



RIVERSIDE HIGH SCHOOL

STUDENT/PARENT ATHLETICS HANDBOOK

Riverside has an excellent tradition in both academics and athletics. The athletic program is an integral part of the total educational experience. While it is an honor for a student to be a part of an athletic program, it is also a privilege. The athletic program will not be allowed to detract from Riverside's primary mission, *To instruct, prepare, and inspire students for success in future endeavors. The mission of Riverside High School is to prepare students to become confident, competent, ethical individuals and responsible citizens by creating a positive and nurturing school environment where staff, students, parents, and the community work together to promote lifelong learning and to provide opportunities for students to reach their maximum potential.* . **Extra-curricular activities are complementary and supplementary to the academic program of Riverside.** Academic success is considered the principal goal for all students.

I. Eligibility Requirements for Try-outs

A. ACADEMICS

For a student to be eligible to try-out for a sport during the first semester eligibility cycle, he/she must meet South Carolina High School League requirements (see below) and have an overall 60% average or 1.0 GPA from the previous school year and/or summer school where applicable.

Students who take a course in summer school will have that grade averaged with their final grades from the previous year.

For a student to be eligible to try-out for a sport during second semester eligibility cycle, he/she must meet South Carolina High School League requirements as well as have an overall 60% average or 1.0 GPA from the first semester.

South Carolina High School League Academic Requirements (Article VII, Section 3)

To be eligible in the first semester a student must pass a minimum of five Carnegie units applicable toward a high school diploma during the previous school year. To be eligible during second semester, a student must meet one of the following conditions:

1. If the student met first semester eligibility requirements then he/she must pass the equivalent of four, 1/2 units during the first semester.
2. If the student did not meet first semester eligibility requirements then he/she must pass the equivalent of five, 1/2 units during the first semester.

Students must satisfy eligibility requirements in the semester preceding participation. Credits earned in a summer school approved by the State Department of Education may apply for first semester eligibility. A maximum of two units per year may be used. Students eligible for a first semester sport will be permitted to complete that sport even if it extends into the second semester.

B. DISCIPLINE

Riverside recognizes the benefit of extra-curricular activities in regards to student behavior and accountability. All students who meet the aforementioned academic requirements will be allowed to try-out for athletics regardless of any previous ISS or OSS incident unless such incident was of such significance that the discipline committee (made up of: the Principal, Athletic Director, and Coach) has revoked any extra-curricular privilege.

Coaches have the right to review and consider any student discipline records in the decision-making process of try-outs. Coaches also have the right to set higher standards for try-out eligibility than what is addressed in this handbook.

Student-athlete expectations are considerably higher than those not involved in extra-curricular activities. Any student who is part of an extra-curricular program will be expected to maintain these standards, which are addressed in the next section. Violations will not be tolerated.

II. Behavioral Expectations/Consequences of Student Athletes

A. SCHOOL DISCIPLINE

Students who are unable to display appropriate and mature behavior will not be allowed to participate in extra-curricular programs.

Minor Offenses include ID Badge and Dress Code violations. Such offenses will be up to the Coach's discretion, but continued violations will no longer be considered Minor Offenses.

All other offenses will follow the following consequences:

- A. In School Suspension (ISS)
 - a. First offense- Coach's discretion
 - b. Second offense- Coach's discretion
 - c. Third offense- Meeting with coach, parent, athlete and Athletic Director
 - d. Fourth offense- One game suspension to be served the next game/match/competition
 - e. Fifth offense- Suspension from competition for the remainder of the current season
- B. Out of School Suspension (OSS)
 - a. First offense- One game suspension to be served the next games/matches/competitions
 - b. Second offense – Three game suspension to be served the next three games/matches/competitions.
 - c. Third offense- Suspension from competition for the remainder of the current season
- C. Missed Practice
 - a. The attendance policy will be created by the head coach and will be consistently enforced.
 - b. All athletes should contact their coach prior to an absence.

*Excused absences will be at the coach's discretion to make up the missed time

Any serious violation or offense may result in the student being dismissed from the team. The significance of a violation or offense will be determined by the Disciplinary Committee.

B. UNACCEPTABLE CONDUCT

Certain conduct by any participant is absolutely unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Examples of unacceptable conduct include, but are not limited to: theft, vandalism, hazing, harassment, violation of substance abuse policy, or violations of the law. This unacceptable conduct rule is in force twelve months of the year. This means a participant may be penalized for unacceptable conduct during the school term, holiday breaks, or while school is not in session. This also means sanctions may be imposed for unacceptable conduct which occurs at school, at a school sponsored event, or off school grounds. The penalty for engaging in unacceptable conduct can include revocation of the privilege of participating in extracurricular activities.

