

# **Readington Middle School**

**“Home of the Vikings”**

## ***Student/Parent Athletic Handbook***

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## **INTRODUCTION**

This handbook has been prepared to enhance communication between parents, student/athletes, coaches and school administrators. Parents and athletes are asked to familiarize themselves with the contents of this handbook. Any concerns or questions should be directed to the Principal's office at **908-534-2113 ext. 3811**. Questions regarding specific sports should be directed to the coach of the team.

At the start of each season, a parent/coaches meeting may be held. This is an important meeting and all parents/guardians will have the opportunity to meet with their son/daughter's coach and discuss items relative to their program.

We strongly encourage parents/guardians to demonstrate their support for their student-athlete by attending as many athletic contests as possible.

The purpose of our athletic program is to provide the student-athlete with an opportunity to compete while cooperating with teammates and coaches, and to exhibit traits of self discipline, responsible decision-making, and social and intellectual growth. The development of good citizenship and the ability to enhance positive social values are also desired outcomes from our athletic programs.

Athletic participation is filled with a great many challenges. Winning is everyone's goal, but striving to win is the most important goal. Parents can make a big difference in the success of the athletic program by encouraging their students/athletes and by supporting their coaches, as well as, the official's decisions during game/event time.

**The Readington Middle School Athletic Program is held in high regard by the community and the communities of the opponents we play. Athletes are expected to uphold this tradition by exhibiting the highest level of competition and sportsmanship. RMS athletes are noted for their dedication to their sport, their intense competitiveness and their respect for opponents and officials. We welcome you to the Readington Middle School Athletic Family!**

# **LETTER TO PARENTS**

The role of the parent in the education of a youngster is important. The support shown in the home is often manifested in the ability of the student to accept the opportunities presented at school in the classroom and through co-curricular activities.

A student's involvement in the classroom and other activities contributes to the development of a value system which has been established in the home. Integrity, fairness and respect are life-time values taught through athletics. These are the principles of good sportsmanship. With them, the spirit of competition thrives, fueled by honest rivalry, courteous relations and graceful acceptance of the results.

A good sport, student or parent, - is a true leader in the community. As a parent of a student at our school, your sportsmanship goals should include:

- To realize that athletics are part of the educational experience and the benefits of involvement go beyond the final score of a game;
- To encourage our students to perform their best, just as you would urge them on with their class work;
- To participate in positive cheers that encourage your student and to discourage any cheers that would redirect that focus, including those that taunt and intimidate opponents, their fans and officials;
- To learn and understand the rules of the game and to respect the officials;
- To respect the task our coaches face as teachers and to support them as they strive to educate our youth;
- To respect our opponents and acknowledge their efforts;
- To develop a sense of dignity under all circumstances.

These and other expectations are included in the attached guidelines, which we hope you will take a few moments to review. They provide a roadmap to follow on a journey toward a more educational atmosphere for interscholastic athletics.

You can have a major influence on your student's attitude about academics and athletics. The leadership role you assume in sportsmanship will influence your child for years to come.

## RMS Athletic Program Objectives

- To develop and maintain physical fitness
- To develop positive attitudes in sports that will carry over to social and working life
- To develop the ability to make appropriate decisions under stress
- To develop a sense of responsibility to family, school, team, coach, and self
- To learn respect for authority
- To provide students an opportunity to enjoy the privilege of competition
- To teach students habits of good health, personal hygiene, and safety
- To provide opportunities to form lasting friendships
- To give students an early understanding that participation in athletics is leadership training. This is a privilege that also carries certain responsibilities
- To provide students the opportunity to place group above self; to learn to practice self discipline for the overall benefit of the team
- To provide opportunities to learn the benefits of following the rules
- To provide the student opportunities to experience the satisfaction of self sacrifice to contribute to the development of *esprit de corps*
- To develop for the community an understanding that the competitive athletic program for students has been promoted under conditions which insure to the participant and to the public the traditions in sportsmanship and citizenship
- To provide for the development of approved social patterns of individual and group conduct
- To promote the development of skills and attitudes. This will lead to participation in lifetime sports
- To encourage students to develop and possess the highest standard of moral character through participation in competitive athletics

## **GUIDELINES FOR PARENTS**

### **PARENT/COACH RELATIONSHIP**

Both parenting and coaching are extremely difficult vocations. By establishing an understanding of each position, we are better able to understand the actions of the other and provide a greater benefit to the children. As parents, when your children become involved in our program, you have the right to understand what is expected of your child. This process begins with clear communication from your child's coach.

### **COMMUNICATIONS YOU CAN EXPECT FROM YOUR CHILD'S COACH**

- Philosophy of the coach.
- Expectations and goals the coach has set for your child and the team.
- Location and times of all practices and games. You can also check/visit [www.cnjconference.org](http://www.cnjconference.org)
- Team requirements, special equipment, and conditioning program.
- Procedure if your child is injured during participation.
- Team rules, guidelines and consequences for infractions.
- Team selection process.

