

# Ramapo Indian Hills Regional High School District Athletics Handbook



## **Introduction**

This handbook is designed to assist parents and student-athletes to gain an understanding of the components of the Ramapo or Indian Hills athletic program. Any questions/concerns regarding any phase of athletics may be directed to the Athletic Directors from each building: Mr. Jon Duncan (Indian Hills) or Mr. Glenn Stokes (Ramapo).

## **Philosophy/General Information**

The Board of Education believes that the educational goals and objectives of the District are best achieved by a diversity of learning experiences, some of which are more appropriately conducted outside the regular classroom program. The purpose of extra-curricular activities shall be:

- A. To develop useful new capabilities in students that can lead to extension of career opportunities;
- B. To develop student initiative and provide for the exercise of responsibility;
- C. To develop leadership capabilities and good organizational skills;
- D. To aid students in the social skills; and
- E. To enable students to explore a wider range of individual interests than might be available in the regular programs.

All students must be in good academic and disciplinary standing to participate in the District's athletic programs. All students in good academic and disciplinary standing shall have equal access to all extra-curricular activities including athletic programs regardless of race, color, creed, ethnicity, ancestry, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity or expression, affectional or sexual orientation, marital or civil union status, domestic partnership, familial status, place of residence within the District, social or economic status, or non-applicable disability. In keeping with the minimal standards established by the New Jersey Interscholastic Athletic Association (NJSIAA) all student-athletes are required to maintain satisfactory progress toward the high school diploma throughout the academic year in order to participate.

The District's athletic programs are conducted in accordance with existing Board of Education policies and regulations and adheres to all of the rules and regulations of the Big North Conference, of which we are members. Every effort is made to supply the athletic programs with the best facilities, equipment, and staff available. Coaches teach the general and specific skills necessary for sports success, and also provide guidance in the development of good sportsmanship, cooperation, leadership, honoring commitment, and the importance of practice and fortitude.

While winning each contest is a definite objective of each team, it is not realistic to expect each team to have a winning record every season. Since winning and losing are both inevitable, athletes must learn how to handle both of these outcomes. High school athletics represents a significant change from recreation and junior programs. Part of the expectation is that student-athletes will take the responsibility to enter their sport season prepared both physically and mentally to participate in that sport. Most of our teams practice on a daily basis and many teams also practice on weekends and over vacation periods.

Many of our sports schedule contests over vacation periods. To remain a member of a team in good standing, athletes are expected to be available during such periods. Being fully committed to your team is essential to the team's success.

PLAYING TIME IS NOT GUARANTEED IN HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETICS. Coaches are aware of the importance of developing skilled athletes while balancing the need for maximum participation. Coaches will make every effort to include as many players as possible in contests, but minimum playing times are not an entitlement, nor is time guaranteed. The objective for all levels is the same: to be competitive and successful while keeping student-athletes safe.

High school eligibility lasts for FOUR (4) years. Once a student enters high school, they are eligible for eight consecutive semesters – with very limited exceptions. If you transferred to RIH from a state that allows students below the ninth grade to compete on high school teams, please notify the Athletic Director immediately. This may have an effect on your eligibility moving forward. The Director of Athletics will reach out to the NJSIAA for clarification.

All student athletes must adhere to the student policies outlined in the student handbook. Violations to the student code of conduct may lead to penalties that may include, but are not limited to, suspension or expulsion from the team.

If an athlete sustains an injury during a district sponsored practice or athletic contest, it is imperative that they notify the school's athletic trainer immediately. The school's athletic trainer will complete a form, available in the office of the Building Principal, that includes the date, time and place of the incident; the names of persons involved; the nature of the injury, to the extent that it is known; and a description of all relevant circumstances. A copy shall be retained by the Building Principal and a copy shall be sent to the business office. The school's athletic trainer will provide any necessary paperwork and insurance papers to the parents of the injured student, should the need arise. After an injury, a student-athlete must be cleared by the school's athletic trainer to return to participation.