Definitions of specific kinds of unacceptable conduct:

- **Theft:** stealing or taking personal property that belongs to another person, school, team or organization.
- **Vandalism:** willful or malicious breaking, destruction, or defacement of public or private property
- **Hazing:** any action that humiliates, degrades, abuses, or endangers another person, regardless of that person's willingness to participate. These actions may include initiation rituals into a team, club, or organization.
- **Harassment:** actions, comments, threats, verbalizations, coercion, jokes, teasing, or intimidation that is based on or takes place because of the race, color, sex, religion, nationality, or sexual orientation of another person who reports the actions as unwelcome.

C. ALCOHOL, TOBACCO AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE:

When a coach, teacher, or principal determines that a participant has violated the alcohol, tobacco, or illegal substances restrictions, the following penalties shall apply:

First Violation Penalty: The participant will be suspended immediately from a minimum of 20% of the scheduled contests in the participant's sport or activity. This includes regular season and tournament contest. If the sport or activity is out of season, then the penalty will be administered at the very next season in which the student is a participant. The student may also be required to submit to on-demand drug testing.

Second Violation Penalty: The participant will be suspended immediately for a minimum of 50% of the scheduled contests. If the sport/activity is out of season, the penalty, or remainder thereof, will be administered at the very next season in which the student participates. The student may also be required to submit to on-demand drug testing.

Third Violation Penalty: The participant will be dismissed from participation in extracurricular activities for the remainder of the student's high school career.

Note: When violation of the alcohol, tobacco, and substance abuse restrictions also results in criminal charges, subsection D (below) will also apply.

D. Athletic Probation:

If a student violates any of these previously mentioned situations they can be put on athletic probation. The form will need to be signed by the athlete and the parent. If any other disciplinary action is needed the athlete could be removed from the team.

E. COMMUNITY BEHAVIOR:

A student who participates in extra-curricular activities at Riverside not only represents the team and the school during competition; he/she represents the team and school in the community. Any behavior deemed unbecoming will be reviewed by the Disciplinary Committee, which is made up of the Principal, Athletic Director, and Coach. This committee will determine what measures will be taken.

Greenville County Schools Student Extracurricular Code of Conduct—Criminal Infractions: Some forms of misconduct may violate local, state, or federal criminal law. If a student participant is charged with a criminal offense other than a minor traffic violation, the student shall immediately be suspended from participation in extracurricular activities missing at least 20% or more of a season. After reviewing the circumstances that led to the student's arrest, the school officials may elect to continue the period of suspension until the criminal charges are resolved or impose disciplinary consequences, to include suspension from games or contests, based on the conduct that led to the student's arrest. Depending on the amount of time necessary for the criminal matter to be resolved and the facts of the matter, the responsible school officials shall have the discretion to lift the suspension and return the student to participation on probation pending resolution of the matter.

If the participant is convicted of the offense or pleads "no contest," the responsible school officials will impose a minimum one game suspension up to a maximum dismissal of the participant from all extracurricular activities. If criminal charges are dropped or if the participant is found not guilty, he/she may return to the regular participation (except to the extent that punishment under either the general or extracurricular code of conduct precludes a return to participation).

In the case of a felony arrest, no competition will be allowed until the adjudication of the case in its entirety. It is important to note, however, that regardless of the outcome of any criminal charges, a participant will be subject to punishment under the two codes of conduct if the responsible school officials determine that a student has engaged in conduct that violates either code of conduct.

If an extra-curricular participant is arrested and charged with a criminal violation, he/she must adhere to the following steps:

1. Report the violation to the coach immediately or 2 weeks prior to try-outs
2. Undergo a review by the Disciplinary Committee
3. Adhere to the decision of the Disciplinary Committee

F. ATTENDANCE POLICY

A student shall not participate in a contest or practice on the day he/she has been absent from school without just reason. Just reason shall be anything beyond the control of the student (ex: school field trip, doctor/dental appointments, bereavement, religious holiday, etc.). However, confirmation notes will be required by the sponsor or coach of that activity. It is expected that students attend at least half a day of school on performance nights to be allowed to participate.

Coaches may have more stringent attendance policies for their team.

G. INJURY

All injuries of any nature must be reported to the coach and athletic trainer at the time that they occur so that further injury can be avoided.

A certified athletic trainer, provided by the Greenville Hospital System, supervises all athletic injuries that occur at Riverside High School. This includes:

- Working directly with coaches in planning conditioning programs to prevent injury.
- Coordinating coverage of games and practices
- Administering emergency care and first aid when injuries occur.
- Evaluating injuries and making appropriate medical referrals.
- Providing daily treatment, rehabilitation and reconditioning to the injured athlete.
- Maintaining records pertaining to all injuries.
- Communicating with the athlete's parents, coaches and physicians regarding injury status and progress.

In order for a student athlete to be allowed to return to practice/competition from an injury he/she must have a written release from his/her treating physician. If the physician has communicated to the athletic trainer, the athletic trainer must notify the coach. If the athletic trainer is treating the injury, he/she must notify the coach.

