

ATHLETIC HANDBOOK

Students <> Parents <> Coaches



**River Valley
School District**



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Message to Parents and Student-Athletes

This handbook is made available to you because your son or daughter has chosen to take advantage of the interscholastic athletics or extracurricular activities sponsored by the River Valley School District. You have expressed your willingness and support for him/her to participate. On behalf of the district, we are pleased with your interest in the athletics & extracurricular programming. It is our belief that a comprehensive program of student activities and athletics is vital to the educational experience and to the development of our students.

Participation in an athletic program or extracurricular activity is a privilege. As an athlete, you are held to higher standards in the classroom, on the field or court of competition, and in the community. You are representing many people, including past athletes, your family, the communities that make up the school district, the school, your coaches and fellow athletes. Your involvement in athletics and extracurricular activities can be very rewarding.

As an athlete, you have to carry yourself with tremendous pride. You must wear the uniform and school colors proudly. Your actions constantly reflect on others, not just yourself. You are a role model for younger members on your team and in the community. As a student-athlete, you must set a good example for those who follow you.

As students elect to participate, there are many questions that students, parents and families may have regarding the athletic program. The purpose of this handbook is to answer as many of those questions, particularly about the policies and procedures for a successful program, as possible. Our priority is to keep students and parents as informed as possible, to maintain an open and welcoming line of communication, and to assist in making the athletic and extracurricular experience a positive one for our students. We are hopeful that this handbook will be of assistance to students, parents & guardians, and coaches who all play a vital role in the success of the program.

*The following pages comprise our athletic handbook for you to familiarize yourself with the district's policies and procedures. Many topics are included and may change on an annual basis.

Good luck and GO PANTHERS!

Sincerely,

Philip Martell, *Superintendent*
River Valley School District

Tiara Stossel, *Director of Athletics*
River Valley Middle/High School

Geoffrey Dixon, *Director of Athletics*
River Valley High School

Justin Kulik, *Principal*
River Valley High School

Eric Westendorf, *Principal*
River Valley Middle School

Statement of River Valley Athletic Philosophy

The River Valley Athletic Program, 7-12, should provide a variety of experiences to aid in the development of favorable attitudes in students that will prepare them for adult life. Athletics play an important role in the total school program, working in conjunction with other educational experiences to provide students the environment and opportunities to develop as better citizens.

The opportunity to participate in the athletics program is a privilege that carries the weight of responsibility to the school district and the communities it represents, to other students, to coaches and officials and to other athletes themselves. These experiences enable the student athlete to achieve maximum benefit from their education as they develop learning skills and emotional patterns that translate to all other facets of life. Participation is encouraged but regarded as a privilege. Excessive praise and awards will be discouraged.

The interscholastic athletic program shall be conducted in accordance with existing Board of Education policies, rules, and regulations. While the Board of Education take great pride in winning, it does not condone “winning at any cost” and discourages any and all pressures that might tend to neglect good sportsmanship and good mental health. At all times, the athletic program must be conducted in such a way as to justify it as an educational activity.

I am a Youth Athlete

I am brave and strong and talented. But I'm still just a kid. I am not perfect. I am a work in progress. I need you to be patient while I test the limits of my body and work through the emotions that come with success and failure. When I make a mistake, I wonder if you will be disappointed. When I reach my goals, I look to see if you are watching. I am a young athlete. I love my sport. You call it competition. I call it playing the game. I want to win and have fun. I am a young athlete. I am your young athlete. Winning feels great, but your praise feels infinitely better. Please remember these things and I promise to do my best to make you proud.

- Author Unknown

River Valley Middle and High School Interscholastic Athletic Programs

Fall Sports

- Cross Country (Boys)
 - Varsity
- Cross Country (Girls)
 - Varsity
- Football
 - Varsity
 - Jr. Varsity
 - Jr. High
- Golf (Boys)
 - Varsity
- Golf (Girls)
 - Varsity
- Volleyball (Girls)
 - Varsity
 - Jr. Varsity
 - Jr. High

Winter Sports

- Basketball (Boys)
 - Varsity
 - Jr. Varsity
 - Jr. High
- Basketball (Girls)
 - Varsity
 - Jr. Varsity
 - Jr. High
- Competitive Cheer
 - Varsity
 - Jr. High
- Wrestling
 - Varsity
 - Jr. High
- Indoor Track and Field
 - Varsity
- Rifle (Co-ed)
 - Varsity

Spring Sports

- Baseball (Boys)
 - Varsity
- Softball (Girls)
 - Varsity
- Track & Field (Boys)
 - Varsity
 - Jr. High
- Track & Field (Girls)
 - Varsity
 - Jr. High

Cheerleading – Participation is during the fall and winter sports seasons.

Pre-Season

Information Needed Before Season Starts

1. Physical Examination – The M.D., D.O., Physician's Assistant, or Nurse Practitioner who administers the physical examination must sign this form. All appropriate documentation will be uploaded to BigTeams.
2. Emergency Notification Form – Completed and signed by parent.
3. Assumption of Risk/Proof of Insurance – Completed and signed by parent. Copy of policy is required.
4. Athletic Handbook Parent and Athlete Agreement Form – Signed by parent and athlete
5. Baseline ImPACT Test – Provided by Athletic Trainers

Insurance, Health, and Injuries

1. Medical insurance for injuries to students is not provided by River Valley. Therefore, the cost for medical expenses incurred by a student as the result of an accident or injury, which occurs on school property or at a school activity, will be the responsibility of the student's family or family insurance provider. Students participating in athletics will be required to present proof of insurance to the Athletic Director before being allowed to participate in any sport. In the case of an accident, no matter how minor, the student has a responsibility to report the accident to the teacher or coach in charge.
2. If an individual has any special medical problems, these should be noted on the student's physical exam, and additional information should be provided to the coach and athletic trainers.
3. Any injury occurring during practice or a contest is to be reported to the coach and athletic trainers immediately.

Accident/Injury Report Procedures

1. Incidents that require immediate medical attention by a physician
 - a. The trainer/coach/sponsor will contact 911.
 - b. Notify parent, if parent is unavailable, contact the person designated as the emergency contact.
 - c. Upon arrival of the emergency medical personnel, trainer/coach/sponsor will communicate with them to determine the treatment plan, including if necessary, the location of the treatment facility to which the student will be transported. This information will then be conveyed to the parent or emergency contact person.
 - d. If the student requires transportation, via an ambulance, to the treatment facility, the coach/sponsor will determine whether it is necessary for someone to accompany the student to the treatment facility, and if so, who. In making such a determination, the coach/sponsor will consider such factors as the age of the student, extent of the injuries or illness, availability of the parent or emergency contact person, expressed wishes of the student and/or parent, the safety and welfare of the other team/activity members, and other relevant factors deemed pertinent by the coach/sponsor.
 - e. If someone accompanies a student to a treatment facility, that individual should remain with the student until the parent or emergency contact person arrives at the treatment facility.
 - f. The coach will notify the Athletic Director and the Principal.
 - g. The coach/sponsor should attempt to contact the parent later that day and/or on the following day to obtain information regarding the student's welfare and disposition.

Team Selection

It is the goal of the River Valley School District to provide opportunity for as many students as possible participate in the Interscholastic Athletic Program.

The School District is aware the number of participants in a sport may have to be reduced. We require the coaches to follow the philosophy for each level of competition as described below:

1. Middle School: Introduction to the sport, all team members contribute, preparation for junior varsity and varsity sports
2. Freshmen: Coaches decide if freshmen play at the junior high or varsity level, development of sport skills, attitude and effort are emphasized, all team members contribute
3. Junior Varsity: Enhanced sport skills, enhanced competition, skill development is emphasized, all team members contribute, playing time may favor more skilled athletes who demonstrate proper attitude
4. Varsity: Mastery of sport skills, competitive, emphasis on how to succeed (through skills, effort, team), everyone contributes but contribution may be limited to practice as playing time will favor more skilled athletes who demonstrate proper attitude

Coaches are encouraged to maximize the opportunities for the students without diluting the quality of the program. Time, space, facilities, equipment, personal preference, and other factors will place limitations on the most effective squad size for any particular sport. With this in mind, the policy of River Valley is:

1. The philosophy of the School District is to have a broad scope of participation to the safest extent possible.
2. If coaches determine it is necessary to have try-outs, the coaching staff will inform the student athletes of this when the students initially sign up for the sport and/or at the beginning of practice.
3. Parents will be notified of the tryouts before they begin.
4. Choosing the members of athletic squads is the sole responsibility of the coaches of those squads. Judges may be utilized and score sheets may be created to evaluate athletes.



Student Athletes

Awards

Awards will be given to coaches to distribute to athletes by the Athletic Director or Assistant Athletic Director. Any athlete who quits his or her sport or who is removed from a team prior to the conclusion of the season, including post-season playoffs, will not receive a letter nor any other individual or team award even if the criteria for earning that award had been met prior to the athlete's decision to quit or their removal from the team.

Junior High and Junior Varsity Awards

All students who successfully complete the season for a Junior High and/or Junior Varsity Sport may receive a respective certificate noting their participation.

Varsity Awards

Requirements for earning a varsity athletic letter will be determined by the head coach, with input and supervision from the Athletic Director and/or Assistant Athletic Director. Requirements for earning a varsity letter must be approved before the start of the season and a copy of these requirements will be retained in the athletic office. All student-athletes will be made aware of the requirements to earn a letter by the head coach prior to the season and will be notified at the conclusion of the season as to their lettering status.

Awards:

First Year Letter – Athlete receives varsity letter certificate. Chenille letter is given along with a sport specific pin.

Second Year Letter – Athlete receives varsity letter certificate along with a participation bar.

Third Year Letter – Athlete receives varsity letter certificate along with a participation bar.

Fourth Year Letter – Athlete receives varsity letter certificate along with a participation bar.

BASIC RULES THAT APPLY TO ALL PROSPECTIVE ATHLETIC LETTER AND PARTICIPATION AWARD CANDIDATES.

1. An athlete must display sportsmanship and conduct which exemplifies the school to his/her opponents, teammates and officials.
2. An athlete must conform to all participation and training rules established by the School District and the head coach for that given sport.
3. An athlete must have conformed to practice and game regulations as established by the coach in that sport.
4. The athlete must complete the season, including individual and post season competition.
5. The athlete must have returned all the equipment issued to him to the satisfaction of the Head Coach and Athletic Director.
6. Letters are only issued to a participant in a varsity sport.
7. All seniors that have remained on the team a minimum of two completed seasons will receive a varsity letter.
8. Coach's discretion can be used to letter an athlete based on the following three attributes:
 - a) Positive contribution to the team.
 - b) An athlete demonstrates good sportsmanship and a supportive attitude.
 - c) An injured player would have lettered if the injury had not occurred

*These are the minimum requirements for each sport. The head coach of each sport can establish stricter requirements. **The head coach will notify the student athletes the requirements to letter before the start of the regular season.**

AWARDS AND VARSITY LETTERS (ATHLETICS)

Awards and varsity letters are encouraged and generally accepted as an effective way to recognize student performance. Head coaches are solely responsible for all awards, varsity letters, etc. so long as they adhere to adopted criteria. The head coach and Athletic Director, prior to purchase/distribution, shall approve all awards and recognition. Award presentations shall be for the sole purpose of student recognition and shall not be a forum for political comment. At a minimum, a request to give an award/honor must include a signature from the head coach supporting this award/honor (Principal's signature for non-school awards/honors), the name of the award/honor, the "specific" criteria for achievement of the award/honor, the "specific" selection process for identifying the winner of the award/honor. Head coaches shall be part of any process for selecting awards/honors for their area.

