



**RIVENDELL ACADEMY  
ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT**

**STUDENT ATHLETE HANDBOOK  
GRADES 7-12**

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## **PHILOSOPHY**

Rivendell Academy recognizes the important role that co-curricular activities plays in a student's education, helping students achieve an added dimension of cooperation, well-being, and success. Team dynamics and self-discipline are essential in all activities. Dedication, sportsmanship, teamwork, spirit and desire are the components of a successful team, and are the core values that our athletic program will strive to achieve.

Competitive athletics play an integral part in the educational process at Rivendell Academy. A player's drive, determination, confidence, mental approach, and emotional control are tested daily. The educational value of athletics is embedded in how an athlete copes with these challenges. Coaches stress commitment, dedication, responsibility, and the importance of displaying a solid work ethic and work closely with the players as they face these obstacles. With good leadership, athletes will learn self-discipline, self-motivation and display good sportsmanship regardless of the outcome of an event. They learn to plan, prepare, perform, evaluate, and try again. Our teams play to win, but winning is only a by-product the aforementioned values.

By design, athletic participation is a blend of successes and failures, setbacks and triumphs. Parents can have an impact in how their child(ren) responds to individual and team experiences and results. Parents who encourage their child(ren) to communicate with their coach to seek clarification, understanding, and counsel are contributing to their normal growth, development and maturity.

It is important that one understands with success comes failure. One must prepare for success by investing the necessary time and energy into preparing for the activity. At Rivendell Academy, we encourage you to set high goals and commit yourself to their attainment. Work long and hard, compete intensely, and treat opposing teams with respect. It is not if you win or lose. but rather how you win and lose that determines a teams' character and moral fiber.

## **RIGHTS OF EACH STUDENT PARTICIPANT**

Each student has the right to:

1. Have a fair opportunity to try out and participate in an activity.
2. Participate at a level commensurate with their maturity and ability.
3. Have qualified adult leadership.
4. Participate in a safe and healthy environment.
5. Properly prepare for participation in their respective activity.
6. Have an opportunity to strive for success and be treated with dignity.

### **One week between Sports Seasons**

Student athletes must have one week of rest between the end of one season and the beginning of another. (This is a VPA regulation.)

## **RULES OF BEHAVIOR**

- Each student is responsible to recognize that he/she is a representative of Rivendell Academy and therefore is expected to act responsibly and respectfully at all times. Their actions reflect on the entire athletic program, school, and community.
- School citizenship and personal conduct while representing the school are also important factors in determining eligibility. When it is decided that it is in the best interest of the athlete or the school, an administrator may declare the athlete ineligible to participate in co-curricular activities. Behavior deemed detrimental to the team, school, or community at these times will result in minimum of a one game suspension to a maximum of

termination from the team. The Coach and Athletic Director will review each incident.

- Any athlete that engages in inappropriate behavior towards opponents, officials, coaches, or members of the public will be immediately suspended for the remainder of that game or team activity. The Athletic Director and Coach will determine further disciplinary consequences, including extended suspension or removal from the team, in consultation with the Principal.
- Frequency, attitude, and severity of the offense will be considered in determining the nature and duration of the suspension .
- All members of sports teams are expected to be members in good standing not only as team members but also citizens in school as well. Failure to do so will result in sanctions and/or suspensions from their team(s).

Students may not participate in or attend any co-curricular or school sponsored program during the term of a school-administered out of school suspension.

A student who is terminated from two programs in a given year is will not be allowed to participate for the remainder of the year.

### **Gymnasium and Locker Room Regulations**

- Horseplay and fooling around is not permitted.
- Toss and catch games are not allowed unless under the supervision of the instructor or coach.
- Students are not to loiter in the gym. Eating in the gym during the school day is not allowed.
- Athletes are not allowed in the gym more than fifteen (15) minutes prior to scheduled practices and games unless otherwise specified.
- No equipment or supplies are to be used without proper supervision.
- Cleats and spikes are not allowed in any area of the school buildings.

### **Training Rules**

Rivendell Academy is concerned with the overall health of its' students. It is the overwhelming opinion of educators, coaches, and parents that students perform best when they follow a healthy lifestyle. A healthy lifestyle includes restrictions on tobacco, alcohol, and other illegal drugs.

Training rules are in effect for all student/athletes throughout the school year regardless of whether they are participating or not. Training Rules include:

1. No use of tobacco products.
2. No drinking or possession of alcohol beverages.
3. No use or possession of narcotics or drug paraphernalia.

Consequences for violations of the Training Rules are detailed later in this handbook.