H. SPORTSMANSHIP

A student-athlete who is a member of a Riverside athletic team, will be held to a higher standard as they participate in athletics. Therefore, the expectations of Riverside student/athlete sportsmanship will be:

- To conduct themselves with dignity as an athlete and compete understanding the spirit of fair play, while at the same time playing hard.
- To exercise self-control and refrain from engaging in all types of disrespectful behavior, including inappropriate language, taunting, trash talking and unnecessary physical contact.
- To respect opponents and try to be a true team player.
- To show respect to authority and accept their decisions.

III. EXPECTATIONS OF PARENTS

A. COMMUNICATION

Both parenting and coaching are extremely difficult endeavors. By establishing an understanding of each position, we are better able to accept the actions of others and provide greater benefit to the student. As parents when your child becomes involved in an extra-curricular program, you have the right to understand what expectations are placed on your child. This begins with clear communication.

In order to assure the best communication possible, the following steps must be taken:

- Call the school to set up an appointment with the coach. Requests to speak to a coach during class time will not be granted. However, parents are encouraged to leave a message for the coaches. Every effort will be made by the coach to contact the parent in a timely manner.
- If the concern is not satisfactorily resolved after speaking to the coach, contact the athletic director in an attempt to resolve the situation.

- Please do not attempt to contact a coach before or after a contest or practice. Often this is an emotional time for both parents and coaches. Meetings of this nature usually do not promote positive resolution.

B. SPORTSMANSHIP

In order to ensure that the educational experience your son/daughter has while participating in extra-curricular activities at Riverside is positive, it is expected parents follow the guidelines below:

- Practice good sportsmanship.
- Respect the officials and their authority during games/competitions.
- Do not question or confront the coach at the athletic venue.
- Remember the game is for the athletes to have fun. These programs are for our students, not the adults.
- Reinforce with your child that competing as hard as one can is more important than winning or losing.
- Demand that your child treats opposing players, officials, coaches, spectators with respect and dignity.
- Promote the physical and emotional well-being of all students.
- Do not encourage any behaviors, which could endanger the health and well-being of the students.
- Playing time, strategy, and other children in the program are topics not open for discussion.

Please understand that it is a privilege, not a right, for your child to be a participant in extra-curricular activities. Therefore, it is a privilege for you to be a spectator. Failure to abide by the aforementioned guidelines may be cause for your removal from that event and future events.

C. TRAVEL

All athletes will travel both ways on the school-provided transportation to a contest, unless there is coach approval, and written notification by the parent or legal guardian is given to the coach. Approval by the coach must be given before the student will be allowed to leave the contest.

Should an emergency occur and a student misses the school's transportation to an away contest, their parent or guardian may transport him.

While on trips to other schools or a competition, all students are under the rules and codes set forth by Riverside and Greenville County Schools.

IV. AWARDS

A. VARSITY LETTERS

Only one letter certificate is given during a student's years of eligibility. Further accomplishments are designated by awarding service bars and/or a pin to designate another activity. The requirements for earning a varsity letter differ for each activity. The criterion is set up by the coach. Letters signify an accomplishment at the varsity level. They are earned, not merely "given."

B. TEAM AWARDS

All team awards are decided upon and presented by the coaches in that particular activity at the end of the season banquet.

**Jerseys or Game Uniforms will not be given to student athletes as gifts.

C. SPORTS SEASONS

Upon making a team and participating in competition, student-athletes are responsible for finishing their obligations with that team and sport. Any student-athlete who chooses to quit a team during the season, may not participate in ANY team activities with another team or sport until the previous season is completed.

D. JERSEY RETIREMENT

The retirement of a jersey is a distinguished honor only bestowed to those students who excel in their particular activity. When a jersey is retired, only the jersey is retired, not the number. The number will continue to be used. For a person to have a jersey retired, the following criteria must be met:

1. That athlete made it to the top level of their particular sport
2. The student was a graduate of Riverside HS

Riverside reserves the right to retract any retired jersey.

Riverside High School Athletic Probation Contract

I, _____, understand that I am now on an athletic behavior contract with Riverside High School as a result of previous disciplinary infractions while as a member of the team. _____

I understand that as a result of my actions, I will be on athletic probation for the remainder of the current school year _____

I will not cut class or walk out of school. _____

I will not miss or be late to any practices or team activities. _____

I acknowledge that I will follow all rules set forth by the coach and will not do any conduct that is detrimental to the team. _____

I understand that participating in athletics here at Riverside High is a privilege and not a right. _____

I understand that any type of disciplinary infraction either at school, with the team, or outside of school will result in my removal from Riverside Athletics.

I understand that if an infraction occurs a committee made up of an administrator, the athletic director, and my coach will decide whether or not I get to remain on the team. Their decision is final. _____

Student: _____ Date: _____

Parent: _____ Date: _____

Athletic Director: _____ Date: _____

Administrator: _____ Date: _____