

Rutland Middle School

Athletic Handbook

2022-2023



Stewardship – Scholarship - Sportsmanship

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Mission

The Bibb County School District's Department of Athletics provides student-athletes with a rich co-curricular program that encourages our students to grow as individuals and leaders by experiencing the importance of being part of a team. The Department of Athletics fosters commitment and loyalty to teamwork, pride, leadership, and fair play.

Vision Statement

The Department of Athletics strives to be an all-inclusive program that provides access and opportunity for its student-athletes; engages its community in the programs offered as much as possible as well as coordinating with its community partners. RMS athletics will place great emphasis on sportsmanship, teamwork and learning the fundamentals of sports to compete at a certain level.

Philosophy

The Bibb County School District's Middle Schools athletic program is based on the premise that students in the transitional years between childhood and adolescence have characteristics and needs that are unique to their age group. Coaches of middle school students should possess an understanding of the characteristics of the age group and should utilize a variety of methods in working with the students.

The goal of each athletic activity should be to improve physical fitness, coordination, confidence, and the ability to follow directions while developing such values as cooperation, sportsmanship, discipline, self-respect, and respect for others. Although excellence is a worthy goal and students should strive to win, they should also learn to recognize the value of participating in a team effort and in doing their best. To be effective, the athletic program at each school should be a cooperative venture shared by the administration, coaches, and parents working together to provide a positive experience for students.

Bibb County

Middle School Sports

Fall Sports

(August – October)

Cheer – Football – Softball – Volleyball

Winter Sports

(November – February)

Basketball – Wrestling

Spring Sports

(March – May)

Baseball – Soccer – Track

Message to Parents and Student-Athletes

This handbook is made available to you because your son or daughter has indicated a desire to participate in RMS athletics, and you have expressed your willingness to permit him/her to compete. We are pleased with your interest in the athletic program. We believe that a comprehensive program of student activities is vital to the educational development of our students.

Participating in an athletic program is a privilege. As an athlete, you are held to higher standards in the classroom, on the field, and in the community. You are representing many people, including past athletes, your family, the community, the school, your coaches, and fellow athletes. Your involvement in athletics can be very rewarding.

As an athlete, you must carry yourself with tremendous pride. You must wear the uniform proudly. Your actions constantly reflect on others. You must realize that you are a role model for the younger members of the community. As an athlete, you have an opportunity to set a good example for those who follow you.

As students elect to participate, there are many questions that both you and your son/daughter may have regarding the athletic program. The purpose of this handbook is to answer as many questions about the policies of the program as possible (i.e., keep students and parents as informed as possible to assist in making the athletic experience a positive one for our student athletes). We are hopeful that this handbook will be of assistance to you as your child participates in the athletic program.

Benefits of Athletics

Rutland Middle School recognizes the value of athletic programs. Athletics provide students the opportunity to exercise, build a skill set and utilize their athletic abilities in a positive, sports-related atmosphere. Rutland Middle practice sessions and games should provide many opportunities to teach the values of competition and sportsmanship.

RMS athletics aim to meet the athlete's needs for self-expression, physical growth, and educational maturity. Participation in athletics is however a privilege which must be earned by the student. Adhering to the standard code of conduct both in and out of school, Bibb County athletic handbook and the specific team expectations is going to be important.

RMS goal in academics, in athletics and in all extracurricular activities is to excel at a high level. A student who elects to participate in athletics is voluntarily making a choice to participate in our programs. It requires self-discipline, commitment, and teamwork to be a part of RMS athletics.

STANDARDS OF GOOD SPORTSMANSHIP

Good sportsmanship will always be the focal point of the Rutland Middle School Athletic Department. It will be reflected in how we treat our teammates, coaches, officials, and opponents. Student-athletes at Rutland Middle School will place the positive and supportive relationship with their teammates and coaches as their highest priority. Regardless of the sport, individual or team, we are only as strong as how we treat each other.

After all contests, Rutland Middle School athletes are expected to shake hands, bump fists, nod or acknowledge the opposing athletes and coaches from the team(s) that we have competed against.

Players are expected to stand or kneel whenever the alma mater is playing. After any contest where ribbons, medals or trophies are presented to the opposing team(s), athletes will stay and watch and applaud the efforts of the athletes and team(s) involved in that contest. At no time will Rutland Middle School athletes ever leave the field or floor while a presentation is being made.