### **Game Ejection Policy**

The VPA (Vermont Principals Association) has stipulated that any student/athlete who is ejected from a game as a result of fighting or un-sportsman like conduct toward an official, coach, athlete, or spectator will be ejected and suspended for the next two contests. If the ejection occurs during the last game of the season, the athlete will be suspended for the same period of time in the next sport in which they participate. An athlete who receives two ejections will be suspended for the remainder of the season.

## HAZING

### **Policy**

It is the policy of the Rivendell Interstate School District ( hereinafter "District") that all its schools provide safe, orderly, civil and positive learning environments. Hazing has no place in the District's schools and will not be tolerated. Accordingly, the District adopts the following policy and procedures to prohibit hazing and will ensure the enforcement thereof.

### **Definitions**

"Hazing" means any act committed by a person, whether individually or in concert with others, against a student in connection with pledging, being initiated into, affiliating with, holding office in, or maintaining membership in any organization which is affiliated with the District; and which is intended to have the effect of, or should reasonably be expected to have the effect of, humiliating, intimidating or demeaning the student or endangering the mental or physical health of the student. "Hazing" also includes soliciting, directing, aiding, or otherwise participating actively or passively in the above acts. Hazing may occur on or off school grounds.

Additional information regarding this policy, including but not limited to notification of the policy, reporting incidences of, investigative procedures and disciplinary actions can be found on the District's web site under RISD Policy F.3 Hazing

## CONSEQUENCES FOR TRAINING RULES VIOLATIONS

In the event of a suspected violation by a student/athlete of training rules and/or rules of behavior, the following procedure will be implemented:

- The Coach and Athletic Director will investigate the suspected violation.
- The Athletic Director will notify the Principal and parent(s) of the suspected violation.
- A meeting to discuss the incident will be held with the athlete, parent, Coach, and Athletic Director. The Principal may choose to attend the meeting, as well.
- The Athletic Director, with assistance from the Principal, makes a determination of the outcome of the investigation.
- The athlete, parent, and Coach will be notified by the administration as to the outcome of the investigation.

If it is determined that a confirmed violation of the training rules has occurred , the following consequences will be imposed :

- The first violation by a student/athlete will result in removal from the team for the remainder of the season. In addition, the student/athlete will be suspended from participating from all athletic related activities for a period of fifteen (15) sport-related activity days commencing from the day that the incident took place. The student/athlete will be required to complete a substance use/abuse counseling program prior to future athletic participation.
- The second violation will result in the above as well as suspension from all athletic participation for a period of twenty-five (25) sport-related activity days commencing from the date that the violation occurred.
- A third violation will result in the termination of athletic eligibility for the remainder of the student/athletes' school career at Rivendell Academy.

If the student/athlete and/or parents are not in agreement with the decision that is rendered, they may appeal the decision to the Principal. The Principal's decision will represent the school's final decision.

Student/athlete and parents must sign training rules forms at the beginning of each sport's season that the student/athlete is involved in.

## ATTENDANCE AT SCHOOL/PRACTICES/GAMES

A student who does not attend school (see VPA regulations) for reasons of illness or truancy will not be eligible to participate in scheduled interscholastic practice or games on that date. If the violation becomes known at a later date, it will be enforced at the next practice or game after disclosure. Coaches are expected to be aware of a player's attendance status on a daily basis.

All students participating on athletic teams are expected to attend all practices and games. Acceptable absences for practices, games, and team events include those for illness, injury, family emergencies, and school functions throughout the school year such as field trips, testing, and college visits.

- Any student who serves an out of school suspension is not eligible to participate in or attend that day's team activities. Additional event suspensions may occur as a result of a school related suspension.
- Students must arrive by 9:15 in order to be eligible to practice or play that day. Students who arrive after that time must have an excused tardy note in order to be to participate.
- If a student is healthy enough to be in school they are expected to be at practice. A coach may excuse a player from actively participating, but the student must speak directly to the coach in order to be excused. An unexcused absence will result in a consequence that will be determined by the coach.
- Coaches are expected to be aware of his or her players' status regarding school attendance and, after consulting with the Athletic Director, need to impose game/practice restrictions if the situation calls for such action. The Athletic Director will act upon emergency situations not covered by this regulation.

## ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY

Rivendell students are given the opportunity to participate in many activities beyond the academic program. Our major concern is that the skills, goals, and objectives of the academic program be most important and that the co-curricular involvement be cooperative and complementary.

The specific guidelines that govern athletic eligibility regarding academic achievement can be found in the *Rivendell Academy Student/Parent Handbook* on pages 13 and 14 under "Interscholastic Sports/Co-Curricular Activities Eligibility."

## ACADEMIC MAKE-UP WORK

Students who miss class as a result of athletic participation are expected to see their teachers before the event in order to get their assignments. Make-up work should be completed as soon as possible. Participants, Coaches, and Teachers should be aware that practice is not an acceptable excuse for failing to make-up work or attending after school help sessions.

