

RRMS Indians

Athletic Handbook



Middle School Athletics Philosophy

The purpose of middle school athletics is to promote sportsmanship and fair play, while enabling our student athletes to gain experience in selected sports. Middle school athletics play a vital role in the total educational program when they are effectively planned, organized, administered, supervised and evaluated. Through school athletics, many of the interest and need of students can be served.

Team membership is both an honor and a responsibility. Proper conduct, as outlined in the Wythe County Public Schools Student Handbook (provided to all students each year), is expected at all times, both on and off the field of play. At RRMS, we pride ourselves on and expect good sportsmanship and student athletes who display the highest level of conduct.

Athletic Handbook

All RRMS students will be given a copy of this handbook at the beginning of each school year. All students interested in participating in a sport need to read the handbook with their parents/guardian and then complete the form at the end. Turning in the handbook form will be part of a student's requirements to participate on a team/squad.

Coaches may have individual team rules that go "above and beyond" this handbook, but requirements/consequences cannot be less than are stated here.

Middle School Athletics Programs

- Fall
 - Football
 - Cheerleading
 - Volleyball
 - Cross Country Club
- Winter
 - Boys' and Girls' Basketball
 - Wrestling
 - Cheerleading
- Spring
 - Baseball
 - Softball
 - Track

Description of Programs

- Football
 - Only 7th and 8th grade students can participate

- There will be no cuts
- There is a limit of 10 games per season
- Cheerleading
 - Only 7th and 8th grade students can participate
 - There will be a separate fall and winter squad
 - There will be separate tryouts for fall and winter squads. Students must attend both tryouts if they want to be considered for both squads.
 - There is a maximum of 10 members on each squad
 - There may be cuts made
 - The squads will attend at least 3 away games for fall and 5 for winter
- Volleyball
 - Only 7th and 8th grade students can participate (starting in 2016, 6th grade students may participate)
 - There may be a maximum of 20 players per team (after 20, cuts may be made)
 - There will be a limit of 22 games per season (tournament games count as part of the 22)
- Cross Country Club
 - All students may participate in cross country club
 - There is no limit for participation
- Boys' and Girls' Basketball
 - Only 7th and 8th grade students can participate
 - There will be a maximum of 15 players per team
 - There may be cuts made
 - There will be a limit of 22 games per season (tournament games count as part of the 22)
- Wrestling
 - All students may participate in wrestling
 - There is no limit for participation
- Baseball and Softball
 - Only 7th and 8th grade student can participate
 - There will be a maximum of 15 players per team
 - There will be a maximum of 22 games per season (tournament games count as part of the 22)
 - There may be cuts made
- Track
 - All student may participate in track
 - There will be no cuts
- JV Sports
 - Volleyball, basketball, softball and tennis
 - If there is a need, the high school coaches can take 8th grade students to be members of these JV teams
 - Any 8th grade student who would like to be considered, MUST attend JV tryouts

Eligibility

In order to try out for any middle school athletics, students must maintain certain academic requirements to be considered eligible.

An *eligibility credit* is a credit received for passing a class. 45 minute classes earn 1 edibility credit, while 90 minute block classes earn 2.

- 6th Grade
 - All 6th grade students are eligible to participate in Cross Country Club

- To be eligible to participate in spring track, a 6th grade student must have earned 5 eligibility credits for the first semester of 6th grade.
- 7th Grade
 - To be eligible for fall and winter sports, a 7th grade student must have earned 5 eligibility credits at the end of his/her 6th grade year.
 - To be eligible for spring sports (and to finish any winter sport season), a 7th grade student must have earned 5 eligibility credits for the first semester of 7th grade.
- 8th Grade
 - To be eligible for fall and winter sports, an 8th grade student must have earned 5 eligibility credits at the end of his/her 7th grade year.
 - To be eligible for spring sports (and to finish any winter sport season), an 8th grade student must have earned 5 eligibility credits for the first semester of 8th grade.
- Grades During the Season
 - During a sport's season, students are required to maintain passing grades in all of their core classes (English, math, social studies and science).
 - Students will not be able to participate until the failing grade has been improved to passing.
 - Core teachers will notify coaches of grades, but ultimately it is the coaches' responsibility to check grades *at least* every two weeks. Coaches who do not work in the school can work with the athletic director to obtain grades.
- Eligibility of Injured/Ill Students
 - Students who have an injury/illness at the time of tryouts that will not allow them to tryout cannot be considered for a team/squad. If, after the tryouts have been completed, there are open spots left on a team/squad, a recovered student (with a doctor's clearance) may be allowed to participate if the coach, athletic director, and principal approve.
- Eligibility of Transfer Students
 - Students who transfer from outside Wythe County Public Schools eligibility will be decided by the principal and athletic director.

