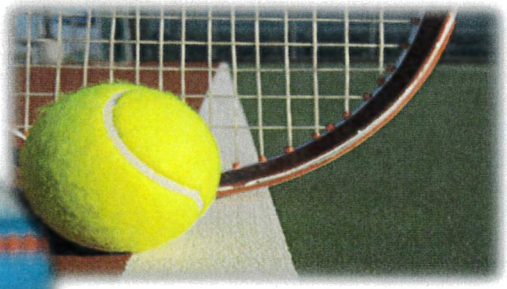
1. Call and schedule an appointment with the school athletic director. At this meeting, the appropriate next step can be determined, if necessary.
2. Call the school principal to discuss the situation.
3. Contact the Central Office only after going through school athletic director and school principal first.

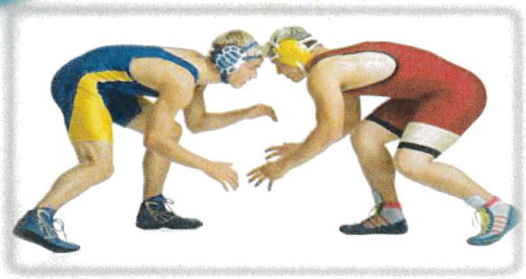
EXPECTATIONS FOR PARENTS AND SPECTATORS

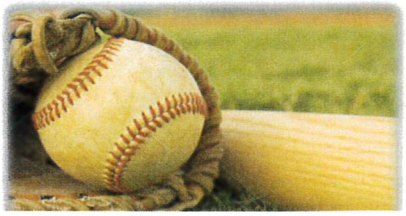
1. Ensure that your child understands that win or lose, you love him or her.
2. Assist your child in setting realistic goals.
3. Emphasize "improved" performance, not winning.
4. Emphasize academics first, athletics second.
5. Provide a safe environment for training and competition.
6. Control your emotions at games and events.
7. Be a "cheerleader" for your child and other children on the team.
8. Respect your child's coaches. Communicate with them in a positive way. Encourage others to do the same.
9. Respect the officials at your child's games. Officials are human and do make mistakes. An official has never won or lost a ballgame to a call.
10. Never approach an official after a game. Emotions are usually pretty high at that time.
11. Be a positive role model for your child. Children do pay attention to your actions.

Be sensible, responsible and keep priorities in order. There is a lot more at stake than a team's record.









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