Requirements for Participation

- **All student-athletes are required to register on DragonFly to complete their eligibility documentation prior to any participation in preseason workouts and/or tryouts. There are no exceptions to this rule!** The eligibility documentation includes a physical, proof of insurance and other forms required by Bibb County Athletics Department. DragonFly is an online portal that keeps all the required eligibility documents in one place for parents, students, coaches, athletic coordinators, administrators, athletic trainers, and District Athletic Directors to access.
- The student-athlete must be in good academic standings to participate in tryouts and/or games. **ACADEMICS BEFORE ATHLETICS @ Rutland Middle School.** He or she must maintain good academic standings throughout the season, or they may be removed from the team because of this matter.
- It's a privilege to play sports at RMS so athletes should act responsible and be respectful at all times. There is a code of conduct our student-athletes will be held accountable for as they represent themselves, their parents' and their school.
- **Athletic Participation Fee** – ALL athletes will be required to pay a \$25 athletic fee to participate in Rutland Athletics. This is a one-time fee that must be paid prior to the first game of their respective sport. This participation fee will grant free entry to those students for ALL of Rutland regular season home games. Should a student be removed from the team for code of conduct reasons and/or grades, he or she will forfeit their right to this offer and the fee is nonrefundable.

ELIGIBILITY

Age Eligibility

To be eligible to participate in interscholastic middle school activities, an 8th grader must not have reached his/her 15th birthday prior to May 1 preceding his/her 8th grade school year. A student athlete's eligibility begins during their 6th grade year. No student that has competed in their first year of the 8th grade can compete again in their second year as an 8th grader. The age requirements for eligibility supersedes the athlete's grade level. Official school records must be used to determine chronological age. Coaches may not rely simply upon asking the child his/her age. Students are never eligible until the receiving school has possession of the official school

Scholastic Eligibility

It shall be the responsibility of the head coach of each sport, the school athletic coordinator, and the principal to validate the eligibility of each participant. When validating scholastic eligibility, the following guidelines should be followed:

- ❖ A student must pass at least 70% of classes the semester immediately preceding participation. This shall be determined based on the number of classes taken. 4 out of 5, 5 out of 6, or 5 out of 7 classes must be passed for the semester. (Rule of thumb: Both nine weeks' grades should equal 140 or above to be eligible. When averaging grades do not round up.)
- ❖ Eligibility is determined by averaging grades for a given semester. The first semester is the first and second nine-week period of the school year and the second semester is the third and fourth nine-week period. The Summer quarter is an extension of the second semester.
- ❖ The grades of like subjects must be averaged together, when possible,

Sixth graders are eligible to participate in all interscholastic athletics and are eligible upon entering middle school. Sixth graders' grades do not need to be checked until the 2nd semester. All 7th and 8th graders must fulfill academic requirements.

❖ Semester Eligibility transition is applicable 24 hours after the date assigned to post grades. Transfer students will NOT be allowed to tryout or practice without having grades available to verify. If a transfer student's grades have not been received by the new receiving school or if the student's records are incomplete the student will not be allowed to participate. Do not use the transfer grades form for eligibility. POLICY 205 Make-Up Work Make-up work will be accepted on the same basis as make-up work

Code of Conduct for Student-Athletes

All athletes shall abide by a code of conduct which will earn him/her the honor and respect that participation and competition in athletics afford. Any conduct that results in dishonor to the athlete, the team or the school will not be tolerated. Acts of unacceptable conduct such as, but not limited to theft, vandalism, hazing, disrespect, immaturity, or violations of the law tarnish the reputation of everyone associated with the RMS athletic programs and will not be tolerated.

Consequences: Student athletes who test positive for tobacco and/or drugs; have been arrested or convicted of committing a crime; or violate athletic or school rules will be suspended for all athletic activities, including practice for 10 days.

They will also be subjected to the policies outlined as follows:

Rule 1: Tobacco – involves the use or possession of any type of tobacco product **1st violation:** Suspension from 10% of the contest season **2nd violation:** Suspension from 25% of the contest season **3rd violation:** Expulsion from participating in athletic events for the remainder of the athlete's high school year. Suspension shall be whole games with all fractions rounded to the next whole number. Penalties will be enforced on consecutive games played from the date of the suspension. Contest season includes all contest original schedules and one (1) sectional game.

Rule 2: Controlled Substances – Possession or illegal use of a controlled substance, narcotic drugs, or alcohol. **1st violation:** Suspended 50% of contest season(s) Option: The suspension may be reduced to 25% of the contest season, contingent upon a professional drug assessment and recommendation for rehabilitation, which must be followed by the student. All concerned parties understand that any costs incurred will be at the expense of the parent/guardian. The student's re-admission to athletics is dependent on the student following the recommendations of the assessment agency. **2nd violation:** Expulsion from participating in athletic events for 365 days Option: The suspension may be reduced to 50% of the contest season, contingent upon a professional drug assessment and recommendations for rehabilitation, which must be followed

by the student. All concerned parties understand that any costs incurred will be at the expense of the parent/guardian. The student's re-admission to athletics is dependent on the student following the recommendations of the assessment agency. **3rd violation:** Expulsion from participating in athletic events for the remainder of the athlete's high school career. If percentage of suspension is not met during current contest season, it will then carry over into the next athletic contest season to fulfill the suspension.

