

Rice Lake Middle School Athletic Code

Philosophy Statement

The Rice Lake School District believes that its primary purpose is to provide opportunities for excellence in education. With this in mind, the school board, administration, and faculty agree that athletics can be an integral part of a student's education. Competitive athletics offer valuable learning experiences that are physically, ethically and emotionally demanding. These experiences provide lessons that often cannot be taught in the normal classroom setting. Athletics is considered to be an extracurricular activity; therefore, anyone wishing to participate must be willing to accept this code of conduct and similarly, accept responsibility for action taken in response to code violations.

I. Eligibility

Each school year, all participating students must turn in the following prior to receiving any equipment or participating in any practice sessions:

1. Proof of insurance or a signature accepting responsibility of payment in case of injury.
2. A statement signed by both student and parents/guardians indicating an understanding of the athletic code.
3. Sport form signed by both student and parents/guardians indicating an understanding of the specific sport requirements.

II. Academics

A student must be passing all of his/her classes. Academic eligibility will be based on weekly checks of students' cumulative grades. Should a check reveal a student to not be meeting eligibility criteria, a period of probation will be instituted for one week. Should the student not meet eligibility criteria the following week, the student becomes academically ineligible. The period of ineligibility will run from Monday to Monday. The student will regain eligibility when a weekly check reveals them to be meeting the criteria. Reinstatement will occur on the Monday following such report. Reinstatement will occur when a weekly grade check reveals the student to be meeting eligibility criteria after the said time period. Academically ineligible students may practice at the discretion of the coach.

III. Attendance

- A. Students are required to be in attendance for at least half (1/2) on the day of a contest or practice to be eligible for participation on that day. The student must be to school by 11:30 AM to practice or participate in a game or at a meet.
- B. An unexcused absence of one or more class periods during a sports season makes a student ineligible for the next upcoming contest for which he/she is eligible, unless there are extenuating circumstances as determined by the MS athletic director and principal.
- C. Some students miss or come in late, particularly the school day after an athletic contest. It is understandable that student athletes may be tired as a result of competition the prior evening. The primary reason for existence of a school is academic education, not athletics. Therefore, student athletes who are late to school in the morning, miss school entirely, or are tardy for classes repeatedly, will be required to have their parents contact the MS athletic director to show cause why he/she should be allowed to continue taking part in athletic competition.

IV. Travel and Conduct on Trips

- A. Athletes must travel with their team using the mode of transportation approved by the school. An athlete who travels to a site with a school team must return with the team. The only exception to the rule is that if the athlete's parent/guardian is present at the site, he/she may request that the athlete return with the parent/guardian. The parent/guardian must personally present the coach with a **written** note indicating that he/she will be taking his/her child home.

- B. Student athletes are responsible for cleaning up garbage and other debris that results from eating on school buses or other school provided transportation.
- C. It is expected that students will conduct themselves in an appropriate manner on school-sponsored trips. It is important that all of our students understand that they represent their school and community to the general public.

V. **Athletic Policies**

- A. **Enforcement** – The RLMS Athletic Code will be enforced from the first day of practice or date of signing, for a period of 12 consecutive months. For students who participate in at least one sport each year, the code applies during their entire middle school experience.
- B. **Suspension** – A student athlete who is in or out of school suspended from school shall miss his/her next contest. The student athlete will not be allowed to practice while serving an out of school suspension.
- C. **Academic or Code Violation Sanctions** – Any student athlete who is under academic suspension or suspension from a code violation will not be allowed to miss school time to travel with the team to away games until the suspension has been served.
Any student athlete who is under academic or code violation suspension will not be allowed to wear the uniform for games during their suspension period but may be with the team at a game dressed in proper attire.
- D. **Appearance** – Student athletes will be responsible for being clean and groomed appropriately.
- E. **Communicating the Code to Parents and Athletes** – It is the responsibility of each athlete and parent to review the athletic code and sign it before participation is granted. If there are any questions regarding the athletic code, contact the MS athletic director. Athletes and their parents must sign the athletic code each year.
- F. **Equipment** – Any school equipment that is issued must be returned or paid for before a student may participate in his/her next sport or receive awards in the current sport.
- G. **Injury** – All injuries incurred during an athletic practice or contest must be reported to the coach immediately.
- H. **Discipline** – Recognition is given that discipline is an essential part of the learning process; therefore, each coach may establish rules in addition to those to ensure an atmosphere conducive to the sport. Any additional rules may not preclude any code of conduct rules. These rules must be submitted to the MS athletic director in writing and approved prior to their introduction to the team at large.

