River Mill Academy



RIVER MILL ACADEMY
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Coaches Handbook

2026-2027

River Mill Jaguar Athletics

Mission

To create mutual respect, trust and care for one another throughout the entire athletic department, including the directors, coaches, athletes, and their families. Emphasizing the importance of academics, teamwork, and sportsmanship for all student athletes.

Code of Ethics for Coaches/Assistant Coaches

All Coaches of River Mill Athletics will:

- Communicate, Communicate, Communicate....often and in a positive manner.
    - Strive for a good working relationship with the student athletes, their families, the coaching staff and with opposing schools.
- Be a good role model for your athletes, staff, students, and their families.
    - Never criticize an official, fan, coach, player, or school official in public.
- Remember that they are STUDENT athletes, and that academics are our first priority.
- No nicotine products (chew, cigarettes, vapes, etc.), alcohol, or profane language use while supervising an athletic team.
- Maintain complete control and supervision of team members at all practices, games, in the weight room, and related activities. No athletes should be unsupervised at any time.
- Respect the decision of officials and remain undemonstrative in accepting these decisions. In the event a head coach feels it necessary to challenge an official's rule interpretation, he/she will do so in a courteous manner.
- Make sure that you are implementing and following your team rules for all athletes.
- Achieve a thorough knowledge and understanding of the rules of the game.
- Be responsible for the administration, implementation and adherence to expectations and rules of River Mill Academy, the athletic conference and the NCHSAA.
- Never promise, state, or otherwise imply participation in out-of-season activities constitutes a team roster spot, playing time, or anything of the nature.

Requirements

1. Must have an account in DragonFly Max to complete all necessary documents and check the status of all players prior to workouts/practices/games regularly.
2. Preview the NCHSAA Eligibility Video found on the state website, watch yearly.
3. Varsity Head Coaches must complete the Rules Clinic online (NFHS) or attend the NC Coaches Clinic in July every year before their first contest.
4. All coaches must obtain the Red Cross First Aid/CPR/AED certification and renew every two years.
5. Complete the following required courses on the NFHS website (www.nfhslearn.com)
    a. Fundamentals of Coaching- $35.00- reimbursed, one time only class
    b. Concussion in Sports- must be taken annually
    c. Sudden Cardiac Arrest- must be taken annually
    d. Heat Illness- must be taken annually
    e. The Collapsed Student- must be taken annually
    f. After School Security- must be taken annually

6. Attend the Mandatory RMA Coaches Meeting and sign off on the Gfeller-Waller, Sportsmanship, and Handbook forms in DragonFly.
7. Abide by all RMA, Conference, and NCHSAA rules and regulations.
8. Follow the NCHSAA Dead Periods, Out of Season Protocols, and Summer Workout guidelines.

Expectations

1. Attend the Mandatory Parent/Coach/Athlete Meeting before your season begins.
2. Present Team Rules and Regulations to the AD 1 week prior to the Mandatory Meeting for approval.
3. Present Team Rules and Regulations to Parents and Athletes at the Mandatory Meeting.
4. Obtain parent and athlete phone numbers and email addresses at the meeting.
5. Communicate daily/weekly with your parents and/or athletes (Game Changer/DragonFly Max/Group Me/Etc.) about practice times/changes/important information/grades, etc.
6. When making a purchase for equipment, apparel, etc. The order will not be made until a Purchase Request has been received and all designs have been approved.
7. Set up a time with the AD to pick up equipment and uniforms at the beginning of your season.
8. Distribute uniforms to the team, and present to the AD a team roster with uniform numbers, sizes, top and bottom, etc. prior to your games starting. Please email this document.
9. HS Coaches are mandated to enter team rosters, schedules, results, and stats into MaxPreps.
10. Be on time for all games, practices, and any other event held for your team.
11. Make sure to have your First Aid Kit, Coaching Binder, and AED (if applicable) at all times.
12. Outdoor sports need to have the “My Lightening Tracker App” downloaded and turned on to assist with weather related issues.
13. Outdoor sports need to be aware of Wet Bulb temperatures and risks of heat-related illnesses. In the Fall, the ADs will communicate/monitor Wet Bulb temperatures DAILY.
14. Report all injuries to the AD in a timely fashion and fill out an accident report. The coach will call the parents to let them know of the injury immediately.
15. If a concussion is suspected due to a blow to the head, refer to the concussion form in your binder. Call the parent immediately and notify the AD.
16. Wait with athletes after practices and/or games until their ride has arrived. DO NOT leave athletes unattended at the conclusion of practices or games.
17. When riding a bus, check the bus following your return to see that it is presentable and vandalism has not taken place.
18. Communicate with the AD after each game whether it was a win or loss.
19. Ensure the field, gym, course, etc. is clean of all trash after every practice and game.
20. HS Coaches must attend the end of season conference meeting for their sport to choose all conference picks and post season information.
21. At the end of season make sure to get all athletes to submit All Uniforms to the ADs.
22. At the end of your season, set up a time with the AD to return all equipment and have an end of season review. This must be completed to receive your check.
23. Attend end of season award ceremony and ESPYs.
24. Summer workouts and camps must be submitted by May 1.