Guidelines for awards/honors should be announced prior to an award being given and will be displayed and/or distributed at each event/ceremony when such awards/honors are being given.

A coach or representative shall make a genuine effort to attend all banquets and programs in which any student participating in his/her activity is being recognized (i.e. Senior Recognition Night, All Conference Banquets, etc.)

Varsity letters will be awarded when the student has met requirements set forth by the coach and in accordance with adopted criteria. These criteria shall be communicated to the participants at the beginning of each season. The Athletic Director, prior to the start of the season, must approve any deviation from the general requirements for lettering outlined in this section. The approved criteria for earning a varsity letter shall be communicated to the participants prior to the first event. All appeals are subject to the sole discretion of the Athletic Director.

Head coaches have the right to withhold awards if necessary as a disciplinary consequence. The head coach, prior to the withholding of an award shall inform the Athletic Director and the Principal.

General Rules

Each player is to be aware of the following rules. Your coach may also give you a list of specific rules for his/her sport.

1. No student may practice until the school has received an Athletic Handbook Accountability Agreement form signed by parents/guardians and students, a physical examination form, and an insurance form.
2. Any student who arrives to school after 11:00 a.m. may not participate in their designated sport practice or competition unless a doctor's excuse is provided, or the High School Principal gives permission.
3. A student must be passing at least four full-credit subjects or the equivalent as of each Friday during a grading period. If you fail to meet this requirement, you will lose your eligibility from the following Sunday through the Saturday immediately following the next Friday as of which you meet this requirement.
4. An activity bus will be provided daily at 5:20p.m. for students whose practice or activity starts following the school day until 5:00p.m. For safety and supervisory efficiency, student athletes will be expected to leave the building immediately after practice or the game. (See Transportation Rules).
5. A student will be responsible for all uniforms/equipment and will be required to return the uniforms/equipment in the same condition when requested by the coach. A student will be charged the new uniform/equipment price for items not returned or items which have been damaged.
6. A student is responsible to keep his/her uniform clean.
7. A student who "cuts" practice/game will not be permitted to dress/play in the next scheduled event.
8. No student will be permitted to participate in another sport until all equipment from the previous sport has been returned or financial obligations have been made.
9. Athletic uniforms/equipment issued by the school may not be worn except for practice or game situations unless the player has received permission from the coach.
10. All players and managers are admitted (free) to all home games of their current sport. The player shall inform the ticket seller of his/her grade and name.
11. A player who quits or is cut by a coach before the conclusion of the season shall not be eligible for an award.
12. Students are not permitted in other areas of the building other than the lobby, locker room, weight room, and gym, during practice and games, unless granted permission by the coach.
13. Students will not be permitted on the basketball floor with "street" shoes.
14. All players will respect the decisions of the officials.
15. A player who is ejected from a game by the PIAA official for unsportsmanlike conduct shall not dress/play in the next scheduled contest.
16. A member of an athletic team is expected to be well groomed. Appearance, expression, and actions always influence people's opinions of athletes, the team, and the school. Once you have volunteered to be a member of a team, you have made a choice to uphold certain standards expected of athletes.
17. All uniforms, warm-ups, and school-purchased equipment must be washed and turned in within one week of the last scheduled event. If this equipment is not turned in, the student will be responsible for the purchase of this equipment. A bill will be issued to the student. Until the bill is reconciled, the student will not be permitted to participate in any other athletic event. Varsity uniforms and warm-ups cost approximately \$300.00 each. Junior High uniforms cost approximately \$100.00 each.

Transportation Rules

The purpose of the following list of rules is to ensure that the health, safety, and welfare of every student is protected and that the school district can continue to economically provide efficient, adequate, and safe transportation to athletic events. It is the duty of each coach and/or driver to enforce each rule and regulation.

1. The driver and/or coach oversees all students. The driver of the bus is in charge of the bus at all times.
2. Students are to be at their designated pick-up spot on time.
3. When you must walk along a roadway, walk on the left side facing oncoming traffic.
4. Stay off the highway while waiting for a bus.
5. Never attempt to board a moving bus.
6. If you must cross the highway at your bus stop, cross only in front of the bus after you are sure that all traffic has stopped.
7. Upon boarding the bus, be seated immediately and remain in your seat until getting off the bus, after the bus has come to a full stop.
8. Classroom conduct is to be observed on the bus.
9. Students are not to open the windows unless granted permission from the driver. Under no conditions are students allowed to shout or yell out the windows.
10. All damage to the bus is to be reported immediately to the driver.
11. Any student who causes damage to a bus while on or off the bus, intentionally or unintentionally, with or without malice aforethought, will pay for the damages.
12. Intentional carrying of snow or ice into a bus and snowballing is not permitted.
13. No student is permitted to open the emergency door except upon direction of the driver or in an emergency when the driver is incapacitated.
14. Each student must travel to and from the athletic contest in the transportation provided by the school unless prior permission is granted by the coach, Principal, or Athletic Director. A coach may grant permission for a student to return home with his/her parents or legal guardian when the request is made in person or in writing by the guardian.
15. Any conduct deemed unacceptable and not specifically covered in these regulations or in the River Valley School Handbook will be referred to the High School Principal.
16. Violations will be acted upon in the same manner as stated in the River Valley High School Student Handbook.
17. Students are to follow all school rules at all school activities, whether at River Valley, or at an away school district.

Strength Training Facility Rules and Policies

1. Prior to participation, all athletes must undergo an orientation regarding common risks involved in strength training, the proper execution of various exercises, and the possible consequences if proper technique is not employed.
2. Athletes are only permitted to use the weight room during scheduled times and with approved supervision.
3. Athletes are expected to have a workout program from the Strength and Conditioning Coach, follow it, and record workout contents.
4. If an athlete has an injury that in any way inhibits a portion of the workout, the athlete will receive a modified program, outlining which movements are to be avoided and which ones may be substituted.
5. Athletes are required to use collars once there is more than one plate on the end of the bar.
6. Athletes should move weights from the racks to the bar only. They should never set plates on the floor or lean them against equipment. Athletes should return dumbbells to the rack in the proper order. They should not drop or throw weights or dumbbells.
7. Athletes should always show respect for equipment and facilities; spitting, misuse of equipment or defacing the facility will not be tolerated and will result in immediate expulsion from weight room privileges. The weight room requires concentration; unnecessary distractions, loud and offensive language, or temper tantrums are not permitted.
8. Athletes should always wear proper training attire.
9. Athletes should utilize spotters when performing pressing and squatting movements.
10. Immediately report any facility-related injury or facility/equipment irregularity to the Strength and Conditioning Coach or other supervising adult on duty.
11. Tobacco, food, chewing gum, glass bottles, cans, alcohol, drugs, and banned substances are not allowed in the strength training facility; plastic water bottles, however, are acceptable.
12. Coaches are not responsible for users' personal belongings or lost or stolen items.
13. Athletes should keep feet off the walls.
14. Athletes should minimize the amount of chalk and powder on the floor.
15. Athletic Department personnel can use these facilities for personal workouts if they do not interfere with the needs of the athletes.
16. Non-athletic department personnel will be allowed to use the facilities with permission of Athletic Director, after signing a waiver form.
17. No one should squat outside of the squat rack.
18. The on-duty strength and conditioning staff member(s) have the authority over all weight room conduct and use of equipment and may expel an athlete from the facility for failure to follow instructions.
19. Failure to follow any of these rules and procedures could result in loss of Strength Training Facility privileges.

Code of Conduct and General Rules for Student-Athletes

A code of conduct is a set of ethical principles and standards designed to guide the athlete in making acceptable and approved actions. They are regarded not only as recommendations but also as rules governing conduct.

As a member of a River Valley Middle/High School Athletic Team, you are expected to understand that an athlete:

1. Understands that drinking, tobacco, vaping/juuling products are harmful to the body and hinders maximum effort and performance. The use of any of these will not be tolerated. All rules will be followed using the Student Handbook of River Valley School District.
2. Does not use profanity.
3. Realizes that officials do not lose a game, but rather they are there to ensure that both teams abide by the rules for the game. For this, they deserve courteous respect.
4. Plans his/her time so that he/she devotes sufficient energy to academics to ensure grades which represent their true abilities.
5. Has good attendance and truant record.
6. Works for the betterment of the school.
7. Obeys the training, practice, and game rules of the coach, athletic trainers, and Strength and Conditioning coach.
8. Understands that he/she represents the community and school and should conduct himself/herself properly at all times.
9. Does not employ illegal tactics to gain an undeserved advantage.
10. Is neat and always groomed.
11. Appreciates that coaches and school authorities have the best interests of the participants in mind as they plan and conduct the athletic programs.
12. Appreciates the importance of proper rest, diet, and exercise.
13. Complies with the standard of this code or be subject to dismissal from the squad or other disciplinary actions.

***See page 21 for Accountability Agreement signatures**



Parents/Guardians

Code of Conduct and General Rules for Parents/Guardians

A code of conduct is a set of ethical principles and standards designed to guide the parent(s)/guardian(s) in making acceptable and approved actions. They are regarded not only as recommendations but also as rules governing conduct.

I pledge to be responsible for my words and actions while attending any interscholastic sporting event and shall conform my behavior to the following code of conduct:

1. I will not engage in unsportsmanlike conduct with any coach, parent, player, participant, official, or any other attendee.
2. I will not encourage my child, or any other person, to engage in unsportsmanlike conduct with any coach, parent, player, participant, official, or any other attendee.
3. I will not engage in any behavior which would endanger the health, safety, or wellbeing of any coach, parent, player, participant, official, or any other attendee.
4. I will not encourage my child, or any other person, to engage in any behavior which would endanger the health, safety or wellbeing of any coach, parent, player, participant, official, or any other attendee.
5. I will not use drugs or alcohol while at an interscholastic or youth sporting event, and will not attend, coach, officiate, or participate in an interscholastic or youth sporting event while under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
6. I will not permit my child, or encourage any other person, to use drugs or alcohol.
7. I will not engage in use of profanity.
8. I will not encourage my child, or any other person, to engage in use of profanity.
9. I will treat my coach, parent, player, participant, official, or any other attendee with respect regardless of race, creed, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, or ability.
10. I will encourage my child to treat any coach, parent, player, participant, official or any other attendee with respect regardless of race, creed, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, or ability.
11. I will not engage in verbal or physical threats or abuse aimed at any coach, parent, player, participant, official, or any other attendee.
12. I will not encourage my child, or any other person, to engage in verbal or physical threats or abuse aimed at any coach, parent, player, participant, official, or any other attend.
13. I will not initiate a fight or scuffle with any coach, parent, player, participant, official, or any other attendee.
14. I will not encourage my child, or any other person, to initiate a fight or scuffle with any coach, parent, player, participant, official or any other attendee.
15. I will follow the chain of command for any complaints if needed.

I hereby agree that if I fail to conform my conduct to the foregoing while attending an interscholastic sporting event, I will be subject to disciplinary action, including but not limited to the following in any order or combination:

1. Verbal warning issued by an Athletic Director or designee.
2. Written warning issued by an Athletic Director.
3. Suspension or immediate ejection from an interscholastic sporting event issued by an Athletic Director or designee. Possible referral to the local law enforcement agency.
4. Suspension from multiple interscholastic sporting events issued by the Principal. Possible referral to the local law enforcement agency.
5. Season suspension or multiple season suspension issued by the Superintendent of Schools or designee. Possible referral to the local law enforcement agency.