Physicals and Concussion Forms

- All students must turn in a completed VHSL Physical and Concussion form to the athletic director before they try out for any event.
- Coaches must ensure that all students trying out, practicing or participating in an event have a valid physical and concussion form.
- Concussion forms must be completed each school year.
- Physicals lapse on May 1 of each year.
- In May, the school usually organizes free physicals. Call the school or visit the website for information as May approaches.

General Rules and Guidelines

- Parent Meetings
 - All coaches are strongly encouraged to have parent meetings before a season starts
- Uniforms
 - All students will be provided a uniform. Students may be required to purchase accessories at their own cost.
 - The cleanliness of the uniform is the student's responsibility
 - Any uniform/accessory that belongs to the school and not turned in at the end of the season will be the financial responsibility of the students/parents/guardians.

- No additions, alterations may be made to any uniform. A student cannot change or add to his/her appearance in uniform unless approved by the coach.
- Fundraising
 - At times, students participating on a team/squad will be asked to assist in fundraising.
 - An effort is required for fundraising. Coaches may institute rules/consequences regarding fundraising for their team/squad. The rules must be sent home to and signed by parents during tryouts.
- Attendance at Practice and Games
 - Each member of an athletic team/squad must assume the responsibilities associated with having such a position and understand his/her obligations to the team. One of these obligations is regular attendance at practices and athletic events.
 - Emergencies do arise, but absences should be few. In the event of an emergency, the parent/guardian should notify the coach by phone, note, or in person. If done correctly, the absence will be seen as excused. Excused absences include professional appointments, death in family, school sponsored field trip and illness.
 - Other obligations such as social events, other athletic obligations, and personal vacations/trips will not be excused.
 - Absences from practice sessions and events will be handled in the following manner:

Absence from Practice

Excused absence	No action
Unexcused absence – 1 st Offense	Conference with coach and discipline of athlete (discipline is up to coach)
Unexcused absence – 2 nd Offense	Suspension from next competition/event
Unexcused absence – 3 rd Offense	Dismissal from team

Absence from Athletic Event

Excused absence	No action
Unexcused absence – 1 st Offense	Suspension from next two competitions/events
Unexcused absence – 2 nd Offense	Dismissal from team

- Attendance at School
 - A student must attend school on the days of an athletic practice or event in order to participate.
 - Students who are absent part of the day, but present a professional, non-illness related excuse will be allowed to participate that day. A copy of the excuse should be turned in to the office.
- Starting a Season Late
 - A student may start a season late if the team is short members or loses members. No one may be cut to add a late entry.
 - Students who transfer to RRMS mid-season may also join a team if it is short or has lost members.
 - All mid-season starts must be approved by the principal and athletic director.
- Multiple Sport Policy
 - As a small school, participating in multiple sports is encouraged.
 - A student desiring to participate in multiple sports, should discuss this with both coaches and develop a plan for participation *before* the season starts. The plan should include a practice schedule and which events for which sport will be attended. Any changes to the plan must be approved by *both* coaches.
 - No coach should discourage a student from participating in multiple sports.