River Mill Athletic Department Coaching Responsibilities

1) **Coaches Education**- ALL coaches must be First Aid/CPR/AED Certified and take the following online courses from NFHS Learn Website: Fundamentals of Coaching, Concussion in Sports, Heat Illness, Sudden Cardiac Arrest, The Collapsed Student, and After School Security. All classes must be completed and uploaded into Dragonfly Max prior to the beginning of the season.

2) **Athlete Forms in DragonFly Max-** Coaches will not allow an athlete to work out without a physical uploaded into dragonfly. Coaches will not allow an athlete to participate in tryouts or practice until all paperwork is completed on DragonFly.

3) **Team Rules and Regulations**- coaches must submit their team rules to the athletic directors to be uploaded to Dragonfly Max at least 1 week prior to tryouts. Parents and athletes must sign off on the rules and regulations before try-outs begin. Coaches must follow their rules consistently.

4) **Attendance Requirements**- it is the policy of River Mill that every student-athlete attends school. Per the NCHSAA, student athletes must have been in attendance for at least 85% of the previous semester at an approved high school. Student athletes also must be in school for at least half a day to be able to participate or attend practice or games. A school sponsored field trip does not affect participation status.

5) **NCHSAA Sport Rules, NIL & Conference Bylaws**- coaches must read, understand, and follow the guidelines for their sport when it comes to the rules and regulations of the NCHSAA and the Central Tar Heel Conference (HS) and/or Mid Piedmont Conference (MS). Coaches must also read and understand the NIL rules posted on the NCHSAA website.

6) **Athletic Fee-** Fees are $50.00 per sport, per athlete, and are due once the student is placed on the official team roster. Coaches who have children participating in a sport in the same season you are coaching get a fee exemption for that season.
7) **Scheduling**- Our schedules are posted on the athletics website under each sport as well as in the Jaguar Journal that goes out every Sunday. There you will find a master calendar for all sports, individual spreadsheets for each team, and a summer calendar for events taking place during summer break. Make sure to frequently check the NCHSAA website for your desired sport to know state playoff dates.

8) **Supervision/Facilities**- Athletes are to always be supervised by a coach and/or school personnel at all facilities, during all activities. Athletes are not to use athletic facilities unattended at any time for any exception.

9) **Overlapping Athletic Participation**- An athlete who is already participating in a sport may not begin practicing in another sport until the first sport has completed its season. Should an athlete drop a sport or be dropped from a sport, they will not begin in the next sport until the first sport has completed its season.

10) **Same-Season Athletes**- Student athletes are permitted to participate in more than one sport during the same season, only if all coaches are in mutual agreement. All NCHSAA rules must be complied with.

The primary sport must be designated, and attendance is required primarily for this sport. The student athlete will be required to pay both athletic fees during this season.

11) **24 Hour Rule**- RMA Athletics will keep the following order for lines of communication: 1st Contact- Athlete's Coach, 2nd Contact- Athletic Director, 3rd Contact- Administration. Please keep all team sport specific questions directed to the Head Coach of each team. The 24-hour policy is in effect for any parent wishing to communicate with coaches. After practices and/or games will not be when concerns/issues will be brought to a coach. Parents/Guardians must set up an appointment with the coach to address any questions, concerns, or issues. If the question, concern, or issue has not been resolved, then the Athletic Director and/or Administration will discuss the matter with the parent/guardian.

