



Royal Palm Academy Athletic Handbook
2026-2027

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Nondiscriminatory Policy

Royal Palm Academy Athletics admits any students of any race, color, and national or ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin in the administration of its participatory policies, admissions policies, or athletic programs.

All athletic information, including the RPA Athletic Handbook and Athletic Calendar, will be available through the Royal Palm Academy website.

Handbook Updated: July 2026

Section One

Purpose Statement and Philosophy

The purpose of the Royal Palm Academy Athletic Program is to provide student-athletes with opportunities to develop their athletic abilities through instruction, practice, teamwork, and competition.

The RPA Athletic Program strives to develop character, leadership, discipline, and sportsmanship while emphasizing the importance of preparation, commitment, teamwork, and personal growth. Athletics at Royal Palm Academy serves as an extension of the classroom by helping students develop physical, social, moral, and leadership skills in a positive and supportive environment.

Our goal is to create an athletic experience where student-athletes learn the value of hard work, perseverance, respect, accountability, and representing Royal Palm Academy with pride.

Participation in athletics is a privilege earned through academic responsibility, positive behavior, effort, and commitment to the team.

Section Two

Athletic Eligibility & Code of Conduct

A member of a Royal Palm Academy athletic team agrees to fulfill the following requirements:

Academic Eligibility

Student-athletes are expected to maintain appropriate academic standards while participating in athletics.

- Students must maintain a C average or above.

Behavioral Eligibility

Participation in athletics at Royal Palm Academy is a privilege. Student-athletes are expected to demonstrate appropriate behavior, responsibility, and respect both in school and during athletic activities.

A student-athlete who is sent home from school due to disciplinary reasons may not participate in practices, games, or team activities on that same day.

Repeated disciplinary concerns, violations of the RPA Code of Conduct, or behavior that negatively impacts the team or school community may result in a student-athlete losing athletic eligibility. Depending on the severity and frequency of the incidents, consequences may include:

- Temporary suspension from practices, games, or team activities.
- Removal from a team for the remainder of the season.
- Loss of eligibility for future athletic participation.

All disciplinary decisions regarding athletic participation will be reviewed by the Athletic Director in collaboration with school administration when necessary.

If a student-athlete does not meet these requirements, they may be temporarily removed from athletic participation until academic progress improves.

The Athletic Director and Administration reserve the right to review eligibility on an individual basis.

Attendance Expectations

1. Student-athletes are expected to attend all scheduled practices and games.
2. Absences due to illness, family emergencies, or other circumstances will be reviewed on an individual basis.
3. Consistent attendance and commitment are expected from all team members.
4. Missing practices may impact playing time or participation decisions.

Sportsmanship Expectations

Student-athletes agree to represent Royal Palm Academy with respect, integrity, and good sportsmanship at all times.

Student-athletes, parents, coaches, and fans are expected to:

1. Demonstrate respect toward teammates, opponents, coaches, officials, and spectators.
2. Refrain from:
 - Abusive or inappropriate language.
 - Arguing with officials.
 - Unsportsmanlike behavior.
 - Actions that negatively represent Royal Palm Academy.
3. Understand that all participants represent RPA both on and off the field/court.
4. Wear appropriate athletic attire:
 - No inappropriate graphics or messages.
 - No visible undergarments.
 - No jewelry during practices or games when prohibited by sport rules.

Section Three

Parent Responsibilities

Parents play an important role in creating a positive athletic experience for all RPA student-athletes. Parents are expected to support their child, the team, coaches, officials, and the athletic program.

Parents agree to:

1. Pick up their child promptly after practices and games.

Coaches dedicate their time to serving our athletes, and families should respect their schedules by arriving on time.

2. Ensure their child arrives on time with:
 - Required equipment.
 - Proper athletic attire.
 - Any necessary uniforms or gear.
3. Serve as positive role models.

Parents should:

- Encourage their child.
- Support the team.
- Demonstrate respect toward opponents and officials.
- Remember that they represent Royal Palm Academy.

4. Address concerns appropriately.

If questions or concerns arise, parents should communicate with the coach or Athletic Director by scheduling a conversation or sending an email.

Parents should not approach coaches immediately before, during, or after games to discuss concerns or disagreements.

5. Support the athletic program by attending games and events whenever possible.
6. Avoid contacting the school office regarding athletic schedules. (All Schedules will be easily accessible if any questions or concerns arise please contact the Athletic Director)

The FACTS Family Portal and official athletic communication platforms will provide the most current information regarding:

- Schedule changes.
- Cancellations.
- Practice updates.
- Athletic announcements.