- Because the student has made an obligation to both teams, if he/she quits one team, he/she will be dismissed from the other team.
- Accidents/Injuries
 - In the event of an injury, the coach will evaluate the student and notify the parents/emergency services as needed.
 - The coach will also complete an accident report within 24 hours and turn it in to the office.
 - A student who has had an injury or illness that has prevented him/her to participate in athletics (by a doctor) will not be allowed to participate without the doctor's written clearance.
- Playing Time
 - While it is true that the goal of athletics is to broaden the experiences of students, and that playing time enhances experience, it is also an important goal of RRMS to strive toward excellence. Therefore, no minimum per game playing time provisions or minimum numbers of athletic events in which athletes must compete are established. Playing time decisions are left up to the individual coaches, but providing meaningful playing time is encouraged.
- Schedules
 - Schedules of events are made by the athletic director in conjunction with the high school AD and the coaches.
 - Coaches determine practice schedules.
 - The coach should give each member a schedule (of events and practices) and update it immediately if there are changes (all event schedules can be accessed on the RRMS website).
 - Practices will not be held on the following days:
 - Weekends
 - Holiday/breaks from school (unless approved by principal because there are events during a break)
 - In the event that school has been released early or cancelled due to inclement weather (no practices and no events)
 - Cancellation of events due to weather will be sent through the instant alert Honeywell system. Students will also be allowed to call home to notify parents.
 - Cancellation of any practice should be done by 12pm on the day of that practice. The coach should also notify the office.
- Transportation
 - Most practices take place right after school. If a practice is later in the evening, the student must go home and return to the school at the appropriate time. Students are not allowed to "hang out" unsupervised at school until time for practice.
 - Students are also not allowed to stay after school and wait for a game unless they have been told to by their coach (and the coach supervises them the entire time). For most away games, teams leave shortly after school is out.
 - Students must ride the bus to all athletic events.
 - Students may only leave away athletic events with their parents/legal guardians. The parents/legal guardians must notify the coach face-to-face that they are taking their child from the away event. No exceptions are made to this rule, so please do not ask.
 - Students must be picked up from the school within 20 minutes after an away event (students are allowed to call from bus with arrival times).
 - Students should be picked up promptly after practices.
 - Failure to pick up students in a timely manner may result in dismissal from the team.
 - Coaches are required to stay with all students until they have all been picked up.
- Discipline

- In the event a student violates the WCPS Student Handbook, the RRMS Student Handbook, or the expectations of sportsmanship, discipline will become an issue.
- Violations/incidents during the school day:
 - Students who receive ISS are not allowed to participate in any after school activities the day they serve their ISS (this includes games).
 - Students who are suspended are not allowed to be on campus *at all* during their suspension or to participate in any after school activities.
 - It is up to each individual coach if the player can attend a game (unless suspended from school), or if he/she is banned from attending.
- Athletic Related Incidents
 - Violations committed during athletic time will be referred to the principal.
 - Consequences can include, but are not limited to ISS, OSS, social probation, suspension from 1 or more events, alternative school, dismissal from the team, and banning from participation in any athletic event for a determined amount of time.
 - Some violations that occur during athletic time are a required to be reported to the SRO/Wythe County Sheriff's Office.
- Parent Behavior
 - Practices and Events
 - Parents are welcome at practices, but if the behavior of any parent/guardian becomes inappropriate or harassment like to the player or coach, the parent will be banned from attending practices.
 - Parents (and fans) who act inappropriately at games (including away games) can be banned from all future games or banned from the RRMS/HS campus completely for a determined amount of time.
 - Interaction with Coaches
 - Parent/coach interaction should be civil and respectful.
 - Yelling and harassing coaches will not be tolerated.
- Handling Issues/Disputes
 - All issues/disputes related to athletic matters should be handled in a respectful manner.
 - The person with the issue (student or parent) should follow the chain of command:
 - Coach
 - Athletic director
 - Principal
 - WCPS Middle School Supervisor
 - If the situation is not resolved at one level, proceed to the next.
 - Please do not make issues out of regulations that are clearly stated in the athletic handbook.

RRMS Athletic Handbook Form

Student's printed name: _____

I have read the RRMS Athletic Handbook and understand the rules and requirements that are to be followed in order to participate in athletics at Rural Retreat Middle School. I also understand that failure to comply can result in disciplinary consequences and dismissal from teams/squads.

Student's signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent's/Guardian's printed name: _____

I have read the RRMS Athletic Handbook and understand the rules and requirements that are to be followed in order for my child to participate in athletics at Rural Retreat Middle School. I understand the expectations from my child and from me as a parent.

Parent's signature: _____ Date: _____

Please turn this form in to the athletic director if you plan to or think you may play a sport during the school year.