Complaint Policy

River Valley School District has taken great steps to hire qualified individuals to direct the extracurricular programs of the district. In hiring these individuals, the Board of Education has expressed their confidence that these individuals are competent and should perform their duties with limited distractions. However, the Board recognizes that concerns do arise between parents and coaches/advisors. The Administration, in conjunction with the Athletic Department, therefore, has created an organized, sequential complaint process to address these concerns. Strict adherence to this policy will bring proper and immediate closure to any such concerns.

The procedure for processing complaints will be as follows:

1. Parent(s)/Guardian(s) will request a face-to-face meeting or phone conference with the coach/advisor.
2. In the event that the parent(s)/guardian(s) are not satisfied with the results of Step 1, the parent(s) may arrange a meeting with the Athletic Director (for the athletic program) or the Principal (for other extracurricular activities) and the coach/advisor.
3. In the event that the issue is not resolved in the above steps, the parent(s)/guardian(s) shall schedule a meeting with the Principal, Athletic Director, and coach/advisor to discuss the concerns.
4. If the issue is still not resolved in the above steps, the Superintendent may meet with the parent(s)/guardian(s) to discuss these concerns.

***Issues of game strategy, lineup, and playing time will NOT be addressed by a parent to coach or advisor; nor may they be addressed through the complaint procedures.**

Booster Club Policies

Purpose and Function of Booster Clubs

A booster club is defined as "an organization that is formed to help support the efforts of a sports team or organization. Support is shown in many ways, including volunteering time, raising money, and contributing funds to better enhance the team or organization's performance."

Another definition is "a booster club provides enthusiastic support of a team or organization." This type of support is much like emotional or psychological parental support but is given in a collective manner. Booster clubs may play a key role in supporting River Valley activities in many ways, and we are very thankful for the positive contributions booster clubs will provide to our programs.

Booster clubs may raise money by printing promotional items like team schedules, programs, yearbooks, and spirit wear. Booster clubs can financially support the program by providing additional funding for events, such as pre- or post-game dinners or social events during the season. Booster clubs may perform, meet, or organize in any way, in accordance with the above stated definition, that supports or 'boosts' the program they are formed to support.

It is the charge of the Principal and the Athletic Director at River Valley High School to ensure that booster clubs operate within their defined parameters.

River Valley Booster Clubs SHOULD:

- Volunteer time and raise money.
- Contribute funds to better enhance the team or organization's performance.
- Print promotional items like team schedules, programs, and yearbooks (subject to approval by the head coach/AD/principal).
- Financially support the program by providing additional funding for additional equipment, camps, or end-of-season banquets and awards.
- Organize team events, such team meals.
- Listen and work closely with the head coach.
- Discuss as official business any item that meets the criteria listed above.

River Valley Booster Clubs SHOULD NOT:

- Openly discuss or perform a performance review of the head coach or coaching staff.
- Review the performance of a coach funded by the booster club; staff evaluations are solely the responsibility of the school district.
- Review the performance of a coach funded by the booster club; staff evaluations are solely the responsibility of the school district.
- Openly discuss playing time issues.
- Ransom funding of the program in order to control the hiring or firing of the head coach or staff member.
- Offer up a petition by booster club members to hire/fire a coach.
- Plan, organize, or attempt to implement an off-season training program without direction or consent from the head coach/AD/principal.
- Discuss as official business any item that does not meet the definition and function of a booster club.

Banquets

- The head coach is responsible for the end-of-season awards banquet. The head coach may delegate these responsibilities to the booster club; however, the program and the agenda must be approved by the head coach.
- The awards given out at the banquet will be distributed by the head coach/assistants.
- There should be no open bar for adults, and parents shall not consume alcohol at banquets.
- To avoid conflict, banquets should not be held before 12:00 p.m. or on Sundays.

Fundraisers

All fundraisers must be approved by the high school principal, well in advance of the event, through an authorized fundraising request form.

- Fundraising is a necessary part of high school athletics today. We are very thankful for the efforts of parents and booster clubs.
- Be aware that membership on a team and/or playing time is not affected in any way by the amount of money raised by a participant.

PIAA Rules Concerning Pre-season Sessions & Illegal Recruiting

Boosters are not permitted to conduct pre-season practices, arrange scrimmages, or conduct organized team activities.

- Coaches are allowed to work with their teams only during the designated PIAA season and/or during the summer waiver period.

- No booster club member may recruit or encourage athletes from another school to transfer to River Valley.

Boosters Will Not Have Any Role in Conflict Resolution between Parents & Coach

- It is inappropriate to approach a coach prior to or at the conclusion of a game or practice unless the meeting has been previously agreed upon as described in the River Valley Athletic Department Handbook for Coaches and Players.
- Playing time is determined solely by the coach; discussion should focus only on how your son or daughter can improve his or her skills as an athlete.
- Calls should be directed to a school phone only.
- If emotions rise to an unreasonable level during the meeting, it will be concluded immediately and rescheduled.

Starting a Booster Organization at River Valley Middle/High School (required)

Booster organizations must meet with the Principal and Superintendent to request formal recognition.

- All of the areas discussed in these guidelines are required and mandatory by the River Valley School District.
- Each Booster Club should have elected or appointed officers (President, a Treasurer, and a Secretary).
- Prior to the 1st practice of each season, each booster club President must inform the principal and AD with the names and contact information (address, phone and email) of each club officer.
- Booster Club meetings should follow a set agenda each meeting (Welcome/Minutes from past meeting/Treasurer Report/Old Business/New Business).
- All RVSD Booster Organizations should comply with state and federal laws.
- Each Club will remain in good standing with State and Federal Laws to be recognized as a “Booster Club” by the district.
 - To remain in good standing with River Valley School District each Club should do the following:
 - Obtain a Federal Taxpayer Identification number.
 - Clubs should be organized in some form consistent with non-profit status under Pennsylvania law, and must operate and fundraise only within state and federal requirements.
- Upon request, provide the district business manager with a copy of the appropriate annual tax/reporting returns filed with the appropriate Federal and State agencies, if applicable.

ACCOUNTABILITY AGREEMENT

Parent(s)/guardian(s) and student-athlete(s) must read the River Valley School District Athletic Handbook. Until the digital signature page is submitted to the Athletic Director, the student will not be permitted to participate in any school-sponsored event.

Signature pages for student-athletes and parents to acknowledge will be emailed to student athletes who have signed up to participate in a school sponsored sport.

Student-Athletes and Parent/Guardian(s) will be required to sign prior to receiving a school issued uniform for ***EACH SEASON***.



Coaches

COACHES CODE OF CONDUCT

1.0 Supervisory Responsibilities of the Director of Athletics. The Director of Athletics or designee shall be responsible for administering policies and procedures that specify standards of professional coaching behavior.

2.0 Coaches' Code of Conduct. All coaches shall be required to annually sign a Coach's Code of Conduct Agreement, attesting to their receipt and understanding of this policy and understanding that violations of this policy may result in sanction or termination of employment.

3.0 Obligation to Report Observed Violations. These policies shall be annually reviewed at a meeting attended by all coaches, trainers, strength and conditioning coach, event managers, facility supervisors, and other administrators responsible for the supervision of coaches. Employees shall be informed of their obligation to report any situation which endangers the health and safety of student-athletes.

4.0 Team Meetings. The Director of Athletics is assigned to directly supervise each sport program and shall attend a meeting with the coaches and student-athlete members of each sport team for the purpose of reviewing important departmental policies applicable to coaches and student-athletes, which shall include a discussion of these policy issues.

5.0 Captains' Council. The Director of Athletics or designee shall oversee the Captains' Council and will annually review the proper role of team captains, how team captains can contribute to a positive team atmosphere, and proper procedure for dealing with complaints related to coach behavior. Each head coach may designate up to two team captains.

6.0 Meeting of Contest Site Supervisors. The Director of Athletics shall annually conduct a meeting of all athletic event site supervisors and security personnel to discuss this policy as it applies to fan behavior and coach conduct. Such personnel shall discuss the types of situations that should be reported.

7.0 Supervision of Coaches and Instructors. The Director of Athletics or her/his designee shall have evaluation procedures in place that include the regular observation of practices and competitions of each coach for the purpose of evaluating instructional performance.

7.1 Complaints. The Director of Athletics shall be responsible for establishing a fair process for handling student-athlete or parent complaints related to the instructional ability or behavior of a coach, that is consistent with standard procedures for handling employee conflicts or performance issues but also includes:

- the opportunity for a student-athlete to report cases of abuse [whether verbal, physical, or otherwise] to a neutral third party outside the athletics department procedures that protect the privacy of the athletes and coaches and limitations on confidentiality
- procedures for determining whether abuse has occurred that protect the legal rights of coaches and players until an investigation has been completed
- an internal institutional appeals procedure in the event that the accused or the alleged victim is dissatisfied with the outcome of the investigation or hearing
- requirement to inform those involved about his or her opportunity for redress in a court of law
- procedures that protect coaches and athletes from retaliation before, during, and after a hearing or appeals process with retaliatory behavior viewed as seriously as abuse itself and acknowledging that retaliation can occur independently of whether a charge of abuse is substantiated
- requirement for immediate action to ensure that the environment is free of abuse and ensure that an investigation proceeds in a timely manner
- investigatory guidelines to ensure that institutional investigators follow proper procedures for an immediate, fair, and unbiased investigation

Procedures related to complaints and chain of command can be found in the Athletics Handbook.

7.2 Annual Performance Appraisal. The coach's annual performance appraisal shall include an assessment of each of the areas covered by this policy: safety, professional development, instructional ability, program success, student-athlete performance improvement, practice learning atmosphere, professional relationships/conduct, and interaction with other constituents. These evaluations will be completed no later than 30 days after the closing of the season.

8.0 Instructional Safety. River Valley School District shall employ coaches that have the necessary credentials and experience to safely and efficiently teach the skills and strategies included in their sport and establish practice environments that minimize the potential for physical harm. Coaches are responsible for conforming to the highest levels of student-athlete care.

8.1 Safety Alerts. Coaches are required to stay up-to-date on all safety alerts that are publicly announced by equipment manufacturers, sport governing bodies, or any other organization associated with their respective sports. Safety alerts must be brought to the attention of the Director of Athletics.

8.2 Physical Abuse. Physical abuse of student-athletes is expressly prohibited. Coaches should be aware that physical abuse can take many forms. Some of the more common forms of physical abuse include: (1) when a coach touches an athlete in a non-instructional, non-consoling, or non-congratulatory way; (2) when a coach requires or suggests that an athlete perform a physical act that has no relevance to the sport and which is intended to cause embarrassment, to be degrading, or to punish; (3) when a coach requires or suggests that an athlete continue to perform a physical act, whether it is relevant to the sport or not, that compromises established conditioning and safety guidelines; and (4) when a coach fails to stop an activity where an athlete is clearly being subjected to physical harm.

8.3 Adherence to Emergency Medical Plan. Each coach is responsible for adhering to the athletics department Emergency Medical Plan whenever dealing with serious injuries occurring in athletics facilities.

8.4 Collaboration with Support Staff. All coaches will collaborate with the Strength and Conditioning Coach and the Athletic Trainers to create practice workouts that are efficient and adhere to sound principles related to a variety of factors such as safety, hygiene, conditioning, hydration, and environmental conditions such as weather and facility anomalies. In any case where the Strength and Conditioning Coach and/or the Athletic Trainers disagree with a coach on an issue related to health or safety, the coach must defer to the expertise of the Strength and Conditioning Coach and/or the Athletic Trainers or engage the Director of Athletics in a meeting with this group to determine the appropriate course of action.