7. Complete all required athletic forms and payments, including:

- Athletic registration.
- Medical forms.
- Waivers.
- Participation fees.

Failure to complete required paperwork or meet athletic responsibilities may impact a student-athlete's eligibility.

Section Four

Tryouts, Practices, and Games

Tryouts

Tryout procedures will vary depending on the sport.

- Coaches and the Athletic Director will establish tryout dates and expectations.
- Student-athletes must attend scheduled tryouts in order to be considered for a team.
- Team rosters will be determined by the coaching staff in collaboration with the Athletic Director.
- Team placement decisions will be based on factors including:
 - Skill level.
 - Effort.
 - Attitude.
 - Coachability.
 - Team needs.

Not every student who participates in tryouts is guaranteed a roster position.

Practices

- Practices are an important part of athletic development and team success.
- Attendance at practices is expected unless excused by the coach.
- Student-athletes should arrive prepared, on time, and ready to participate.
- Missing practices may impact playing time and team responsibilities.

Games

The RPA Athletic Department will make every effort to communicate schedules and updates in a timely manner.

Families should understand that athletic schedules may change due to:

- Weather.
- Facility availability.
- Opponent conflicts.
- Other circumstances outside of the school's control.

Updated schedules and announcements will be communicated through official RPA athletic communication channels.

Important Participation Policies

A student-athlete who is sent home from school due to illness may not participate in practices, games, or team activities on that same day.

A student-athlete who leaves school early for an approved reason may participate at the discretion of the Administration team, Athletic Director and coach.

A student-athlete who chooses to quit a team after official rosters have been posted may be subject to restrictions regarding participation in future athletic seasons. This policy exists to encourage commitment and responsibility once a student accepts a position on a team.

Section Five

Safety Policies and Procedures

The safety and well-being of our student-athletes, coaches, families, and visitors is the highest priority of the Royal Palm Academy Athletic Program. RPA is committed to providing a safe environment through proper preparation, communication, training, and adherence to established safety procedures.

All coaches, student-athletes, and families are expected to follow safety guidelines and instructions provided by coaches, officials, and the Athletic Department during practices, games, and athletic events.

Coach Safety Requirements

All Royal Palm Academy athletic coaches are required to:

- Maintain current CPR certification.
- Complete required safety training and background screening.
- Follow all school and athletic department safety procedures.
- Promote proper techniques, sportsmanship, and injury prevention.
- Monitor student-athlete health and safety during all practices and competitions.

All RPA coaches are also required to complete concussion awareness training and follow established concussion protocols. Any student-athlete suspected of experiencing a concussion or head injury will be removed from participation and evaluated according to school procedures before returning to athletic activities.

Lightning Safety Policy

Royal Palm Academy utilizes the Thor Guard Lightning Detection System to monitor lightning activity and assist in protecting athletes, coaches, officials, families, and spectators during outdoor athletic activities.

If the lightning alarm is activated during a practice, game, or athletic event:

- All coaches, officials, student-athletes, families, and spectators are required to immediately seek shelter.
- Individuals must move inside a vehicle or building whenever available.
- Outdoor areas, fields, bleachers, and open spaces should not be used as shelter during lightning activity.

If a vehicle or building is not immediately available, the MAC Gymnasium will serve as the designated shelter location for student-athletes, coaches, officials, families, and spectators.

Athletic activities may resume only when the Thor Guard system indicates that conditions are safe and approval is given by the Athletic Director, coaches, or event officials.

Injury and Emergency Procedures

- Student-athletes must immediately report any injury, illness, or safety concern to their coach.
- Coaches will determine the appropriate response and follow school procedures for injuries.
- Parents/guardians will be notified when necessary.
- Student-athletes should not return to participation until they are cleared according to school and medical guidelines when required.

Weather and Environmental Conditions

The Athletic Department will monitor weather conditions and make decisions regarding practices and games based on safety considerations.

Events may be delayed, modified, relocated, or canceled due to:

- Lightning.
- Severe weather.
- Extreme heat.
- Unsafe playing conditions.
- Other environmental concerns.

The safety of our student-athletes and community members will always take priority over competition.

