

Reagan County ISD



Athletic Policy

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Ken Campbell, AD

High School Sports (9-12)

Football	Cross Country
Volleyball	Basketball
Track	Tennis
Powerlifting	Golf
Baseball	Softball

Middle School Sports (7-8)

Football	Cross Country
Volleyball	Basketball
Track	Tennis

Strive for Excellence!

Introduction

This athletic policy handbook is meant to address the general guidelines that RCISD student athletes are to follow. It does not address every possible situation and individual coaches are able to institute their own rules for their sport in addition to these policies. Students are expected to follow all the guidelines in the athletic policy and from their individual coach. They will also follow all the rules and policies that are set forth by Reagan County ISD, including dress code and drug testing. In addition, they must adhere to stipulations on eligibility set forth by the UIL, which governs athletics in Texas.

Athletics is an extracurricular activity, which means that it is to be an extension of the classroom. Athletics should be an integral part of and should add to the educational process. Athletes must remember that they are students first and must take care of their classwork. They have to pass to play and they also have to do what is required of them in school.

Students are encouraged to participate in athletics as an opportunity to develop physically, intellectually, emotionally, and socially. Students will be supported and challenged to achieve the highest levels of knowledge, skills, and character, while realizing the benefits of commitment, self-discipline, self-confidence, hard work, effort, teamwork, preparation, responsibility, and respect for others and respect for authority that will benefit them for the rest of their lives.

Participation

Students are encouraged to participate, but are not required to participate. They should understand that athletic participation is a PRIVILEGE, not a right, and can be taken away. The coaching staff has the authority to suspend students from athletics when the rules or standards of the athletic program are not followed. While students are participating, they must realize that they are representing RCISD and need to do so with pride and not do anything that would embarrass or harm the reputation or perception of our school.

Most of our sports, especially team sports, require the student to be enrolled in the athletic period. Those sports are: football, volleyball, basketball, track, baseball, and softball. Students do not have to be in the athletic period (but can be) to participate in: powerlifting, tennis, golf, and cross country. Students enrolled in an athletic period are expected to be there and participate every day, just like they would for any other class. Athletes should understand that there is a COMMITMENT involved with being on a team. They should be at practice every day and quitting is not an option that they should take lightly.

Athletes will be placed on the team (varsity or JV, A or B) that the coaches involved believe that they should be on. This will be based on, but not limited to: attitude, skill, knowledge, and experience. All sub-varsity players should receive playing time. The amount of playing time again depends on attitude, skill, and meeting expectations. Varsity players do not have any guarantee of playing time. The team must come before the individual.

Prior to participation, student-athletes must have the following UIL forms on file with the school, signed by the student and the parents:

- Pre-participation Physical Evaluation -- Medical History & Physical Examination (medical history every year, physical every 2 years)
- Acknowledgement of Rules
- Sudden Cardiac Arrest Awareness Form
- Concussion Acknowledgement Form
- Illegal Steroid Use and Random Steroid Testing Form

Practice

Athletes are expected to be at practice every day to receive instruction in fundamentals, skills, and assignments, as well as receiving the conditioning needed to participate safely. If a student misses practice, then s/he needs to realize that they are missing out on that instruction, and that cannot be recovered. Missed practices may also affect playing time. That is each individual coach's call based on the circumstance.

Also, when they miss practice, they are missing out on their conditioning. This conditioning WILL be made up. When an athlete is required to run for missing practice, the reason is to make up the conditioning that was missed.

If an athlete has to miss practice, s/he should make every effort to let the coach know that they won't be there and the reason. Unexcused absences will have more consequences than excused absences. If an athlete is not able to participate because of an injury, he/she is still expected to be at practice to observe the instruction taking place and take care of any treatment prescribed. Also, athletes are still expected to be a part of the team, which includes making every effort to sit on the bench for games and travel to away contests.

For football and volleyball, which both have two-a-day practices that start before school begins, there are additional guidelines. For every week of practice that is missed, there are that many weeks of competition that must also be missed, in addition to the make-up conditioning which will be completed before they compete. (Scrimmages do count as competitions)

Football examples: miss 1 week of practice - miss 1 scrimmage; miss 2 weeks - miss 2 competitions (1 scrimmage and 1 game); miss 3 weeks (which would be all 2-a-days) - 3 games

Students may join football or volleyball until the first week of school.