8.5 Acceptable Physical Activities. Coaches may require that athletes take part in instructional, competitive, or conditioning physical activities during practices or contests that are relevant to the sport and, through collaboration with the Strength and Conditioning Coach and the Athletic Trainers, meet conditioning and safety guidelines. Such activities should be based on the coach's training, educational background, and experience and any new techniques for which training or certification does not exist, must be prefaced by reasonable external consultation or review by experts and must not impose danger, risk, or harm to participants that would normally not be encountered by participation in that sport.

8.6 Excessive Physical Activities. Coaches may not require or suggest that athletes continue to take part in physical activities beyond reasonable limits that could compromise student-athletes' health or conditioning and/or safety guidelines.

8.7 Responsibility to Act. Whenever a coach observes a situation where an athlete is mismatched physically with an opposing athlete and in danger of being harmed or the athlete is clearly unable to perform a physical activity safely or effectively, it is the coach's responsibility to immediately discontinue the activity for that athlete.

8.8 Responding to Athlete Questions. Coaches are expected to be responsive to respectful athlete questions regarding the purpose and intended impact of training and instructional activities.

9.0 Professional Development. All coaches shall continue to advance their knowledge related to teaching excellence and safety considerations by attending at least one coaches' workshop, clinic, or other professional development experience per year.

10.0 Physical Bodily Contact with Athletes. Coaches may not have any physical bodily contact with athletes outside of the practice or contest environment. Within the practice or contest environment, coaches may not have any physical bodily contact with athletes except under the following conditions: (1) when correcting physical form for skill or strategy execution; (2) when comforting or consoling an athlete who is visibly upset or injured; and 3) when congratulating an athlete for a good performance.

11.0 Emotional Verbal Abuse. Coaches and athletes engage in verbal interactions constantly. It is the coaches' responsibility to use such interactions for instructional and motivational purposes. Emotional verbal abuse of student-athletes is expressly prohibited. Emotional abuse of athletes can take many forms such as: (1) when a coach excessively, in comparison to treatment of other athletes, singles out an athlete through negative interactions; (2) when a coach routinely uses profanity or degrading language; (3) when a coach personalizes error correction; (4) when a coach devalues a player's role on the team, potential for success, or value as a person; (5) when a coach constantly blames the team or groups of players for failures; and (6) when a coach isolates a player by ignoring him or her. Coaches must make every effort to avoid such conduct. Coaches should immediately call a halt to any bullying or emotional verbal abuse undertaken by any student-athletes while in the coach's presence. Coaches should refrain from and disallow their student-athletes from engaging in verbal discourse that denigrates others.

12.0 Proper Error Correction. Coaches are expected to correct inefficient performance of skills and strategies by athletes. Error correction should always be targeted at the actual physical performance or the effectiveness of the decisions made. Coaches shall not use error correction in ways that target personal attributes or characteristics of the athletes such as alleging that the athlete is being too weak or too lazy. Error correction must be free from profanity or personally degrading language.

13.0 Equal Treatment. Coaches are expected to treat all players equally. Coaches are prohibited from singling out a player through excessive negative interactions or from ignoring individual players for any reason. Coaches should encourage participation and must never devalue any player's role on the team, their potential for success, or their personal worth. Coaches are prohibited from discriminating against any student-athlete or group of student-athletes based on the individual's race, religion, age, disability, gender, or sexual orientation.

14.0 Team Success and Failure. It is paramount that coaches recognize that the successes and failures of teams are a result of skill, collaborative effort, and effective training by coaches. Coaches are prohibited from placing the blame for failures on any one player or group of players. Coaches should never deflect the responsibility for failure completely away from the coaching staff. Analysis of success and failure should be confined to critiques of skill execution, strategy, consistency of effort and other objective elements of performance.

15.0 Coach-Athlete Relationships. Coach-athlete relationships are extremely powerful. Coaches and athletes spend an inordinate amount of time together in an activity that can be intense and emotional. There is always the danger that the relationship between a coach and an athlete may cross the line from mentor-mentee to one that is based on total control, dependence, and/or romance. It is the coach's full responsibility to maintain an appropriate professional teacher/student relationship with each and every student-athlete regardless if the student-athlete is an adult and can legally consent to entering into a dating, romantic, or sexual relationship with the coach. The coach must maintain an unbiased position, demonstrating no appearance or actuality of favoritism toward any one or several student-athletes.

15.1 Control and Dependence. The nature of participating on a sports team demands a certain amount of inter-team dependence and discipline. It is the coach's responsibility to establish a team environment and ethos that maximizes cooperative effort and performance without compromising basic individual rights. There must be appropriate times in which athletes are free to question and discuss and the coach to respond with explanations. A coach's system of discipline should at all times be reasonable and professional. Care must be taken to avoid creating an atmosphere based on fear, intimidation, and total compliance. Such systems of control create a hostile learning environment. Team environments should be a balance between positive, nurturing, and supportive and should be highly organized, disciplined, and efficient.

15.2 Romantic, Dating, or Sexual Relationships. A coach may never enter into any romantic, dating, or sexual relationship with a student-athlete, while that student-athlete is attending that institution and any athletic eligibility remains for that student-athlete, and for two years after cessation or termination of coaching that athlete in any program within or outside the institution, even if that student-athlete is not currently engaged in participating in that athletic event. The two-year prohibition is based on the belief that public confidence in the athletics program will be undermined by the appearance or actuality of intimate relationships with former athletes. A coach who engages in such activity even following this two-year period still bears the burden of demonstrating there has been no exploitation of the coach-athlete relationship if faced with allegations of impropriety. This prohibition and obligation to demonstrate no exploitation is consistent with the United States Olympic Committee Coaching Ethics Code.

15.3 Social Prohibitions and Sexual Abuse. Coaches are teachers first and foremost and have a significant responsibility to maintain a mentor-mentee relationship with student-athletes. Therefore, coaches are prohibited from: (1) engaging in a dependent friendship with any student-athlete; (2) spending social time with an individual student-athlete or a group of student-athletes outside of the team environment; and (3) having a romantic, dating, or sexual relationship with a student-athlete; (4) engaging in any unwelcomed quid pro quo sexual activities between the coaches and any student-athletes or potential student-athletes, including requiring that student-athletes or potential student-athletes engage in any sexual activities with their coaches in order to receive an athletic scholarship, playing time, participation on the team at a specific position (such as basketball guard or softball pitcher, etc.), or to remain on the team; and (5) creating a hostile environment by engaging in sexual harassment activities.

16.0 Peer Pressure. Captains and team leaders are often given responsibilities to "set the bar" for other student-athletes by demonstrating intensity in practice and games, positive energy, and an unwavering level of commitment to team principles. The positive purpose of such captain leadership is to create an athlete driven system of motivation and support that becomes contagious throughout the team. At times, however, delegation of high levels of control to captains can create unreasonable peer pressure that could become a conduit of abuse characterized by student-athlete control through intimidation of teammates. Coaches are responsible for educating captains and other student-athlete leaders about their appropriate roles and monitoring the level of peer pressure that is being imposed. Coaches are prohibited from encouraging or allowing team leaders to require activities outside of practice or from levying sanctions or punishments in any way.

17.0 Social Isolation. When compared to many other student activities, participating on a sports team requires an inordinate time commitment. Daily practices, contests, and the time spent traveling to and from contest sites can often prohibit student-athletes from taking part in other social activities with peers and family. When these regular sport time commitments are added to the common practice of extending sports seasons through championship play, student-athletes playing together on non-school teams and the encouragement of year around training programs, the result may be an environment of social isolation where the vast majority of a student-athlete's interactions are with teammates and coaches. Despite the fact that student-athletes elect to participate in sports, coaches should not exacerbate this potential for social isolation.

18.0 Interactions with Other Constituents. Coaches interact with many different constituents such as faculty members, parents, booster groups, fans, alumni, contest officials, and the media. At times these

interactions may be contentious. Coaches are expected to maintain a teaching presence and a professional demeanor at all times. Any situation that cannot be comfortably handled by the coach or that may have department-wide ramifications (i.e. fan behavior, inappropriate parental interference, etc.) should be brought to the attention of the Director of Athletics. If a situation occurs at the site of a contest, the site supervisor and/or public safety officer should be engaged for assistance.

COACHES CODE OF CONDUCT

Signature pages for Coaches to acknowledge will be sent digitally after being approved by the RVSD School Board of Directors, or by clicking this [link](#).

Emergency Action Plan

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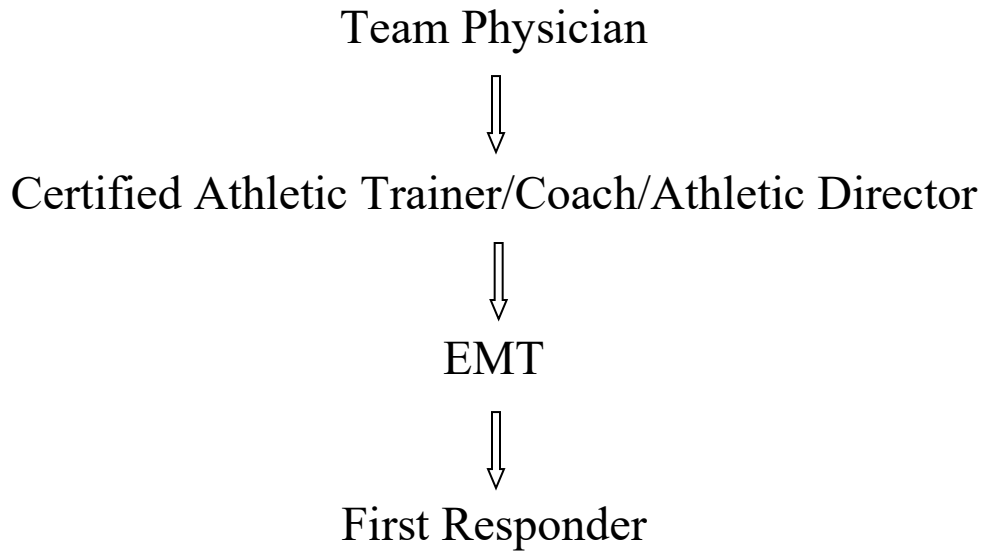
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Emergency and Non-Emergency Contact List

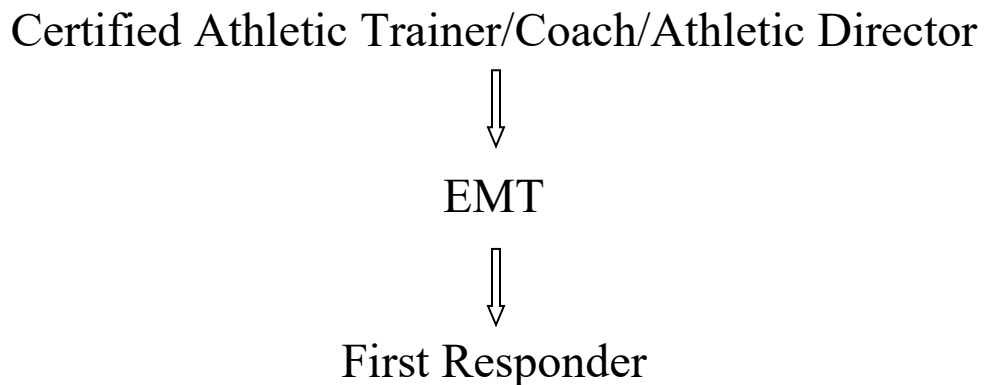
Contact Person	Work	External/Direct Dial	Email
Athletic Director	724-459-5500	724-343-8423	Stossel.t@rsvdpa.org
Athletic Director	724-459-5500	724-343-8425	Dixon.g@rsvdpa.org
Athletic Secretary	724-459-5500 Ext. 1105		Watt.j@rsvdpa.org
Athletic Trainer		724-459-5500	Hunt.a@rsvdpa.org
Assistant. Athletic Trainer			Wilson.m@rsvdpa.org
HS Principal	Ext. 2130	724-343-8409	Kulik.j@rsvdpa.org
MS Principal	Ext. 2140		Westendorf.e@rsvdpa.org
Nurse	Ext. 2126		Muir.c@rsvdpa.org
Superintendent's Office	Ext. 1107		Martell.p@rsvdpa.org
Business Manager	Ext. 1100		Santoro.j@rsvdpa.org
Maintenance-During School Hours	Ext. 1113		Hughes.j@rsvdpa.org
Police Department	911		
Fire Department	911		