12) **Recognition and Awards**- The athletic directors will organize all seasonal awards which include the following:
    a) 8th Grade Recognition for the Fall/Winter/Spring seasons
    b) Senior Night for the Fall/Winter/Spring seasons
    c) Fall/Winter/Spring Awards Days
    d) Letter of Intent Signing Days
    e) ESPY Awards at the end of the school year

River Mill Athletic Department Coaching Policies

1) **Uniform Policy**-
    a) Uniforms will be in rotation for approximately 5-7 years. The athletic department is responsible for the ordering and selection of uniforms; however, if a head coach is currently serving in that role, they will sign off on the design mockups before purchasing.
    b) Uniforms are the property of RMA Athletics. They are not permitted to be worn during school days. Uniforms and equipment will be distributed to coaches at the start of each season. Each coach will be responsible for the distribution of uniforms and equipment. It is the responsibility of each coach to return all items received to the designated athletic director at the end of the sports season. The athlete is financially responsible for all uniforms and equipment assigned to him or her. All parts of the uniform must be returned at the end of the season in the condition which it was assigned. Failure to return the uniform or return in the same condition will result in a fine for each piece not returned or damaged. Before any awards are received, or a student begins a new sport, the athlete must return all their items or pay the determined fee.
    c) If a team would like to purchase supplemental uniforms or equipment, parents of the team are encouraged to coordinate with their team's head coach to set up individual team fundraising/donations. All individual team fundraising/donation requests must be submitted by the Head Coach in writing to the athletic directors for approval. All money brought in must be submitted to the athletic department. Uniforms and equipment will be purchased through the athletic department ONLY.
    d) All equipment and uniforms purchased by teams shall become the property of River Mill Academy and entrusted to the care of the athletic department. We do not allow uniforms to be purchased

for teams that do not go through the approval process of the athletic department's approved vender list. Monetary donations to a specific sports team are acceptable.

2) **NCHSAA Academics Policy-** RMA students will follow the NCHSAA Semester Grade Policy.
   a) A student must have passed a minimum of 70% of their classes from the previous semester. This policy applies to our middle school as well.
   b) The student must take a minimum academic course load each semester and must fulfill this for the entire semester. (must be credited courses).
   c) The student must meet local promotional standards and any local GPA requirement. Local promotional standards can be found in the student handbook.

3) **Sportsmanship Policy**- It is expected that our athletes be gracious in victory, dignified in defeat, and at all times treat game officials, coaches, and opponent athletes with the utmost courtesy and respect. It is a privilege and should be treated as an honor to represent River Mill Academy in any athletic activity.
   a) <u>Unsportsmanlike Behaviors:</u>
      i) Profanity: Use of profanity, foul language, or obscene gestures demonstrates a lack of self-control that will not be tolerated.
      ii) Fighting: Fighting is prohibited at all times regardless of who threw the first punch.
      iii) Trash talking: Use of any derogatory language that threatens or verbally abuses any opponent (or game officials) is not allowed.
      iv) Inappropriate Physical Contact: Such as slapping /pushing /shoving /tripping /throwing punches/etc. is forbidden
      v) Arguing with Game Officials: Respectfully accepting their call, even if you do not agree with it. Do not argue with him/her. Immature outbursts such as throwing balls/kicking chairs/etc. Will not be tolerated.
   b) **<u>Violations:</u>** Violations of these policies will be handled in the following manner, and punishments shall be issued whether or not a game official issues a penalty of unsportsmanlike or ejectable nature. Offenses may result in a suspension from school at the principal's discretion. Any RMA athlete who receives an unsporting double yellow/red card, technical foul, or ejection will follow the rules outlined below.
      i) **First Offense**: The athlete will be suspended from the current game. Then, the athlete, accompanied by a parent or guardian, will attend a meeting with a school administrator prior to returning to the team for activity.
      ii) **Second Offense**: The athlete will be suspended from the current contest as well as the next scheduled contest. (If an offense occurs during practice, the athlete will be suspended from the next game.) Then, the athlete, accompanied by a parent or guardian, will attend a meeting with a school administrator again prior to returning to the team's activity. They will also receive written notice of prior and future actions.
      iii) **Third Offense**: The athlete and a parent/guardian will attend a meeting with a school administrator and receive written notice resulting in suspension from the team for the rest of the season.
   c) **<u>Other Punishments</u>**:
      i) If an RMA athlete starts a fight, he/she will be immediately ejected from the game and may be suspended from the team for the remainder of the season.

ii) If administration determines a pattern is occurring over the sporting season or years, administration may impose additional sanctions.

d) **Implementation**: All coaches must enforce this policy. Oversight of the coach's execution of this policy rests solely in the hands of the principal. If the principal finds that this policy is not being implemented, the principal shall have the authority to enforce this policy against any student athlete who violates it.