Rule 3: Student athletes shall not participate in interscholastic sports if convicted of committing a crime. Consequence: A student athlete convicted of a felony at any time shall be excluded from athletic participation for one full year (12 months) from time of conviction.

Consequence: A student athlete convicted of a misdemeanor at any time shall be removed from athletic participation for twenty percent (20%) of the athletic schedule on the first offense. The second or succeeding offense will exclude an athlete for one (1) calendar year.

Rule 4: Student athletes that have been arrested and charged with a crime may be removed from participation until a court renders a verdict. Rule 5: A student athlete that has violated a school rule and has completed a disciplinary hearing with a Rutland Middle School administrator may be subject to additional punishment under the discretion of RMS Athletic Handbook and/or an individual coach policy. Student athletes suspended out of school are also removed from participation for the duration of the suspension. Rule 6: A student athlete that has violated any portion of the RMS Athletic Handbook other than Rules 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 is subject to a disciplinary hearing and potential punishment that may range from a warning to removal from a team. Rule 7: The coach of each sport may set specific team rules in addition to those found in the Athletic Handbook.

Reporting of Violations: Violations of the Code of Conduct for Student Athletes and/or violations of any portion of the Athletic Student Handbook should be reported immediately to the appropriate head coach or to the RMS Athletic Department.

Carry Over of Penalties from Season to Season: If the violation of the Code of Conduct for Student Athletes or a violation of RMS rules occurs in the last part of an athletic schedule of athletic season and the student athlete cannot fulfill the remaining terms of their penalty in that sport, the remaining portions of the removal from participation will carry over into the next interscholastic sport that the student

Serving of Penalties: Penalties for violations of the Code of Conduct for Student Athletes or any other violation of RMS rules or those rules of the coach within a sport will be imposed immediately and will be served in the order that the contests are scheduled.

Athletic Participation During a Period of Removal from Participation: During the period of time that a student athlete has been removed from participation, and with the exception of the student athlete that has been removed from participation for practices and contests, the student athlete is expected to be present at all athletic contests and practices involving their team. The student athlete is a member of the team and is expected to fulfill this responsibility.

If the athlete does not attend a contest or practice or any other function scheduled by the coach, credit will not be given toward fulfilling the requirements of the removal from participation.

Appeals to the Athletic Department: A student athlete and their parent(s) or guardian(s) have the right to a hearing on a removal from participation by notifying the Northeast High School Athletic Director by phone or in writing within two (2) school days after the removal. The right of appeal is forfeited if this is not requested within this two (2) day limit. The purpose of the appeal hearing is to inquire into the student athlete's alleged violation and allow the athlete and parents or guardians to present evidence on behalf of the student athlete. The removal from participation will remain in effect during the appeal hearing. **Appeals to the Principal:** The student athlete has the right to appeal the decision of the athletic department to the building principal. The notification of the intent to appeal to the principal must be made by phone or in writing within two (2) school days after the Athletic Director's decision. The right of appeal is forfeited if this is not requested within this two (2) day limit. The purpose of the appeal hearing is to inquire into the student athlete's alleged violation and allow the athlete and parent(s) or guardian(s) to present evidence on behalf of the student athlete. The removal from participation will remain in effect during the appeal hearing. Following the hearing with the principal, the student athlete and the parent(s) or guardian(s) will be notified within two (2) school days by the principal as to what the final decision is.

GENERAL INFORMATION FOR STUDENT-ATHLETES

Accidents/Injuries: All accidents or injuries incurred in practice or a contest in the GHSA sanctioned sports are to be reported to the coach and/or trainer immediately. All accidents or injuries occurred in practice, or a contest should be reported to the coaching staff immediately. This will allow for appropriate medical attention our sports staff and their medical personnel.

Changing a Sport: If a student athlete is cut from a team, they may join another team in that sport season. A student athlete cannot quit one sport to join another sport until the original sport season has concluded. However, athletes will be allowed to transfer from one sport to another during a given season upon mutual agreement of both coaches and the athletic director.