CHAIN OF COMMAND

With the team physician in attendance:



Without the team physician in attendance:



CALLING 911

1. State your name and where you are calling from
2. State the number of victims and their conditions
3. Provide information on how long it has been since the incidence occurred
4. Provide information on the care that is being given at the present time
5. Be prepared to relay information to any first responders
6. Be prepared to give directions to the site of the incidence (including which entrance to enter)
7. **DO NOT HANG UP ONCE YOU HAVE CALLED 911; THE DISPATCHER WILL ASK YOU TO STAY ON THE LINE UNTIL HELP ARRIVES**

CROSS COUNTRY COURSE

Cross Country Course Location Information

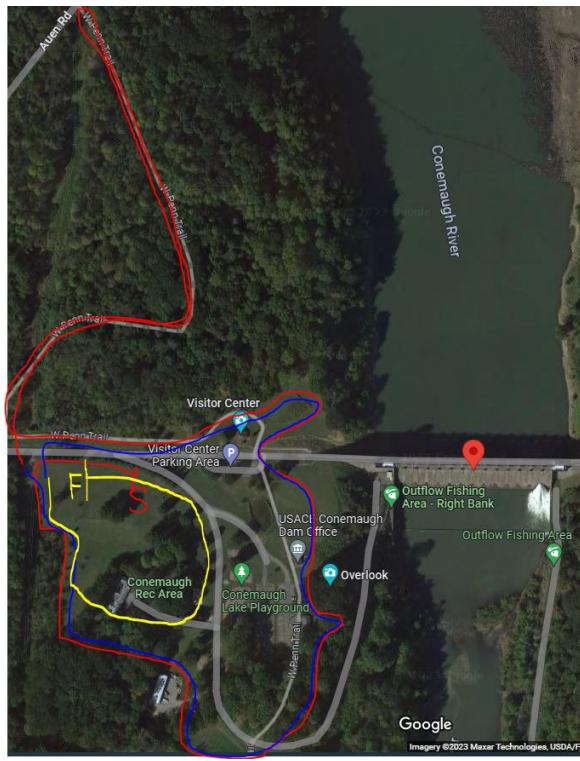
The Cross Country course is located at the park at Conemaugh River Lake. The course will loop around the park and use some parts of the West Penn Trail.

Emergency Vehicle Entrance:

Emergency vehicles will be directed upon entering the park.

Closest AED:

With the attending Athletic Trainer. (portable)



Cross Country Course Medical Emergency

The coach should:

- ❖ Remain calm
- ❖ Assess the situation, including ABC's (airway, breathing, circulation)
- ❖ Determine where the injured athlete is located
- ❖ Contact the athletic trainer immediately. If no athletic trainer is present, call 911.

- ❖ Do not move the injured or ill athlete unless all life threatening conditions have been ruled out or the athlete is in danger.
- ❖ Meet or designate someone to meet with emergency medical professionals
- ❖ Contact the athlete's parent/guardian
- ❖ Contact the athletic director
- ❖ If the athlete is transported to the hospital and a parent isn't present, travel with or designate someone to travel with the athlete. However, do not leave your team unsupervised.
- ❖ Follow up with all involved parties the next day
- ❖ Provide the athletic training room with documentation detailing the event and how it was handled

The athletic director/event manager and athletic trainer should:

- ❖ Remain calm
- ❖ Assess the situation
- ❖ Review the information the coach has given you
- ❖ Move all athletes, spectators, and unnecessary personnel away from the injured athlete
- ❖ Contact 911 if necessary
- ❖ Make an announcement if necessary
- ❖ Assist medical personnel in gaining access to the site
- ❖ If the injured athlete is not from your school contact the other school/coach to make them aware of the situation
- ❖ Follow up with all involved parties the next day
- ❖ Document the event and procedure that was followed

Cross Country Course Severe Weather Emergency

Severe Weather - ALL ATHLETES MUST TAKE SHELTER!!!

- Contests will be delayed 30 minutes each time lightning is seen
- Please follow school protocol for releasing athletes

Tornado Watch

- Take shelter immediately or find lowest points as shelter.
- The coach should:
 - Monitor weather reports
 - Prepare for a tornado warning
 - Contact the athletic director/medical staff
 - Follow school protocol for releasing athletes

Tornado Warning

- Take shelter immediately or find lowest points as shelter.
- The coach should:
 - Remain calm

- Have a list of all athletes and coaches present that day and account for each one once in shelter
- Have your athletes remain calm and quiet so they can await further instruction
- Make sure the athletic director is aware of the situation
- Follow school protocol for releasing athletes
- The athletic director/event manager should:
 - Talk with officials and coaches
 - Communicate with the medical staff
 - Make sure shelter areas are unlocked and accessible
- If evacuation of the course has been determined necessary:
 - Make an announcement (see below)
 - Assist with evacuation of the course; make certain no one remains

FOOTBALL STADIUM/TRACK AND FIELD

Stadium Location Information

The stadium is located at 102 School Ln, Blairsville, PA 15717.

Emergency Vehicle Entrance:

All emergency vehicles should enter the vehicle gate at the ticket booths. In the event of needing other access, there is a secondary vehicle gate behind the scoreboard.

Closest AED: Permanently mounted in the Athletic Fieldhouse. Athletic Trainer will have on site (portable) or in ambulance unit on duty for the game.

Stadium Medical Emergency

The coach should:

- ❖ Remain calm
- ❖ Assess the situation, including ABC's (airway, breathing, circulation)
- ❖ Determine where the injured athlete is located
- ❖ Contact the athletic trainer immediately. If no athletic trainer is present, call 911.
- ❖ Do not move the injured or ill athlete unless all life threatening conditions have been ruled out or the athlete is in danger.
- ❖ Meet or designate someone to meet with emergency medical professionals
- ❖ Contact the athlete's parent/guardian
- ❖ Contact the athletic director
- ❖ If the athlete is transported to the hospital and a parent isn't present, travel with or designate someone to travel with the athlete. However, do not leave your team unsupervised.
- ❖ Follow up with all involved parties the next day
- ❖ Provide the athletic training room with documentation detailing the event and how it was handled

The athletic director/event manager and athletic trainer should:

- ❖ Remain calm
- ❖ Assess the situation
- ❖ Review the information the coach has given you
- ❖ Move all athletes, spectators, and unnecessary personnel away from the injured athlete
- ❖ Contact 911 if necessary
- ❖ Assist medical personnel in gaining access to the site
- ❖ Update teams of athletes condition
- ❖ If the injured athlete is not from your school contact the other school to make them aware of the situation
- ❖ Follow up with all involved parties the next day
- ❖ Document the event and procedure that was followed

Stadium Severe Weather Emergency

Severe Weather - ALL ATHLETES MUST TAKE SHELTER!!!

- Contests will be delayed 30 minutes each time lightning is seen
- During game play, decision made by officials and game manager using available means.
- Announcement made via PA to evacuate the stadium/field. Teams report to locker rooms, cheerleaders and band members to their buses and fans leave stadium and report to their cars. Once all clear is given, re-enter the stadium.

Tornado Watch

- Take shelter immediately.
- The coach should:
 - o Monitor weather reports
 - o Prepare for a tornado warning
 - o Contact the athletic director/medical staff
 - o Follow school protocol for releasing athletes

Tornado Warning

- Take shelter immediately. Evacuate stadium.
- The coach should:
 - o Remain calm
 - o Have a list of all athletes and coaches present that day and account for each one once in shelter
 - o Have your athletes remain calm and quiet so they can await further instruction
 - o Have athletes sit on the floor facing the wall, legs crossed, head down, and hands clasped overhead
 - o Make sure the athletic director is aware of the situation
 - o Follow school protocol for releasing athletes
- The athletic director/event manager should:
 - o Talk with officials and coaches
 - o Communicate with the medical staff
 - o Make sure shelter areas are unlocked and accessible
- If evacuation of the field has been determined necessary:
 - o Assist with evacuation of the stadium; make certain no one remains

MIDDLE/HIGH SCHOOL GYMNASIUMS

Gymnasium Location Information

The gymnasium is located by Middle School entrance which is at the far end of the main building. HS gym is up the stairs to the right and MS gym is straight ahead through the entrance doors.

Emergency Vehicle Entrance:

Emergency vehicles will be taken to the doors closest to Middle School entrance.

Closest AED:

On the wall outside the gymnasium by Auditorium or portable with Athletic Trainer



Gymnasium Medical Emergency

The coach should:

- ❖ Remain calm
- ❖ Assess the situation, including ABC's (airway, breathing, circulation)
- ❖ Contact the athletic trainer immediately. If no athletic trainer is present, call 911.
- ❖ Do not move the injured or ill athlete unless all life threatening conditions have been ruled out or the athlete is in danger.
- ❖ Meet or designate someone to meet with emergency medical professionals
- ❖ Contact the athlete's parent/guardian
- ❖ Contact the athletic director
- ❖ If the athlete is transported to the hospital and a parent isn't present, travel with or designate someone to travel with the athlete. However, do not leave your team unsupervised.
- ❖ Follow up with all involved parties the next day
- ❖ Provide the athletic training room with documentation detailing the event and how it was handled

The athletic director/event manager and athletic trainer should:

- ❖ Remain calm
- ❖ Assess the situation
- ❖ Review the information the coach has given you
- ❖ Move all athletes, spectators, and unnecessary personnel away from the injured athlete
- ❖ Contact 911 if necessary
- ❖ Assist medical personnel in gaining access to the site
- ❖ Update teams of athletes condition
- ❖ If the injured athlete is not from your school contact the other school to make them aware of the situation
- ❖ Follow up with all involved parties the next day
- ❖ Document the event and procedure that was followed

VARSIITY SOFTBALL FIELD

Softball Field Location Information

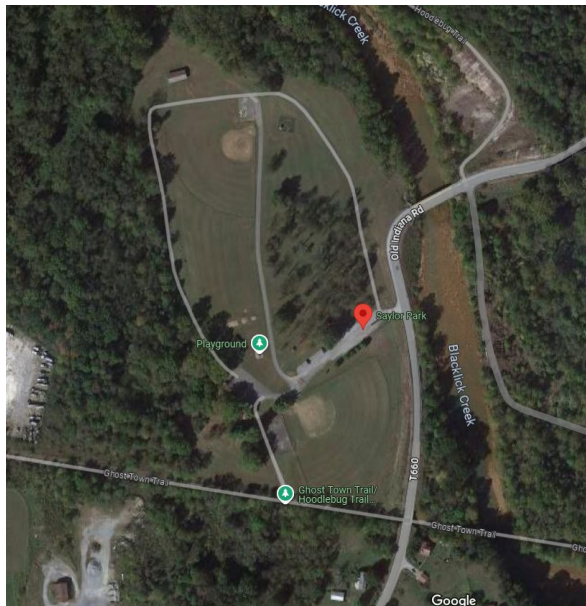
The softball field is located at Saylor Park 1284 Old Indiana Rd. Black Lick, PA 15716.