They will not be allowed to join after that first week of school.

This rule does not apply to students that move in during the school year.

Quitting a Sport

Athletes should do everything in their power to honor their commitment and not quit. In Reagan County athletics, we promote an attitude of not quitting when things don't go your way. If an athlete decides that s/he wants to quit, there are some things that need to happen. S/he should NOT just stop showing up to practice or send word through a friend. Instead, s/he needs to quit the right way by showing up, talking to the coach, and turning in any equipment. **At the beginning of a season, there will be a grace period where this policy does not take effect. This grace period will be no more than 2 weeks up until the first competition.**

There could be a circumstance where the coach may release the athlete by mutual consent and allow the student to remain a part of the team as a manager. If this happens, then there will be no other consequences.

However, if there is not mutual consent on the release, then that athlete may not start the next sport until the sport they quit is over. Also, they will be required to run 25 miles in a 2 week period. (10 laps for 10 days). This running must be completed before they can start the next sport.

Quitting a second time is starting a problematic pattern that is not acceptable, as well as being a behavior that we do not want to promote in our athletic program. Therefore, if an athlete chooses to quit a second time during a school year, then s/he will be removed from athletics for one calendar year and will have to do the running (25 miles) to get back in.

Disciplinary Issues

Athletes need to make every effort to stay out of trouble at school.

If they do get in trouble, they need to realize that if there is a choice given by the principal, they need to choose swats, not ISS. While an athlete is in ISS, they are not able to participate in practice or games.

To encourage students to stay out of trouble and to stay out of ISS, an athlete that receives ISS will be suspended for one contest.

(if ISS is not for disciplinary reasons, such as Saturday School, this rule does not have to apply)

If a football player gets a 15 yard unsportsmanlike penalty, they must come out of the game. They will also have to run for further punishment.

If a basketball player gets a technical foul, then they must come out of the game and sit for a quarter. They will also run for further punishment.

In either instance, the coach may increase the length of the time of sitting out if the athlete does not respond properly.

No tattoos or hickies will be visible during practice or games. They must be covered up.

Other Serious Offenses

(includes, but not limited to stealing and any other major discipline problems)

- 2 weeks suspension from contests (athlete must continue to practice)
- 25 miles (10 laps for 10 days)
- 25 hours of community service

If the student chooses to not do the punishment, they will be removed from athletics. Before they can get back into athletics, the student would have to complete these disciplinary sanctions.

Ejection Policy

Players should do everything in their power to not be ejected. If an athlete gets ejected from a contest for inappropriate behavior, there will be a suspension for their next contest.

Since sub-varsity players are usually less experienced and may not be as knowledgeable about consequences of an ejection, the suspension from a sub-varsity game is less. They will need to miss a half of a contest.

If it happens in the first half, then the second half of that game can count, but they will not start the next game.

If it happens in the third quarter, then they will miss the fourth quarter and also sit out the first quarter of the next game.

If it happens in the fourth quarter, then they will be suspended for the first half of the next game.

They also will be required to do running for further punishment.

Our expectations for varsity players are higher; therefore, the penalties for varsity athletes are stricter.

If the ejection occurs in the first half, the player will be suspended the first quarter of the next game.

If the ejection occurs in the second half, the player will be suspended for the first half of the next game.

The ejected player will also have to do extra running in practice for punishment.

These are minimum penalties. If, in the coaches' opinion, the offense was more serious, the suspension can be increased. Also, if the player responds negatively with a bad attitude, the suspension can be increased.

Travel

All athletes will travel to and from away contests on school transportation. If an athlete needs to ride home with a parent/guardian, the parent should talk directly to the coach and a parent's signature on a note will be required. If a circumstance arises where the athlete needs to travel to the game in some other manner or leave after the game with someone other the parent/guardian, this must be **pre-arranged and pre-approved by the coach and principal.** Under no circumstances will an athlete be released to go with anyone other than the parents or a pre-approved person.

Contest Conflicts

Sometimes sports overlap or occur in the same season. When an athlete is participating in more than one sport and there is a conflict with contests, the athlete should not be put in a position of having to choose, if at all possible. Playoff games take precedence over district games. District contests take priority over non-district. All competitions have priority over practices. If there is no level difference, then coaches are expected to work together to do what is in the best interest of that particular athlete and the teams involved.