### **Athletic Physical Procedure**

There are three sports seasons. Any student planning to play a sport needs to have a valid physical on file with the school. They will also need to be cleared by the school district physician for participation. It is incumbent upon the athlete and their parent(s) or guardian(s) to complete the physical paperwork well in advance of the first practice date to avoid missing any practices. This physical process needs to be completed only once during each school year. Students trying out for a second or third sport during the year will only have to complete the health history update in order to be cleared for practice.

#### **The steps are as follows:**

Log in to the **Genesis Parent Portal**

Complete the **Registration Form** for the season you are participating in (ie: Fall, Winter, Spring).

Complete the **Health History Update**.

Complete the Physical Evaluation, if your last physical is more than 365 days old

Make sure your doctor fills out the **Medical Eligibility Form**.

**Bring the Medical Eligibility Form to the School Nurse**, so it can be given to the district doctor for clearance. The district doctor has to sign off on a student-athlete for them to be cleared to participate in practice.

Forms can be downloaded at on the school's website:

<https://indianhills.rih.org/athletics-clubs/athletic-registration>

## SPECTATOR CODE OF CONDUCT

1. Conduct themselves with decorum and with respect for the rights and property of others at all times, at the school event and while traveling to and from the school event;
2. Respect and obey those in authority--school officials and police--and the persons assigned by the school to act for those in authority;
3. Respect the efforts of the students involved in the event, for whom the event may mark the culmination of many hours of preparation and hard work;
4. Respect the seating arrangements provided by the school and remain seated in assigned seats during the event;
5. Respond enthusiastically to student efforts and accomplishments by cheering and applauding and refrain from boos, disrespectful remarks, and other loud negative expressions;
6. Stay off the stage, arena, or athletic playing area on which students are performing or competing;
7. Respect the property of the school by causing no litter and leaving the premises as clean as they were found; make proper use of lavatory facilities and food and drink concessions;
8. Not bring and/or consume alcoholic beverages or narcotics or drugs of any kind on school premises and stay away from school premises if under the influence of alcohol or drugs or exhibiting observable signs of intoxication or impairment including but not limited to lingering smells or inappropriate behavior;
9. Refrain from smoking in any school building or in any place on school premises ("smoking" means the burning of, inhaling from, exhaling the smoke from, a lighted cigar, cigarette, pipe, or any other matter or substance which contains tobacco or any other matter that can be smoked, including the use of smokeless tobacco and snuff, or the inhaling or exhaling of smoke or vapor from an electronic smoking device); Use no tobacco product in a school building or in any place on school premises;
10. Park as directed, obey traffic rules, and drive with extreme care on school property; and
11. Out of concern for the comfort and safety of all spectators and respect for the efforts of performing or competing students, report any violation of these rules to a person in authority

## **Starting Dates for Athletics Seasons**

Please note that an athlete must be cleared medically by the school district physician, prior to the first day of practice for each season, in order to participate. All forms must be completed and turned in by the established dates that are communicated in order to guarantee timely clearance. Paperwork that arrives after the communicated deadlines may jeopardize the student-athlete's start date. Be reminded that athletes must have 6 practices before competing in a game or scrimmage.

### **Sports Offerings**

#### **FALL SEASON**

FOOTBALL  
BOYS & GIRLS SOCCER  
GIRLS VOLLEYBALL  
TENNIS  
GYMNASTICS  
CROSS COUNTRY  
CHEERLEADING

#### **WINTER SEASON**

BASKETBALL CHEER  
BOYS & GIRLS BASKETBALL  
BOYS & GIRLS BOWLING  
BOYS & GIRLS FENCING  
BOYS & GIRLS SWIMMING  
BOYS & GIRLS WRESTLING  
COMPETITIVE CHEER  
COMPETITIVE DANCE  
ICE HOCKEY  
INDOOR TRACK

#### **SPRING SEASON**

BASEBALL  
BOYS TENNIS  
BOYS VOLLEYBALL  
BOYS & GIRLS GOLF  
BOYS & GIRLS LACROSSE  
MOUNTAIN BIKING  
SOFTBALL

## **Sportsmanship**

The Board of Education requires that all individuals involved in or attending the athletic and intramural programs sponsored by the Board exhibit sportsmanship when representing the school at any athletic event. Sportsmanship is defined as abiding by the rules of the contest as defined or accepted by the participating teams.