Emergency Vehicle Entrance:

Emergency vehicles should follow the entrance directions listed above and park directly beside the softball field.

Closest AED:

Athletic Trainer will have portable unit.



Softball Field Medical Emergency

The coach should:

- ❖ Remain calm
- ❖ Assess the situation, including ABC's (airway, breathing, circulation)
- ❖ Determine where the injured athlete is located
- ❖ Contact the athletic trainer immediately. If no athletic trainer is present, call 911.
- ❖ Do not move the injured or ill athlete unless all life threatening conditions have been ruled out or the athlete is in danger.
- ❖ Meet or designate someone to meet with emergency medical professionals
- ❖ Contact the athlete's parent/guardian
- ❖ Contact the athletic director
- ❖ Fill out a medical injury form located in your teams medical kit

- ❖ If the athlete is transported to the hospital and a parent isn't present, travel with or designate someone to travel with the athlete. However, do not leave your team unsupervised.
- ❖ Follow up with all involved parties the next day
- ❖ Provide the athletic training room with documentation detailing the event and how it was handled

The athletic director/event manager and athletic trainer should:

- ❖ Remain calm
- ❖ Assess the situation
- ❖ Review the information the coach has given you
- ❖ Move all athletes, spectators, and unnecessary personnel away from the injured athlete
- ❖ Contact 911 if necessary
- ❖ Assist medical personnel in gaining access to the site
- ❖ Update teams of athletes condition
- ❖ If the injured athlete is not from your school contact the other school to make them aware of the situation
- ❖ Follow up with all involved parties the next day
- ❖ Document the event and procedure that was followed

Softball Field Severe Weather Emergency

Severe Weather - ALL ATHLETES MUST TAKE SHELTER!!!

- Contests will be delayed 30 minutes each time lightning is seen
- Please follow school protocol for releasing athletes

Tornado Watch

- Take shelter immediately. The shelter area for the softball field is the middle school.
- The coach should:
 - Monitor weather reports
 - Prepare for a tornado warning
 - Contact the athletic director/medical staff
 - Follow school protocol for releasing athletes

Tornado Warning

- Take shelter immediately. The shelter area for the softball field is the middle school.
- The coach should:
 - Remain calm
 - Have a list of all athletes and coaches present that day and account for each one once in shelter
 - Have your athletes remain calm and quiet so they can await further instruction

- Have athletes sit on the floor facing the wall, legs crossed, head down, and hands clasped overhead
- Avoid spaces that are opposite doorways, areas with swinging doors, and rooms with excessive windows/glass
- Make sure the athletic director is aware of the situation
- Follow school protocol for releasing athletes
- The athletic director/event manager should:
 - Talk with officials and coaches
 - Communicate with the medical staff
 - Make sure shelter areas are unlocked and accessible
- If evacuation of the field has been determined necessary:
 - Assist with evacuation of the field; make certain no one remains

VARSITY BASEBALL FIELD

Baseball Field Location Information

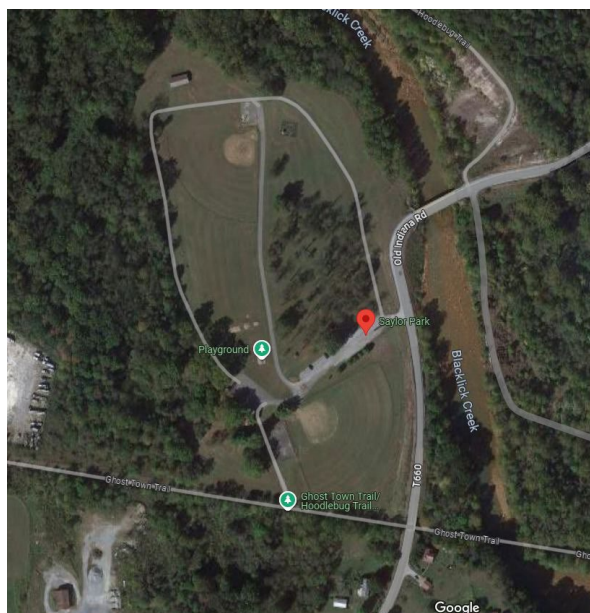
The baseball field is located in Saylor Park 1284 Old Indiana Rd. Black Lick, PA 15716.

Emergency Vehicle Entrance:

Emergency Vehicles should enter the baseball field by entering Saylor Park and following the road to the parking area nearest the backstop. Team personnel will direct from there.

Closest AED:

With the Athletic Trainer or Head Coach (portable)



Baseball Field Medical Emergency

The coach should:

- ❖ Remain calm
- ❖ Assess the situation, including ABC's (airway, breathing, circulation)
- ❖ Determine where the injured athlete is located
- ❖ Contact the athletic trainer immediately. If no athletic trainer is present, call 911.
- ❖ Do not move the injured or ill athlete unless all life threatening conditions have been ruled out or the athlete is in danger.
- ❖ Meet or designate someone to meet with emergency medical professionals
- ❖ Contact the athlete's parent/guardian
- ❖ Contact the athletic director

- ❖ If the athlete is transported to the hospital and a parent isn't present, travel with or designate someone to travel with the athlete. However, do not leave your team unsupervised.
- ❖ Follow up with all involved parties the next day
- ❖ Provide the athletic training room with documentation detailing the event and how it was handled

The athletic director/event manager and athletic trainer should:

- ❖ Remain calm
- ❖ Assess the situation
- ❖ Review the information the coach has given you
- ❖ Move all athletes, spectators, and unnecessary personnel away from the injured athlete
- ❖ Contact 911 if necessary
- ❖ Assist medical personnel in gaining access to the site
- ❖ Update teams of athletes condition
- ❖ If the injured athlete is not from your school contact the other school to make them aware of the situation
- ❖ Follow up with all involved parties the next day
- ❖ Document the event and procedure that was followed

Baseball Field Severe Weather Emergency

Severe Weather - ALL ATHLETES MUST TAKE SHELTER!!!

- Contests will be delayed 30 minutes each time lightning is seen
- Please follow school protocol for releasing athletes

Tornado Watch

- Take shelter immediately. The shelter area for the baseball field is the dugout or team bus for visitors.
- The coach should:
 - Monitor weather reports
 - Prepare for a tornado warning
 - Contact the athletic director/medical staff
 - Follow school protocol for releasing athletes

Tornado Warning

- Take shelter immediately. The shelter area for the baseball field is the transportation garage.
- The coach should:
 - Remain calm
 - Have a list of all athletes and coaches present that day and account for each one once in shelter
 - Have your athletes remain calm and quiet so they can await further instruction
 - Make sure the athletic director is aware of the situation
 - Follow school protocol for releasing athletes

- The athletic director/event manager should:
 - o Talk with officials and coaches
 - o Communicate with the medical staff
 - o Make sure shelter areas are unlocked and accessible
- If evacuation of the field has been determined necessary:
 - o Assist with evacuation of the field; make certain no one remains

HIGH SCHOOL WRESTLING ROOM

Wrestling Room Location Information

The wrestling room is located in the Thomas L Shoemaker Fieldhouse.

Emergency Vehicle Entrance:

Emergency vehicles will be taken to the doors at the east end of the fieldhouse building and directed to the wrestling room.

Closest AED:

The closest AED is located on the wall outside the Athletic Trainer's room.

Wrestling Room Medical Emergency

The coach should:

- ❖ Remain calm
- ❖ Assess the situation, including ABC's (airway, breathing, circulation)
- ❖ Contact the athletic trainer immediately. If no athletic trainer is present, call 911.
- ❖ Do not move the injured or ill athlete unless all life-threatening conditions have been ruled out or the athlete is in danger.
- ❖ Meet or designate someone to meet with emergency medical professionals
- ❖ Contact the athlete's parent/guardian
- ❖ Contact the athletic director
- ❖ If the athlete is transported to the hospital and a parent isn't present, travel with or designate someone to travel with the athlete. However, do not leave your team unsupervised.
- ❖ Follow up with all involved parties the next day
- ❖ Provide the athletic training room with documentation detailing the event and how it was handled

The athletic director/event manager and athletic trainer should:

- ❖ Review the information the coach has given you
- ❖ Update teams of athletes condition
- ❖ If the injured athlete is not from your school contact the other school to make them aware of the situation
- ❖ Follow up with all involved parties the next day
- ❖ Document the event and procedure that was followed

APPENDIX

GENERAL FIRST AID INFORMATION

This is basic first aid information that applies to most situations you will come across. However, on occasions, there will be special circumstances. Please follow protocol to the best of your ability when handling circumstances that differ from the information in this handbook.

Minor Cuts, Scrapes, Turf Burn

- 1) All materials needed to clean and cover a minor cut, scrape, or turf burn are located in your medical kit
- 2) Apply gloves
- 3) Clean out the wound by liberally applying water, a saline solution, or hydrogen peroxide
- 4) Use dry gauze, tissue, or paper towel to dab the damaged area dry
- 5) Apply antibiotic ointment to the area
- 6) Apply gauze, a non-adhesive dressing, or a bandage over the area

Blood

When controlling bleeding:

- 1) Give the athlete a piece of gauze to hold on the wound themselves
- 2) Apply gloves
- 3) Apply gauze, tissue, paper towel, or in worse case scenarios, clothing over the wound and apply direct pressure
 - a. Once you have placed something over the wound to control the bleeding don't remove it. You may tear off clotting material the body was producing causing the wound to bleed all over again. If the applied dressings become saturated in blood, add more dressings over what exists, do not remove what is over the wound. Only when you are sure the blood has stopped should you slowly remove the dressing
- 4) In cases where direct pressure is not helping to control the bleeding, raise the wounded area above the level of the heart
- 5) If this still does not work, apply pressure to main arteries while maintaining direct pressure over the wound
 - a. For the arm, wrist and hand: apply pressure to the inside upper arm just below the arm pit
 - b. For the leg, knee, ankle, and foot: apply pressure in the inner leg, near the groin

Nose Bleeds

- 1) Give the athlete a piece of gauze to hold on the nosebleed
- 2) Apply gloves
- 3) Have the athlete pinch down on the nose

- 4) Keep the head in a neutral position
- 5) If the nosebleed has continued longer than 2 minutes, apply gauze under the top lip and press it up against the gums
- 6) If the nosebleed has continued longer than 4 minutes, apply ice to the back of the neck and over the bridge of the nose
- 7) Once bleeding slows, a nose plug can be placed in the nostril

***Most nose bleeds should stop within a few minutes. If the athlete has been bleeding for 15-20 minutes without the blood slowing, the athlete should be taken to the hospital for evaluation.

Burns

The most common burns you will encounter with athletes are sun burns. Athletes of fair complexion should apply sunscreen during sun exposure. In the case that they do become sun burnt, a soothing lotion should be applied, and the burnt area should be removed from the sun. If blisters form, the athlete should be referred to a doctor so medicated ointment can be prescribed.