### **COMMUNICATION COACHES CAN EXPECT FROM ATHLETES /PARENTS**

- Concerns expressed directly to the coach.
- Notification of any schedule conflicts in advance.
- Notification of illness or injury as soon as possible.

As your child becomes involved in the programs at RMS, they will experience some of the most rewarding moments of their life. It is important to understand that there also may be times when things may not go the way you and your child wish. At these times, discussion with the coach is encouraged. It is the first and most integral step to understanding and resolution.

### **APPROPRIATE CONCERNS TO DISCUSS WITH THE COACH**

It is sometimes difficult to accept your child not playing as much as you might hope. Coaches make decisions based on what they believe to be best for all student-athletes involved. As you have seen from the list above certain things can be and should be discussed with the coach. Other things, such as those listed below, must be left to the discretion of the coach. Always have your child talk to the coach first prior to you attempting to talk to the coach.

### **There is no guaranteed playing time**

There are situations that may require a conference between the coach and the player or coach and parent. It is important that all parties involved have a clear understanding of the other person's position. When a conference is necessary, the following procedure should be used to help resolve any concern.

- Please call the coach to set up an appointment.
- If the coach cannot be reached, please call the Principal, he will set up the meeting for you.
- Please do not attempt to confront a coach before or after a contest or practice, this is not an appropriate time.

## **THE NEXT STEP**

If the meeting with the coach does not provide a satisfactory resolution, parents should set up an appointment with the Athletic Director to discuss the situation.

### **STUDENT/ATHLETE PARTICIPATION**

Participation in athletic sports and all activities in Readington Middle School is a privilege which carries with it certain responsibilities. A student is a representative of the school and the entire community. There are certain basic standards expected of our participants in athletics.

- All students who represent Readington Middle School on a team are expected to conduct themselves in such a manner as to reflect excellent credit upon our school.
- All students must remember they are students of the school first and participants second. Participation in athletics is a privilege granted to a student, not a right guaranteed to them.
- Being a member of a team does not entitle any student to any special privileges in the school. Rather, it may carry the burden of being a good citizen in the face of peer pressure to become involved in some action which might violate school rules. Our athletes are expected to set examples of good school citizenship and cooperation which will reflect upon them as individuals and upon all of our athletes in general.
- Students afforded these privileges must assume the responsibilities which accompany them at all times.

## **RMS Interscholastic Team Rules for Players and Parents**

1. The coaching staff in each sport determines who will become a member of that team. All students who tryout for a team may not be selected for that team.
2. In order to participate in an athletic event, a student must arrive at school **no later than 11:00 a.m.**
3. Student athletes must meet eligibility standards in order to participate throughout the season. One failing grade in any subject will cause a student to become ineligible until the situation is corrected.
4. Student athletes must change into appropriate attire and participate in Physical Education classes in order to participate that day in their sport. Any student who does not take Physical Education that day may not participate in practice or a game for that day.
5. A student may be removed from a team for unacceptable behavior.
6. Daily practice schedules are available on [cnjconference.org](http://cnjconference.org). Please use this website for all questions regarding athletics.
7. Parents may take their child home from an away event after speaking to the coach.
8. Coaches will dismiss athletes promptly from practices. Please be prompt in picking up your child.
9. Coaches are required to stay until their last player has been picked up.
10. Pickup times for games vary. Please be at the school at the time given on the [cnjconference.org](http://cnjconference.org)
11. All valuables must be kept in the students' hall locker, not in the locker room.
12. Students and parents are reminded that there is no guaranteed playing time for any individual member of a team.
13. Students must be present for tryouts at **3/5** days in order to be considered for an athletic team. It will give each coach ample time to evaluate each player.
14. Students must return their uniforms in good condition at the end of their season.

## **Code of Ethics for Coaches**

- Always conduct myself with the best interests of the community, school, and team in mind.
- Develop a complete understanding of the rules and regulations of the sport and coach within that framework.
- Display a respect toward the officials and their duties.
- Refrain from the use of profanity under any circumstances.
- Understand and respect the individuality of each member of the team.
- Develop a set of training and team rules that are fair to all members of the team.

## **Code of Ethics for Athletes**

- Represent my school and team with the highest standards of proper behavior.
- Respect the integrity and personality of my teammates, opponents and coaches,
- Abide by the rules of the game in letter and spirit, with modesty in victory and graciousness in defeat.
- Respect the integrity and judgment of officials.
- Be responsible for the uniform and equipment issued to me as something to be used not abused.
- Report for practice and competition properly attired.
- Refrain from using profanity under any circumstances.
- Strive for the maximum achievement in scholastic and athletic competition.
- Practice good health habits and adhere to the training rules established by the coach.
- Strive to develop the qualities of leadership, initiative, and good judgment.
- Demonstrate good sportsmanship in winning as well as losing.