In exhibiting sportsmanship all participants shall:

1. Respect and follow the rules of the contest;
2. Recognize skilled performance of others regardless of affiliation;
3. Display respect for all individuals participating in the athletic event;
4. Treat opponents in an empathetic manner; and
5. Congratulate opponents in victory or defeat.

Unsportsmanlike conduct is prohibited and shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

1. Any person (athletic department, staff member, student athlete, or a fan or spectator associated with the school district) who strikes or physically abuses an official, coach, player, or spectator;
2. Any person (athletic department, staff member, student athlete, or a fan or spectator associated with the school district) who intentionally incites participants or spectators to violent or abusive action;
3. Any person (athletic department, staff member, student athlete, or a fan or spectator associated with the school district) who uses obscene gestures or profane or unduly provocative language or action towards officials, coaches, opponents, or spectators;
4. Any person (athletic department, staff member, student athlete, or a fan or spectator associated with the school district) who engages in harassing verbal or physical conduct which exhibits bias based on any of the protected categories listed at N.J.S.A. 10:5-3;
5. Any school or athletic staff member who is publicly critical of a game official, opponents, and/or opposing coaches/players;
6. Other conduct judged by the Principal or designee to be unsportsmanlike in character; and,
7. Any violation of the rules of the New Jersey State Interscholastic Athletic Association.

Failure to exhibit good sportsmanship may subject the individual to disciplinary action as deemed appropriate by the Board of Education.

## **Code of Behavior for Athletic Events**

The Board of Education welcomes the attendance of members of the community at athletic events held by the schools of the District and believes that in order to achieve its goals for interscholastic competition, the student body and the general public attending such an event must conduct themselves in such a manner as to make a positive contribution toward the educational objectives of this District. Fans, coaches, and players are expected to honor and obey all rules and regulations of the NJSIAA and the Big North conference. Enthusiastically encourage your own team. Refrain from negative remarks and booing.

Fans, coaches, and players are expected to treat the opponent players and coaches, the officials, and other fans with respect and courtesy. Their safety and comfort should never be endangered. Unsportsmanlike behavior will not be tolerated and may lead to ejection from the event.

**REMEMBER THAT IT IS A PRIVILEGE TO PARTICIPATE IN AND ATTEND  
HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETIC CONTESTS.**

Spectators can help promote good sportsmanship by observing the rules of fair play. Any verbal, written, or physical conduct related to race, color, creed, ethnicity, ancestry, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity or expression, affectual or sexual orientation, or disability shall not be tolerated, could subject the violator to ejection, and may result in penalties being assessed against your team. Each one is requested to take personal responsibility for keeping this competition at a high level of good sportsmanship. The NJSIAA requires officials to enforce all rules regarding unsportsmanlike conduct by coaches and players. There will be no tolerance for any negative behavior, such as taunting, trash talking and verbal, written, or physical conduct related to race, color, creed, ethnicity, ancestry, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity or expression, affectual or sexual orientation, or disability. Such behavior will result in an individual being ejected from this event. All participants must respect the game and respect their opponents. The Board may bar the attendance of any person at a school event whose conduct constitutes a disruption. The Board prohibits the possession and consumption of alcoholic beverages at any function sponsored by the District, and, further, prohibits wagering on school premises.