To manage burns that are not sun related:

- 1) Flush the area with cool water for approximately 3-5 minutes
- 2) If the area just becomes red, apply a lotion and keep an eye on the burn. If blistering occurs, send the athlete to the doctor immediately
- 3) If the area becomes, red, black, or skin appears to be charred or missing, this is a medical emergency and 911 should be called immediately
- 4) For chemical burns or something splashed into the eyes, flush the area for 15 minutes. 911 should be called and all clothing with the chemical on it should be immediately removed

Shock

If an athlete has become severely injured, is bleeding profusely, or just becomes scared of the situation that they are in, they may go into shock. In most cases where the athlete would go into shock, you will already have 911 called. The following are signs of shock and how you can help:

Signs of shock:

- Restlessness
- Altered consciousness
- Pale, cool, and moist skin
- Rapid breathing and pulse

How to help:

- Keep the athlete warm
- If pale, raise their legs about six inches. If their face is red, raise their head about six inches
- Do not raise or move a dislocated or fractured body part

Fractures and Dislocations

Do not move the athlete and call 911 immediately. Keep the athlete as still as possible and stabilize the area. Monitor the athlete for shock. Check for bleeding. If bleeding is occurring, follow the protocol outlined above without moving the athlete.

- The Vacuum Splint bag (large red 'Cramer' bag)
- Vacuum Splint bag is located above the treatment table in the ATR.

MANAGING SPECIFIC MEDICAL EMERGENCIES

C-Spine Injury

Signs and Symptoms of a C-Spine Injury:

- Witnessing mechanism of injury
- Witnessing athlete who remains down or motionless after play
- Abnormal neurological findings
- Loss of motion in extremities
- Cervical spine pain with or without palpation
- Cervical spine deformity

After determining that there is a C-Spine injury, EMS should be activated immediately!

Upon waiting for EMS the C-Spine should be stabilized until they arrive and the athlete is spine boarded. Athlete should not be moved unless an immediate danger to the athlete is present.

Anaphylaxis

Signs and Symptoms of Anaphylaxis or Allergic Reaction

- Trouble breathing
- Hives or swelling
- Tightness of the throat
- Hoarse voice
- Nausea
- Vomiting
- Abdominal pain
- Diarrhea
- Dizziness
- Fainting
- Low blood pressure
- Rapid heartbeat

If the athlete is not responding to the EpiPen dosage, EMS should be activated immediately.

Proper use of an EpiPen:

- Form a fist around the auto-injector with the black tip pointing down. Pull off the safety cap.
- Place the black tip against the fleshy portion of your outer thigh. You may give the injection directly through your clothing. Do not put your thumb over the end of the unit.
- With a quick motion, push the auto-injector firmly against your thigh. This will release the spring-loaded needle that injects the dose of EpiPen. Hold the auto-injector in place for a few seconds after activation.
- Remove the auto-injector from your thigh. Carefully re-insert the used device needle-first into the carrying tube. Re-cap the tube and take it with you to the emergency room so that anyone who treats you will know how much EpiPen you have received.

If the athlete finds no relief with the usage of their EpiPen or becomes unconscious,

activate EMS immediately!

Asthma Emergencies

Signs and Symptoms of an Asthma Emergency:

- Shortness of breath (>30 respirations per minute)
- Mental status change-anxious, confused, combative, or drowsy
- Inability to speak in sentences
- Sweaty and unable to lie down

If the athlete is not responding to relief from their MDI (Metered Dose Inhaler) or is unable to properly use their MDI, EMS should be activated immediately.

Proper use of the MDI:

- Remove the cap and hold the inhaler upright
- Shake the inhaler
- Tilt the athletes head back slightly and have the athlete breath out
- Open mouth with inhaler 1-2 inches away (or mouth to spacer piece if available)
- Press down on the inhaler to release the medication as the athlete breaths in slowly
- Have the athlete breath in slowly for 5 seconds
- Allow the athlete to hold their breath for 10 seconds to allow the medication to reach deeply into their lungs
- Repeat puffs as prescribed-wait one minute and take another puff

If the athlete finds no relief with the usage of their MDI or becomes unconscious, activate EMS immediately!

Diabetic Emergencies

A diabetic emergency is related to an imbalance in the athlete's blood glucose level.

Signs and Symptoms of a Diabetic Emergency:

- Change in level of consciousness (drowsy, dizzy, or confused)
- Irregular breathing patterns
- A rapid or weak pulse
- Sweet smelling breath
- General malaise
- Irregular speech problems

If this occurs and the athlete is conscious, administer oral glucose. This can be in the form of fruit juice, candy, non-diet soft drink, table sugar, or glucose gel (located in your med kit). This should return the athletes blood-glucose levels back to normal.

If the athlete becomes unconscious, activate EMS immediately!

Seizure Emergencies

A seizure represents a loss of body control that occurs when brain functions are disrupted. This can occur as a result of an underlying condition, or the athlete may be prone to epileptic seizures.

If an athlete is seizing:

- DO NOT place anything in their mouth
- Protect the athlete by placing towels, or other soft objects around their head
- Place the athlete on their side (recovery position) when the seizure is over to drain any fluid from the mouth

When the seizure is over:

- Monitor the athletes airway, breathing, and circulation
- Check for other injuries
- Reassure and calm the athlete until they are fully oriented

*** If the athlete is prone to having seizures, it is not necessary to contact EMS unless, it lasts more than 5 minutes or they don't regain consciousness. However, their parents or guardian should be contacted.

If an athlete suffers from a seizure for the first time, activate EMS immediately.

Exertional Heat Illness Emergencies

There have been a multitude of documented cases related to heat illnesses that have led to death. There are many of internal and external risk factors that may lead to exertional heat illness that will be outlined below. The key to these types of emergencies is early recognition.

Intrinsic Risk Factors Associated with Exertional Heat Illness:

- History of exertional heat illnesses
- Inadequate heat acclimatization
- Lower level of physical fitness and/or higher percent body fat
- Dehydration or over hydration
- Presence of fever and/or gastrointestinal illness
- Usage of certain medications and/or dietary supplements
- Reluctance to report problem, issue, illness, etc.

Extrinsic Risk Factors Associated with Exertional Heat Illness:

- Intense or prolonged exercise with minimal breaks (Inappropriate work/rest ratios)
- High temperature/humidity/sun exposure, as well as exposure to heat and humidity the preceding days
- No access to shade during rest times
- Minimal access to fluids before and during practice and rest times
- Delay in recognition of early warning signs

Signs and Symptoms Associated with Exertional Heat Illness:

- Dry mouth
- Thirst
- Irritability
- Weakness
- Dizziness
- Cramps
- Chills
- Nausea/Vomiting
- Decreased Performance

If this occurs and the athlete is conscious; get the athlete to a cool environment and administer water and ice packs/cold towels to neck, arm pits and groin. If the athletes' condition deteriorates, they may need to be seen by a physician for IV fluids.

If the athlete becomes unconscious, activate EMS immediately!

Rhabdomyolysis

Rhabdomyolysis is a serious metabolic syndrome that occurs due to direct or indirect muscular injuries. During these injuries muscle fibers are affected causing a release of deteriorating fibers to be released into the bloodstream which can lead to kidney damage/failure. This stress on the kidneys results in ineffective waste removal and concentrated urine; in rare cases rhabdomyolysis can lead to death.

Causes of Rhabdomyolysis:

- Extreme muscle training, especially in untrained athlete. Beware of student athletes who haven't been to workouts and train excessively on first day back.
- Use of antipsychotic and blood pressure medications combined with muscle training.
- Use of alcohol or illicit drug such as heroin, cocaine or amphetamines combined with muscle training.
- Crush injuries related to automobile accidents, extreme falls, or building collapses.

Other Risk Factors Associated with Rhabdomyolysis:

- Very high body temperature (hyperthermia) or heat stroke
- Seizure Disorders
- Metabolic Disorders such as ketoacidosis
- Diseases of the muscles such as muscular dystrophy
- Viral and Bacterial Infections
- Previous history of rhabdomyolysis increases risk of subsequent attacks

Signs and Symptoms of Rhabdomyolysis:

- Extreme muscle pain, especially in the shoulders, legs, or low back
- Abnormal muscle weakness; inability to move arms or legs
- Severe abdominal pain
- Nausea or vomiting
- Rapid heart rate
- Dehydration, confusion, fever, or lack of consciousness
- Dark red or brown urine; reduced or no urine output

If this occurs and the athlete is conscious; get the athlete to a cool environment and administer water and advise gentle stretching of areas that have extreme pain. If the athlete reports multiple sign and symptoms, especially change in urine color and output athlete may need to be referred to the ER for IV fluids.

If the athlete becomes unconscious, activate EMS immediately!

Internal Injuries

Internal injuries are far less common but potentially much more dangerous than some musculoskeletal injuries. Internal abdominal injuries can occur from blunt trauma, or when body hits or collides with a large object. These types of injuries are most common in contact sports like football, ice hockey, soccer, and lacrosse. Because these injuries can result in rapid blood loss, it's important to recognize them as soon as possible. If this type of injury is suspected the student athlete should be transported to an emergency care facility for further evaluation.

Signs and Symptoms of Internal Injuries:

- Abdominal pain

- Tenderness over the injured area
- Rigid abdomen
- Left arm and shoulder pain (spleen)*
- Right-sided abdominal pain and right shoulder pain (liver)*
- Blood in the urine (kidney)*
- Cold, sweaty skin (early signs of shock)
- Bluish discoloration of the belly
- Nausea and vomiting
- Rapid pulse
- Low blood pressure
- Loss of consciousness

***Referred Pain Pattern**

If any of these signs or symptoms occur and the athlete is conscious; get the athlete into a cool quiet location for further assessment of vital signs. If the athlete reports multiple signs and symptoms, especially any of the referred pain patterns refer to the ER immediately. If the athlete becomes unconscious, activate EMS immediately!

Cardiovascular Emergencies

Although cardiac emergencies are not always a primary concern with athletes, they can be a concern with coaches, officials, and spectators. For this reason, it is important to know general signs and symptoms of a cardiovascular emergency.

Types of Cardiac Emergencies:

- Angina-pain due to the restriction of blood flow to the heart
 - Signs and symptoms:
 - Chest pain
 - Nausea
 - Shortness of breath
 - Pain in the neck, shoulder, and arms
- Heart Attack (Myocardial Infarction)-blockage of an artery in the heart
 - Signs and symptoms:
 - Chest pain and tightness
 - Pain radiating down the left shoulder/arm
 - Feeling of indigestion
 - Shortness of breath
 - Dizziness/fainting
 - Nausea
 - Sweating
 - Paleness, anxiety, fear, and sometimes denial
- Stroke-blockage of an artery in the brain
 - Signs and symptoms:
 - Numbness or weakness of the face, arm, or leg on one side of the body
 - Loss of vision or blurred vision
 - Sudden and severe headaches
 - Dizziness

- Difficulty speaking or understanding speech

***All of these are emergencies and EMS should be activated immediately upon identifying one of these conditions. ***

Sudden Cardiac Arrest (SCA) and House Bill 1610

- 300,000 cases of SCA outside of hospitals
- 2,000 patients under the age of 25 die each year

What is it?

- The heart stops beating, suddenly and unexpectedly. Blood stops flowing to the brain and other vital organs.
- It is NOT a heart attack, although sometimes a heart attack can cause SCA.
- It is a malfunction in the heart's electrical system, causing the heart to suddenly stop beating.
- If not treated within minutes, SCA results in death. Heart rhythm can only be restored through use of the AED.

What are the warning signs and symptoms?

- Dizziness
- Lightheadedness
- Shortness of breath
- Difficulty breathing
- Heart palpitations
- Fainting
- Fatigue
- Weakness
- Nausea and vomiting
- Chest pains

***Symptoms are often confusing and unclear in athletes because they can also be signs of physical exhaustion.

***SYMPTOMS ARE THE BODY'S WAY OF INDICATING THAT SOMETHING IS WRONG AND SHOULD NOT BE IGNORED. SCA can be prevented if the cause can be quickly identified and treated.