VI. **Code Violations**

- A. Purchase, possession, or use of alcoholic beverages, tobacco, illegal drugs or look-alike drugs.
- B. Insubordination, illegal acts or conduct contrary to the principles and standards of the Rice Lake Area Schools (conduct not becoming of an athlete).
- C. Violation of Wisconsin Statutes, County and Municipal Ordinances (includes illegal gambling or presence [without a parent] in an establishment that sells alcohol)

VII. **Reporting and Administration for Code Violations**

- A. Athletic code violations may be observed or reported by administration, faculty, parents, students, or community members. When appropriate, as determined by the MS athletic director, the anonymity of the informant will be maintained.
- B. The athlete and his/her parent(s)/guardian(s) will be notified of the alleged violation within two days of receipt of the report by the MS athletic director. The MS athletic director shall interview the athlete and/or his/her parents(s)/guardian(s) not later than two days after the preceding notice.
- C. Upon conclusion of the interview and after such other and further investigation and inquiry as the MS athletic director deems appropriate, the MS athletic director shall issue his/her decision whether the athlete violated a code provision. The athletic director shall determine and impose the appropriate

consequence if a violation is found to have occurred. The MS athletic director shall be the sole finder of fact.

VIII. **Consequences**

Participation in interscholastic athletics is considered a privilege and not a right. Failure to abide by the established rules will result in withdrawal of the privilege to participate. Violations of the code of conduct will be dealt within the procedures that follow:

Honesty Consequence Reduction – Athletes who admit to violations voluntarily when questioned for the first time during the first interview will receive a lesser consequence compared to those who do not cooperate or attempt to deceive school officials during the first interview. Additionally, athletes who report their violations to the MS athletic director of their own volition, could, at the discretion of the MS athletic director, have their suspension reduced by another contest. The honesty consequence reduction is available on the first offense only.

- **First Offense** – Suspension from 1/3 of the season. (A student athlete who uses the honesty option will have the suspension reduced by 50%. If the violation is for a drug or alcohol offense, the athlete will be provided with information concerning additional sources of help.
- **Second Offense** – Suspension from ½ of the season. If the violation is for a second drug or alcohol offense, it is required that the athlete have a chemical assessment by an approved non-school AODA counseling agency. The athlete must cooperatively participate and complete the treatment program that the agency recommends.
- **Third Offense** – Suspension from interscholastic athletics for **12 consecutive months** from the date of the offense. The athlete will meet with the administration and AODA coordinator to determine appropriate procedures for re-admittance to the athletic program.
- **Fourth Offense** – Suspension from interscholastic athletics for the remainder of his/her MS career. The HS athletic director will be made aware of any MS athlete that makes a fourth offense.
- **Increased consequence for serious violations** – If a student commits an act in violation of the athletic code which would be classified under Wisconsin state law or federal law as a felony or Class A misdemeanor, or which in the sole discretion of the MS athletic director is so serious that additional (increased) consequences including, but not limited to additional and increased suspension periods. These consequences are solely within the discretion of the MS athletic director.
 - **Suspensions** will be rounded to the nearest whole number of contests. Any suspension not completed in one sport will carry over to the next sport. An athlete must complete a sport in order to satisfy the requirement of a suspension.
 - **Consequences** for violations that occur while an athlete is already serving a suspension will result in the additional suspension being imposed after the current suspension is completed.

IX. **Appeal Procedure**

If the athlete and/or the athlete's parent(s)/guardian(s) are not in agreement with the disciplinary action taken, the following procedure may be commenced. Written notice of an appeal must be submitted to the MS athletic director within 72 hours of the MS athletic director's decision. Written notice of an appeal to any subsequent level must also be submitted to the MS athletic director within 72 hours of the decision at any level of appeal. The hearing for each level of appeal will be held within seven days of the MS athletic director's receipt of the written notice of appeal. The athlete and/or parent/guardian should present a legitimate basis for appeal, not simply to appeal for appeal's sake. The order of appeal after the MS Athletic Director is: MS principal, then District Administrator, then Rice Lake School Board.

Athletic Code Agreement Form

-Rice Lake Middle School-

Student's Name: _____ Grade: _____

Address: _____

Parent(s)/Guardian(s) Name: _____

Address (if different than child): _____

Phone Number: Daytime: _____ Evening: _____

- ✓ We have read and understand the Athletic Code of the Rice Lake Middle School.
- ✓ We agree to abide by the code and cooperate with the school in the enforcement of this code on a year-round basis.
- ✓ We understand that violation of any Rice Lake Middle School regulations will result in immediate action as stated.
- ✓ We are aware of the risks involved in extra-curricular participation and give my/our consent for the student named below to participate in extra-curricular activities sponsored by the school.

Student/Athlete Signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

As a parent, I agree to immediately report any violation I become aware of to the MS athletic director (initial) _____

We/I, the parent(s)/Guardian(s) of _____ give permission for emergency medical treatment of this child in case of illness or accident and accept responsibility for medical expenses incurred on behalf of the child.

We/I _____ **DO** _____ **DO NOT** elect to purchase additional insurance offered through the school.

Parent(s)/Guardian(s) Signature: _____

This form must be filled out completely to be valid.