## **Transportation**

- Athletes must remain seated, use seat belts, and obey all requests of the driver.
- There will be no eating on the bus.
- Athletes are not to throw anything from the bus.
- The coach must ride the bus with the athletes at both departure and return unless other arrangements have been made with administration.
- Parents may take their child home from an away event after speaking to the coach.
- The coach must check the bus at the conclusion of the trip.
- The coach must supervise all athletes to be picked up after returning to RMS.
- The bus driver will assume responsibility for the safety of the team on a return trip to RMS when an injured athlete requires the assistance of the coach. This applies when there is one coach on the trip.
- Athletes must have written permission from a parent/guardian to go home with someone other than their own parent.

## **Attendance and Discipline Guidelines**

Each head coach will ensure that his/her student athletes understand the following policies, which apply to *every* member of an RMS athletic team.

### **Suspension**

During the time of a suspension, in-school or out-of-school, a student is barred from participation in athletic events.

### **Detention**

A student athlete who has after-school detention *may not* participate in athletic events on the day of the detention once the detention is concluded; however, such participation is at the discretion of the coach.

### **School Attendance**

In order to participate in an athletic event, a student must arrive at school **no later than 11:00 a.m.** Students who leave school during the day's session for a doctor's appointment may return to school and participate in that day's athletic activity.

## **HAZING**

Hazing is a form of harassment and will not be tolerated. It is the right of every student in the district to be free from the humiliation and danger of school affiliated hazing. Students who participate in the district's extra-curricular and/or co-curricular activities should not plan, encourage or engage in hazing. This policy applies to the behavior of students that are participating in these activities that occur on or off school property, during and after school hours, and/or any school sanctioned activity.

Hazing is defined as a "willful act occurring on or off school property, directed against a player or prospective member of a school sponsored team or activity, that endangers the mental or physical health or safety of a player or member of an activity for the purpose of initiation, admission into, or continued membership on any such team or activity."

Consequences for hazing violations may range from individual suspension from participation in the athletic program or activity for a period of time, to cancellation of an athletic schedule or activity depending on the magnitude of the incident and number of people involved.

Consequences for hazing violations brought to the attention of the administration after the season may be applied to subsequent athletic participation and/or loss of athletic awards.

***The RMS Administration will determine consequences.  
Apparent permission or consent by a person being hazed  
does not lessen the prohibitions contained in this policy.***

## RMS Athletic Department

### Academic Eligibility

The process is as follows:

- A student who fails **one** subject area per marking period may be deemed ineligible to participate on an athletic team
- The teacher is to notify the RMS principal in writing before making a student *ineligible* to participate.
- The student will be *ineligible* only when the coach has received written notification from the principal.
- The student remains *ineligible* until the coach receives written notification from the principal indicating the student is passing.
- The student will become eligible as soon as they are passing.
- The student may become eligible at the beginning of a new marking period if all work has been completed to the satisfaction of the teacher.
- The principal will distribute an eligibility list at the beginning of each session.

### Team Size

Cutting is avoided whenever possible. At times it becomes impossible to accommodate each student who wants to participate in a particular program. In such cases, the principal will be informed of the plans and intentions of the coach, in advance, along with the method used to reduce the squad. As soon as it becomes apparent the reduction in squad size will be inevitable, the coach will inform all candidates of the procedures that will be used. When decisions are made candidates will be informed. Lists will not be posted. A candidate may request a private conference to go over the reasons they did not make the team.

The coach will inform all candidates of the procedures that will be used. When decisions are made candidates will be informed. A candidate may request a private conference to go over the reasons they did not make the team.

The **minimum** number of athletes for each sport is the following:

Soccer	14
Field Hockey	12
Volleyball	9
Basketball	8
Cheerleading	8
Baseball	12
Softball	12
Lacrosse	13
Track	20
Wrestling	13
Cross Country	20

## **Athletic Policy on Attendance: Clubs/Rehearsals**

The Readington Middle School Athletic Program recognizes the diverse needs and interests of student athletes throughout the various athletic seasons. The expectation is that student athletes maintain appropriate communication with their coaches, music directors, and club advisors, especially regarding scheduled practices, rehearsals, and meetings. In the event of overlapping after-school activities, the following policy applies:

Sports Practice Days: The student athletes report to their music rehearsal for the full time (until 3:45pm) and then attend practice afterward.

Home Games: The student athletes report to their music rehearsal until 3pm and then join their team.

Away Games: The student athletes report directly to their team to board the bus.

Tryouts: The student athletes will report directly to team tryouts during the entirety of the tryout period.

**If there are extenuating circumstances, student athletes are expected to communicate directly with their respective coaches/directors/advisors to discuss any conflicts and attend their activities as scheduled.**

## **NURSE/HEALTH INFORMATION PAGE**

**\*\*ALL FORMS CAN BE FOUND ON THE SCHOOL'S WEBSITE\*\*  
MAKE SURE TO SIGN UP FOR AND CHECK SCHOOL'S LIST  
SERV FOR UP TO DATE INFORMATION.**

**[WWW.READINGTON.K12.NJ.US](http://WWW.READINGTON.K12.NJ.US)**

***Physicals are good for one calendar year! If you have a physical on file already in the Nurse's office, please return all other paperwork!***

**Nurse's Office  
Readington Middle School  
P.O. Box 700  
Whitehouse Station, NJ 08889**