What is the best way to treat SCA?

- Early recognition
- Early 911
- Early CPR
- Early defibrillation
- Early advanced care

***You only have minutes to save a life.

What does Bill 1610 do?

- helps protect student athletes with warning signs
- any student athlete that has signs and symptoms should be removed from competition immediately
- Before returning to play, an athlete must be evaluated by a licensed physician, certified nurse practitioner cardiologist. Clearance to return to play must be in writing.

Head Related Injuries

Concussions

A concussion can occur when an individual receives a traumatic force to the head or the upper body thus causing the brain to move inside of the skull. A concussion causes a change in the mental status of an individual. It can also affect their physical and emotional functioning. Symptoms vary from one person to another and can last for minutes, days, and sometimes even weeks after a concussion. A concussion can occur during practice or competition in ANY sport and can also occur without having a loss of consciousness.

Prevention of Head Injuries

- Do not initiate contact with your head or helmet. You can still get a concussion if you're wearing a helmet.
- Avoid intentionally striking an opponent in the head
- Follow the Athletic Department safety manual for your respective sport
- Practice good sportsmanship at all times
- Practice and perfect the skills of your sport!

Signs and Symptoms of Concussions:

Cognitive Symptoms	Physical Symptoms	Emotional Symptoms
Poor attention and concentration	Headaches	Nervousness/Anxiety
Problems remembering	Vacant Stare	Excessive sadness
Difficulty following conversation	Appears dazed or stunned	Excessive laughter
Answers questions slowly	Dizziness	Irritability
Asks same question repeatedly	Fuzzy/Blurry vision	Personality Changes
Mentally foggy	Clumsiness/Balance problems	Decrease in activity
Slowed reaction time	Sleeps more or less than usual	Loss of appetite
Appears fatigued, tired or sleepy	Nausea/Vomiting	Hypersensitivity to light or sound

What to do if a Concussion is Suspected

- Don't hide it! Please tell your athletic trainer or coach. Never ignore a blow to the head. Also tell your athletic trainer or coach if you suspect a teammate might have a concussion!
- Get checked out! Your athletic trainer is a trained medical professional that can evaluate you for a suspected concussion. They will refer you to other medical professionals who can do in depth evaluations.
- Take time to recover! When you are concussed, your brain needs time to heal. If you return to play before your brain is fully healed, you can suffer from permanent brain damage or death.

Return to Play Criteria

River Valley School District follows return to play guidelines outlined below:

Those guidelines include:

- No physical exertion at rest for three days. Must be asymptomatic before moving to Phase One.
- Phase One: Light exertion: aerobic exercise- walking, stationary biking
- Phase Two: Moderate exertion: sport specific training- running, skating

- Phase Three: Heavy exertion: Non-contact training drills
- Full contact practice AFTER MEDICAL CLEARANCE
- GAME PLAY
- If at any time during this process symptoms of a concussion return, the student athlete will return to Phase One.

Mental Health

IF a person is a threat to themselves or others, call 911 Immediately.

Indiana County Guidance Center: (888) 686-1991

Crisis Hotline: 1-800-273-8255

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS THAT REQUIRE IMMEDIATE ATTENTION:

- **Thoughts or plans of killing or hurting self or others**
- **Hearing voices or seeing things that no one else can see or hear**
- **Unexplained changes in thinking, speech or writing**
- **Being overly suspicious or fearful**
- **Serious drop in school or work performance**
- **Sudden personality changes that are bizarre or out of character**

Signs and symptoms (a combination of symptoms lasting longer than a week might indicate a mental health condition):

- Problems with concentration, memory or ability to think clearly
- Changes in eating (overeating or loss of appetite)
- Unable to complete tasks
- Feeling overly worried
- Feeling sad, empty, hopeless or worthless
- Sensitivity to sound, sight, smell and touch
- Irritability and restlessness
- Loss of interest in activities you previously enjoyed
- Withdrawn or disconnected from others
- Feeling like your brain is playing tricks on you (hearing knocking, scratching, name being called)
- Changes in energy level and sleep patterns (sleeping during the day and awake at night)

How to respond:

IF you notice **EMOTIONAL BEHAVIOR**: approach the individual and encourage a mental wellness evaluation. Discuss with athlete's parents, Athletic Trainer, Athletic director. AT and/or AD will discuss with school guidance counselor, and school nurse.

IF you notice **BIZARRE or IRRATIONAL BEHAVIOR**: Discuss with the individual and with parents the concern and need for a mental wellness evaluation. Discuss with athlete's parents, Athletic Trainer, and Athletic Director. AT and/or AD will discuss with school guidance counselor, and school nurse

EMERGENCY SITUATION- NON-VIOLENT

- Offer a quiet and secure place to talk
 - Show your genuine concern.
 - Avoid judging the student-athlete; provide positive support.
 - Provide support and a positive tone. Do not try to solve his or her problem; it is not within your scope as an AT.
 - Help the student-athlete understand that he or she is not alone - others have been through this too.
 - Listen to the student-athlete. Allow him/her to express his/her thoughts. Provide him/her the opportunity to be heard. It's OK to have a moment of silence between you and the student athlete.
 - Ask questions that encourage conversation. Asking these important questions will NOT plant the idea in his/her head:
 - Can you tell me what is troubling you?
 - Are you thinking of hurting yourself?
 - Is someone hurting you?
 - Have you thought about suicide?
- *(see Table A)
- If the student-athlete is expressing suicidal ideation:
 - Determine if he or she has formulated a plan.
 - Emphasize ensuring the athlete's safety, while being aware of your own.
 - Do NOT leave the person alone.
 - Alert designated school officials and/or colleagues available at that time of day (i.e. school counselor/nurse, school administrator, etc.). Have the school call the student-athlete's parents or emergency contact.
 - You may offer a positive reinforcement, such as: "It took courage for you to disclose this information to me. And, by telling me, it says you want to do something about what is going on. Let's get you in contact with someone who specializes in this type of situation, so you can get the care you need."
 - Document and communicate your concerns, and refer to the school counselor. School staff may be aware of past or current circumstances that you are not privy to, including abusive home environment, emerging psychological condition/mental illness, etc.

IF you notice **AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOR**: In an emergency, call 911. When dealing with someone who is physically threatening, your and others' safety comes first. Notify Athletic Trainer and Athletic Director, who will report to school guidance counselor and school nurse.

RECOGNITION

Any 'yes' answer should be considered an emergency:

- Am I concerned the student-athlete may harm himself/herself?
- Am I concerned the student-athlete may harm others?
- Am I concerned the student-athlete is being harmed by someone else?
- Did the student-athlete make verbal or physical threats?
- Is the student-athlete exhibiting unusual ideation or thought disturbance that may or may not be due to substance use?
- Does the student-athlete have access to a weapon?
- Is there potential for danger or harm in the future?

MANAGEMENT

If immediate risk to safety:

- Remain calm - maintain calm body language and tone of voice.
- Listen to the student-athlete. Allow him/her to express his/her thoughts. Provide him/her the opportunity to be heard. It's OK to have a moment of silence between you and the student athlete.
- Avoid judging the student-athlete; provide positive support.
- Keep yourself safe - do not attempt to intervene if there is eminent threat of harm or violence.
- Keep others safe - try to keep a safe distance between the student-athlete in distress and others in the area.
- Alert designated school officials and/or colleagues available at that time of day (i.e. school counselor/nurse, school administrator, etc.). Have the school contact the student-athlete's parents or emergency contact.
- If the student-athlete seems volatile or disruptive, get help from a co-worker or other adult. Do not leave the student-athlete alone, but do not put yourself in harm's way if he/she tries to leave.
- Follow campus and department protocols and policies.
- If you call 911, provide the following information:
 - Student-athlete's name and contact information.
 - Physical description of the student-athlete (i.e. height, weight, hair and eye color, clothing, etc.).
 - Description of the situation and assistance needed.
 - Exact location of the student-athlete.
 - If student-athlete leaves the area or refuses assistance, note direction in which he/she leaves.

River Valley School District

Guidelines & Procedures for Requests to Add New Athletic Teams or Club Sports

The River Valley School District is committed to providing diverse athletic opportunities that support student growth, wellness, and community engagement. To ensure all requests for new athletic teams, including club teams or club sports, are handled fairly, consistently, and transparently, the following procedures shall be followed:

1. Point of Contact

- All inquiries, proposals, or requests to establish a new athletic team must be directed first to the Athletic Director (AD).
- Community members, parents, and students should not bypass this process by going directly to the Superintendent, School Board, or coaches.

2. Request Submission Process

- **Initial Contact:** The requestor must submit a written proposal to the Athletic Director. The proposal should include:
 - Rationale for the team (student interest, participation numbers, community support).
 - Evidence of sustainability (anticipated costs, funding sources, facilities needs).
 - Alignment with PIAA or other governing body guidelines, if applicable.
- **Student Interest Verification:** The AD may require surveys, sign-up sheets, or other documentation to verify genuine student interest.
- **Resource Review:** The proposal must include preliminary consideration of costs, staffing, facilities, transportation, and equipment.

3. Role of the Athletic Director

- **Initial Review:** The AD will review all submitted materials, verify the accuracy of participation and facility information, and consult with appropriate district staff (finance, facilities, etc.) as needed.
- **Feasibility Study:** The AD will determine whether the proposal is viable, sustainable, and in alignment with district priorities and Title IX compliance.
- **Recommendation:** The AD will prepare a recommendation to the Superintendent based on findings.

4. Chain of Command & Communication Expectations

To maintain professionalism and respect for district processes:

- Parents/Community Members: Must direct all inquiries through the Athletic Director and avoid contacting the School Board or Superintendent until the AD review is completed.
- School Board Members: Should refer any inquiries they receive about adding new teams back to the Athletic Director for proper handling.
- Administrators/Staff: Must follow the same chain of command, ensuring the AD is the initial point of contact.
- Students: Should communicate interest directly to the AD through approved channels (e.g., interest meetings, surveys).

5. Superintendent & Administrative Review

- Upon receiving the AD's recommendation, the Superintendent and central office staff will evaluate:
 - Financial impact.
 - Alignment with district goals.
 - Legal or compliance considerations (including Title IX).
- The Superintendent will decide whether the request moves forward for Board consideration.

6. School Board Consideration

- The School Board will only consider proposals that have been fully reviewed and recommended through the chain of command.
- The Board may request additional information or ask the AD and Superintendent to provide a formal presentation before making a decision.

7. Decision-Making Factors

When reviewing proposals, the following factors will be weighed:

- Documented student interest and participation sustainability.
- Availability of qualified coaching staff.
- Facilities and equipment needs.
- Financial impact and funding sources.

- Impact on existing programs and compliance with Title IX.
- Alignment with district mission, vision, and athletic philosophy.

8. Approval, Denial, or Pilot Program

- Approval: If approved, the district will establish a timeline for launching the program.
- Denial: If denied, the AD will provide written reasoning to the requestor.
- Pilot Option: In some cases, the district may authorize a pilot club program before committing to varsity or sanctioned status.

9. Documentation & Transparency

- All proposals, recommendations, and Board decisions will be documented and filed by the Athletic Director.
- Requestors will receive timely communication on the status of their request at each stage.

10. Annual Review

- Approved new teams (especially club teams) will undergo an annual review by the Athletic Director to determine sustainability, participation levels, and continued alignment with district priorities.