4) **Social Media Policy**- Any content online that is unsportsmanlike, derogatory, demeaning, or threatening towards any individual or entity as well as any acts of violence (derogatory comments towards another school, taunting comments aimed at a student, coach, or team, and derogatory comments against race, sexual orientation, and/or gender, etc.) will not be tolerated from a student athlete or parent/guardian or Coach. Administration, Athletic Directors, and the head coach have the ability to impose probation, suspension, or removal from a team on the first offense.

5) **Transportation Policy**- Coaches are responsible for being on the bus with their team at all times. A team should not travel to or from an event without a coach on the bus. Upon arrival back at the school, it is the coach's responsibility to make sure the bus is clean, and all athletes are picked up before leaving the campus. If a bus cannot be provided (too small numbers, no bus driver, etc.) and a coach transports athletes in their personal vehicle to an away game, the coach will receive compensation per mile based on the google map direction mileage to and from the event back to the campus.

6) **Commitment Policy**- Once you agree to coach a sport, it is expected that you will stay the entire season. Both head and assistant coaches should be at the majority of practices and games. Failure to finish the season may result in no pay. Failure to attend most practices and games may result in reduced pay.

River Mill Athletic Department Procedures

1) **Incident and Accident Procedures**- In the event of an incident or accident at an athletic event on or off campus, the supervising coach or RMA staff member must report said incident or accident to an RMA administrator as soon as possible.

2) **Social Media Posting Procedures**:

a. If you wish for something to be posted on the school's social media accounts, please create a post/image and send it to the athletic department for approval via the RMA Athletics email address.
b. Everything for the week should be emailed to us by SUNDAY night with the date you would like it to be posted.
c. If you would like to post about winnings from games, special recognition, etc... This needs to be sent to us the night before you wish it to be posted. Please give a 24-hour window for these to be posted.
d. If a change needs to be made due to cancellation or rescheduling a game, we will contact you for a new post.

3) **Purchase Order Procedures**:
   a. All teams that are purchasing items outside of the athletic department's seasonal order will be required to submit a purchase request form to the athletic department PRIOR to any items purchased or ordered. The athletic department will check team balances then return the paper to you for approval/denial.
   b. Any team purchase that parents and student athletes are purchasing on their own must be approved by the athletic department. A purchase order must be submitted with the quote prior to ordering. Examples: team shirts, hats, shoes, etc. This must be approved before you purchase them.
      i. All money collected for the team item must be given, counted, and receipted to the athletic department.
   c. After approval is given, coaches will be permitted to purchase and/or order the items. The athletic department will give the financial department ALL requests once a week as well as any money collected.

4) **Fundraisers/Money Collected Procedures**:
   a. Fundraiser requests must be submitted to the athletic department prior to beginning any team fundraiser.
   b. All money collected for the fundraiser must be given, counted, and receipted to the athletic department.

5) **End of Season Procedures**:
   a) T**wo Weeks Prior to the end of your regular season play.**
      i) All head coaches need to send your season award winners at least 2 weeks before your last regular season game. Please list the award name and the winners' correct name spelling.
         (1) Middle School teams receive 2 awards
         (2) JV teams receive 2 awards
         (3) Varsity teams receive 3 awards.
      ii) Let us know if you plan on having an end of the season party with your team. If you plan on using your team's funds for this event, you MUST submit a purchase order request prior to the event.
   b) Within 5 days of your last game
      i) Uniforms need to be handed in to the athletic department. They should be washed and turned in a Ziplock bag with their name written on it.
      ii) Set up an end of season meeting with the athletic department. At that time, you will return all equipment, first aid kits, coolers, coaching binders, and scorebooks. Be prepared to discuss coaching concerns, needs, schedules, off season/summer workouts, camps, and team fundraisers.
      iii) Once all equipment and uniforms are returned and the end of season meeting has occurred, we will request the coaching supplements be sent out.
      iv) All head and assistant coaching positions will be reviewed and hired on a yearly basis.

Coaches Acknowledgement:

The NCHSAA/RMA rules and regulations listed above are expectations that our coaches will follow, enforce, and believe in helping our student athletes grow on and off the field/court. Signing this document acknowledges that you will follow the tasks, understand what is expected of you, and abide by and uphold the policies and requirements of the NC DPI, NCHSAA, and RMA. River Mill reserves the right to dismiss a head or assistant coach at any time.

Coaches Name: _____

Coaches Signature: _____

Date: _____