**Eligibility**

Board of Education Policy establishes certain eligibility requirements that students wishing to participate in a program of athletic competition in the District must satisfy. Student-athletes are required by the NJSIAA to meet certain academic standards to maintain athletic eligibility. To be eligible for athletic competition during the first semester (September 1 to January 31) a pupil must have passed 25% of the credits (30) required by the State of New Jersey for graduation (120), during the immediately preceding academic year. 2. To be eligible for athletic competition during the second semester (Feb. 1 to June 30), a pupil must have passed the equivalent of 12 1/2% of the credits (15) required by New Jersey for graduation (120) at the close of the preceding semester (Jan. 31). Full-year courses shall be equated as one-half of the total credits to be gained for the full year to determine credits passed during the immediately preceding semester. See [HERE](#)

Student athletes considering dropping a course should consult with their guidance counselor and/or the Athletic Director before doing so to avoid any eligibility difficulties. Also, any student repeating a course to improve a grade but not for credit must keep in mind the number of credits required for eligibility.

In addition to academic eligibility requirements, a student in any grade must maintain a satisfactory record of attendance to be eligible for participation in District-sponsored programs of athletic competition.

A student who is serving an in-school or out-of-school suspension may not participate in District-sponsored programs of athletic competition while serving the suspension.

A student in any grade who fails to observe school rules for student conduct may forfeit their

eligibility for participation in District-sponsored programs of athletic competition.

If a student-athlete is planning on pursuing college level athletics, it is important that they visit [NCAA.org](http://NCAA.org) and register for the eligibility center.

### **Equipment**

Each student athlete is responsible for the proper care and safe return of all athletic equipment issued. Athletes should never trade equipment/uniforms during the season. Special care must be taken to lock all equipment in the locker that will be provided. Equipment/uniforms are to be worn only for practices/contests. Any equipment not returned will result in a fine totaling the replacement cost. Access to Genesis may be blocked if equipment/fines are outstanding.

### **Transportation**

The school district makes transportation available for all athletic events. Student-athletes are expected to travel to and from contests on the arranged mode of transportation. Athletes are expected to travel as a team. This practice helps build camaraderie and team unity, an essential component in high school athletics. Only in an emergency should student-athletes request permission from a coach to ride home with a parent. Student-athletes are not permitted to drive themselves to contests, unless previous permission has been granted by the Athletic Director. However, if a situation arises which necessitates a student being driven to or from a contest by a parent, permission may be granted in advance by the Athletic Director. Requests are to be made in writing in advance of the contest and must be approved.

### **School Attendance**

Student-athletes must be in attendance in school for at least FOUR (4) hours on the day of a contest in order to participate in that day's contest. Exceptions to this attendance policy will be considered, if the need arises. This approval will be granted by the discretion of the Athletic Director; excellence in academics and athletics can only be achieved through consistent attendance both in the classroom and on the practice field/court.

### **Parents' Role**

Parents should strive to maintain a positive influence and be supportive of athletes, coaches, and officials. The Board of Education believes that, in order to achieve its goals for interscholastic competition, the student body and the general public attending an interscholastic event must conduct themselves in a manner so as to make a positive contribution toward the educational objectives of this District. Take time to discuss with your child games, practice, and their role as a member of a team. Avoid criticizing coaches, team members, and officials especially during games/contests. Modeling good sportsmanship will create the kind of positive atmosphere high school athletics should embody. Matters of concern throughout the course of a season may arise. Approaching coaches following a practice to arrange a meeting or calling the athletic office to request a meeting is appropriate consistent with the chain of command laid out below.

If an issue is not life threatening or does not require immediate attention, please adhere to the "24 hour rule" where you refrain from addressing coaches with questions or concerns until 24 hours after the conclusion of a contest. This allows cooler heads to prevail when discussing issues arising from an athletic contest.



There is an appropriate chain of command which should be followed when a concern arises. It is as follows:

1. Student athlete meets with coach to discuss question or concern,
2. If student athlete does not get satisfaction, parent contacts coach,
3. If student athlete does not get satisfaction, parent contacts Athletic Director,
4. If student athlete does not get satisfaction, parent contacts Building Principal,
5. If student athlete does not get satisfaction, parent contacts the Superintendent.

This chain of command must be followed in order to appropriately address any concerns or questions arising from an athletic contest.