Conflicts Between Activities: Student-athletes at RMS are involved in a great number of school related activities away from sports. Conflicts are going to happen between a student athlete's commitment to their sport and other school related activities. If the conflict is between an academic class resulting in a credit and grade and an athletic contest or practice, the academic class takes precedent. Student athletes are encouraged to review their time commitment very closely before becoming involved in too many activities. Because of the demands of athletics at RMS, it is very difficult to miss practices and games without getting behind.

Participation in Two Sports in One Season: Student-athletes may participate in more than one sport during a season. The coaches involved with this athlete will be expected to meet with the prospective student athlete and discuss and agree as to how this will take place. The student athlete will be asked to declare one of the sports as their primary sport for the duration of the season. This declaration will be used to resolve any conflicts that might arise between the two sports.

Participation after an injury: A student athlete cannot return to a practice/contest after an injury until released by an appropriate licensed medical authority. A parent(s) cannot grant approval to return to practice/contest that would be against the judgments of licensed medical personal.

Practices: Regular, Vacation and on School Closing Days: Student athletes are expected to attend all practices unless excused by their coach. The coach sets practice schedules during school vacations and only the coach can excuse. If there is a school closing, the coach will contact the individual team members and advise as to what will happen.

School Day Attendance: Student athletes who are absent from school will not participate, work, or attend any school events on that day. You are to attend school the morning after evening athletic events/extracurricular activities or risk loss of participate privileges.

Selection of Teams: Each varsity coach will have their own policy as to how they will choose their teams. Some of our sports allow all those who come out to participate while others require a selection process to have the appropriate number of student athletes on the teams. At the beginning of the season, if appropriate for that sport, the head coach will review with the student athletes who are trying out for the team what selection criteria will be used for selection to a team.

Athletic Attire: As representatives of RMS athletics, when competing in a contest or taking part in any kind of award program or team function, student athletes are expected to dress and wear their clothing in an appropriate manner.

Hazing/Initiations: Hazing or an initiation of any team member by other team members is not acceptable and violators will be handled accordingly.

Parent/Guardian Expectations

- A. Parents can communicate openly and freely with coaches and administrators but at appropriate times. No parent should be approaching coaches before and/or immediately after a game or competition. Please plan to speak to the coach within 24 hours after the issue or situation at hand.
- Parents will communicate with respect.
 - Parents will be honest.
 - Parents will communicate issues and concerns in a timely manner, including those of student's physical and emotional well-being.
 - Parents will follow an appropriate chain of command:
 - o Parent – Head Coach of the specific sport
 - o Parent – Athletic Coordinator
 - o Parent – Principal / Assistant Principal of the specific school
 - o Parent – Director of Bibb County Athletics
 - Parents are required to attend meetings and read all information disseminated by coaches and the athletic department.
 - Playing time is not guaranteed by paying the participation fee and may only be discussed with the coaches.
- B. Parents will display good sportsmanship and behavior by doing the following:
- Understanding the game is for the students, not the adults
 - Recognizing that student participation is a privilege
 - Displaying good sportsmanship as a spectator, and conducting yourself in a manner that reflects positively on both the team and school
 - Promoting the team by being supportive and positive when helping the program
 - Respecting the officials, opponents, coaches, and players
 - Refraining from coaching from the stands
 - Understanding that the student has an obligation to attend all practices and games
- C. Parents will create a positive and supportive environment to promote your student-athlete's well-being by:

- Supporting good conditioning and a healthy lifestyle
- Placing the emotional and physical well-being of your student ahead of any personal desire to win
- Expecting your student to play in a healthy and safe environment
- Supporting your student to be successful in the classroom given the demands of training and practices
- Being a role model for other parents by remaining positive at sporting events
- Getting involved and staying involved in a positive manner as you support your student is critical to the success of the team (i.e., concessions, game support, fundraiser)

Failure to follow the standards and expectations of Rutland Middle School Athletic Department guidelines for parent expectations may cause you to forfeit your right to support your child and the team.

RESPECT THE



ACT RESPONSIBLE AND BE RESPECTFUL!

#WeAreOne

Acknowledgement of Receipt of Rutland Middle School Athletic Handbook

The undersigned hereby acknowledges receipt of a copy of the Rutland Middle School Athletic Handbook which includes our Student Code of Conduct policies. My parents and I have read, reviewed, and discussed the RMS Athletic Handbook, and we agree to fully abide by the rules and regulations provided to us.

We also know there is additional information that parents and students have access to under the Athletics tab on RMS website. Please take time to gain knowledge about anything you may need to know regarding Athletics @ RMS.

There will be a form in DragonFly for parents and students to sign off electronically acknowledging receipt of this Athletic Handbook. Please take care of that requirement as it is important to become a member of our Hurricane Family!

Signature of Student

Signature of Parent