## ATHLETIC PROGRAM COMMUNICATION GUIDELINES

### **For Parents and Spectators:**

Athletic events are an integral part of life at Rivendell Academy. They are times of high expectations and high emotions. Rivendell Academy has strict standards for student behavior during the school day and at all athletic events. Student/athletes who misbehave may have their athletic participation privilege suspended for a period of time that is commensurate with the nature of the behavioral issue. Students have the right to expect adults to adhere to the same code of conduct that is required of them. We want all parents and school supporters to feel welcome at school athletic events. The following guidelines have been established to help cultivate the climate of respect and fair play that should be evident at school events. These guidelines are intended to clarify expectations as well as procedures for how a parent or team supporter may register concerns in a manner that is respectful of the players' right to play, the coaches' right to coach, and the officials' right to officiate.

**Parents should expect their child's coach to communicate:**

1. The school's and the coach's philosophy of athletic participation.
2. Individual and team expectations.
3. Dates and times of practices, games, and team activities in a timely manner.
4. Emergency and medical procedures to be followed in the event of an injury.
5. Disciplinary procedures, including academic concerns, which may result in the loss of playing time.
6. The assurance that sportsmanship and team dedication is essential to team success.

**Coaches should expect from parents and other team supporters:**

1. The understanding that the judgment of coaches and officials must be honored during and after an event.
2. Restraint in the heat of the game and courtesy to wait until an appropriate place and time to discuss a concern.
3. That concerns be expressed directly to the coach that is both respectful and emotionally controlled.
4. Parents should discuss their concern with their child(ren) prior to contacting the coach. Often times the player understands what the situation is and is able to convey that information to the parent(s).
5. To notify the coach of scheduling conflicts well in advance of a practice, game, or a team activity.
6. Support for appropriate disciplinary protocols, including consequences for academic failure.
7. Understanding that the allocation of playing time is influenced by many factors and that the amount of time that a player plays is at the sole discretion of the coach.
8. At the varsity level, the coach is expected to field the best possible lineup that will lend itself to the success of the program.

**Concerns that parents might want to discuss with a coach:**

1. The athletic development of their child and how the coach may help.
2. Special accommodations, when appropriate, which may help their child be successful.
3. Their child's behavior.

**If you have a concern to discuss with a coach:**

Please do not confront a coach prior, during, or after an event. This can be an emotional time for all involved and does not lend itself to an amicable discussion. These confrontations also interfere with the continuing responsibilities of a coach relative to supervision and other duties. The Rivendell Academy administration reserves the right to direct adults who disrupt the conduct of an athletic event to leave the playing field, court and premises. Adults who repeatedly offend the spirit of fair play and civility will lose their privilege to attend Rivendell athletic events.

1. Call to make an appointment with the coach.
2. If the coach cannot be reached, call the Athletic Director.
3. Both parent and coach have the right to request that the Athletic Director attend the meeting.

**If you are not satisfied with the results of a meeting with a coach:**

1. Call the Athletic Director in order to discuss the concern or the displeasure of the coach's meeting.
2. If you are not satisfied with the meeting with the Athletic Director and the Principal, make an appointment with the Superintendent of Schools.

Adults who enhance the spirit of fair play and healthy competition are welcomed and thanked by all at Rivendell Academy who seek to assist our students growing into responsible adulthood.

**Athletic Appeals**

Appeals of circumstances that occur in the Athletic program should adhere to the following procedures and in the given order.

1. **Athletic Director:** The Athletic Director may serve as a mediator or is available for individual meetings which best address the needs of the concerned parties.
2. **Principal:** The Principal can act upon recommendations from the Athletic Director and establish a meeting with the concerned parties. The Principal will hear appeals of the decisions of the Athletic Director, as presented in writing from the parents/guardians. The decision of the Principal will represent the school's final position and will be communicated directly to all parties concerned.

## **PRACTICES AND SCRIMMAGES**

### **Practices**

- No unsupervised sessions are allowed. If proper supervision isn't available, practice is to be canceled.
- Student athletes must attend ten (10) practices prior to participating in a game event.
- Teams may not practice or play more than six (6) consecutive days without a day of rest. (This is a VPA regulation.)
- Practice schedules will be posted and available to all players and parents by the Head Coach. A copy shall be submitted to the Athletic Director and the Executive Assistant in the main office.

### **Scrimmages**

- All scrimmages must be cleared and approved by the Athletic Director.
- The number of pre-season practices will be contingent on restraints within the budget and VPA regulations.
- Coaches must have away scrimmages approved by the Athletic Director two (2) weeks in advance so that proper transportation can be approved. Destination, date, and departure time need to be stated.