If a student-athlete is not able to participate in one activity due to injury, then they will NOT be able to participate in any other activity, including any physical activity for cheerleading.

Student-Athlete Responsibilities

The student-athlete will strive for excellence in all activities at all times. They will abide by all rules and policies of RCISD and the athletic department. They will abide by the coaches' instructions and decisions. Insubordination will not be tolerated. The athlete will personally notify the coach if they have to miss practice, but should make every effort to be there. They are responsible for equipment issued to them. They will respect their coaches, teammates, teachers, staff, parents, and officials. They must commit to the demands of the athletic program to achieve the rewards that will come.

In addition, as a representative of the athletic department, the student athlete has a responsibility in their attendance at school. On the day of a game, a student must be in attendance at least 4 periods in order to participate that day unless prior arrangements have been made with the principal for extenuating circumstances. When an entire day will be missed for an athletic contest/event, the student athlete needs to be at school at least four periods the day before in order to receive instruction and assignments that will be missed. For extenuating circumstances, prior arrangements need to be made with the principal. Furthermore, athletes are expected to be at school, and on time, the day after a following a contest/event. "Being tired" is an unacceptable excuse. The only excuse would be with a note from a health care professional, or if prior arrangements had been made with the principal for extenuating circumstances.

Parent Responsibilities

Parents should encourage their child to participate in the athletic program. They should encourage the athlete to be committed and to always be at practices and contests and to always do their best and behave properly. Parents should support the Owls and be positive in the stands. They should cheer for the team and the coaches and not belittle or yell at them. During the competition, parents do not need to talk to their kids or try to “coach” them. Players need to be focused on what is going on in the game and what their coach is saying.

If there is a problem that they feel that they need to address with the coach, they need to schedule a conference. After the game is not the right time or place. **They also need to follow the chain of command. Go to the coach first. If not satisfied, then go to the Athletic Director. If still not satisfied, then they can go to the superintendent.**

Furthermore, as positive role models for their children, parents need to be in control of their emotions during and after a game in regards to the officials. Yelling at the officials during a game may yield consequences from the school district, and approaching officials after a game WILL yield consequences from the district.

Parents also need to realize that athletics is an extracurricular activity and that the primary reason that their children are in school is to get an education. Therefore, it is imperative that parents get their children to school so they can receive instruction in all their classes. Athletics can add to that educational process, but they MUST be in regular attendance in school. Excessive absences can actually lead to a student having to miss some school activities.

Insurance

RCISD does provide supplemental insurance on athletes. It is a secondary policy that only pays after the athlete’s primary policy. The parents are still responsible for any medical bills on their child. Claim forms, when needed, should be requested by the parents.

Athletic Department Alcohol & Drug Policy

Alcohol/drug violations that do not fall under District Drug Testing Policy

Violations are cumulative for an athlete's entire high school career

Circumstances which will initiate this policy:

- ticketed for MIP/MIC by law enforcement
- self-admission
- reported by credible/unbiased school employee (hearsay will not be used)

If there is a positive result on a Drug Test, that policy will take precedence with its penalties. But, it will still count as a strike under this policy and move the student to the next level.

The parent/guardian will be notified. A conference will be set up, if requested. There will be an appeal process available, if needed.

For alcohol, there will be 5 levels to progress through.

For drugs, the first offense will go directly to Level 2 and there will be only 4 steps. Once a level is reached, any further violation automatically moves to the next level.

<u>Offense</u>	<u>Suspension</u>
1	1 week of competition
2	2 weeks of competition (District Drug Policy - 10 school days)
3	4 weeks of competition
4	1 calendar year
5	Permanent removal from the athletic program

Counseling will also be necessary for the student athlete.

During the suspension, the athlete WILL continue to practice and extra running will be added after practice.

Suspensions may not be served while a student is academically ineligible. A student must be able to participate in order to be suspended from competition.

If the offense occurs during offseason or summer, the suspension from competition will begin with the first week of the next sport that the athlete is participating in.

An additional consequence will be that the student's name will be added to the list for drug testing for the remainder of the school year.

This policy was initiated for the 2012-13 school year.