Section Six

Description of Athletic Program

The Royal Palm Academy Athletic Program is designed to provide students in grades 3rd through 8th with opportunities to develop athletic skills, teamwork, leadership, and sportsmanship through competitive experiences.

The RPA Athletic Program consists of Junior Varsity and Varsity levels. Specific grade levels may vary depending on the sport, team size, and competitive needs of each program.

Team placement decisions are made by the coaching staff and Athletic Director based on:

- Athletic ability.
- Skill development.
- Effort and attitude.
- Team needs.
- Commitment to the program.

Student-athletes should understand that participation on an athletic team is a privilege. Being selected for a team requires responsibility, dedication, and a commitment to representing Royal Palm Academy positively.

Junior Varsity Program

The Junior Varsity (JV) program is designed to introduce student-athletes to competitive athletics while focusing on skill development, teamwork, fundamentals, and sportsmanship.

JV teams emphasize:

- Individual skill development.
- Team concepts.
- Learning the fundamentals of the sport.
- Building confidence and character.

Coaches will encourage participation and development while creating an environment where athletes can grow and prepare for future varsity competition.

Playing time will be determined by the coach and may vary based on:

- Attendance.
- Effort.
- Skill development.
- Game situations.
- Team needs.

Varsity Program

The Varsity program is designed to challenge student-athletes and prepare them for continued athletic success.

Varsity teams emphasize:

- Advanced skill development.
- Team strategy.
- Commitment.
- Preparation.
- Competitive excellence.
- Leadership.

Coaches will focus on helping student-athletes reach their full potential while representing Royal Palm Academy with pride and integrity.

Playing time is determined by the coaching staff and may vary depending on:

- Performance.
- Practice habits.
- Game situations.
- Team goals.
- Academic standing

During tournament or playoff competition, coaches may adjust playing time decisions based on what they believe best supports the success of the team.

Athletic Conference

Royal Palm Academy is a proud member of the Sunshine Athletic Conference (SAC).

Being a member of the RPA Athletic Program is a privilege earned through:

- Maintaining academic standards.
- Demonstrating appropriate behavior.
- Showing commitment to teammates and coaches.
- Representing Royal Palm Academy with dignity and sportsmanship.

Student-athletes, coaches, and families are expected to uphold the values and reputation of Royal Palm Academy both on and off the field/court.

If a sport does not have enough participants to support multiple teams, the Athletic Department will determine the appropriate team structure while prioritizing opportunities for students to participate and develop.

Sports Offered at Royal Palm Academy

Fall	Winter	Spring
- Girls Volleyball ● Junior Varsity: Grades 4–5 ● Varsity: Grades 6–8 - Boys Flag Football ● Varsity: Grades 6–8 - Co-Ed Cross Country ● Grades 3–8	- Girls Basketball ● Junior Varsity: Grades 4–5 ● Varsity: Grades 6–8 - Boys Basketball ● Junior Varsity: Grades 4–5 ● Varsity: Grades 6–8	- Boys Soccer ● Varsity: Grades 6–8 - Girls Soccer ● Varsity: Grades 6–8 - Co-Ed Track & Field ● Grades 4–8 - Co-Ed Golf ● Grades 5–8

Section Seven

Fees for Participation

Every student-athlete who makes a team will be required to pay an athletic participation fee.

The athletic fee helps support the RPA Athletic Program by funding:

- Game officials.
- Athletic equipment.
- Uniforms.
- Facility maintenance.
- Athletic supplies.
- Other program needs.

The participation fee is:

\$200 per child, per sport season

Participation fees are subject to change at the discretion of Royal Palm Academy. Any changes to athletic fees will be communicated to families in advance prior to registration.

All athletic fees will be processed through FACTS Giving.

Additional fees may apply for certain sports requiring specialized equipment or items retained by the athlete, including but not limited to:

- Equipment.
- Apparel.
- Personal gear.

Athletic Registration

Athletic registration will open for a limited period of time following the completion of tryouts and the finalization of team rosters. Families will be notified when registration becomes available and must complete the registration process within the designated timeframe in order for their student-athlete to participate.

Exception: Cross Country and Golf does not require tryouts and will operate on a first-come, first-served basis. Registration for Cross Country and Golf will open prior to the start of the season and will remain available until team capacity has been reached.

Royal Palm Academy understands that families may occasionally experience financial difficulties. No student-athlete will be denied the opportunity to participate due to financial circumstances.

Families with concerns regarding athletic fees should contact the Athletic Director.

Section Eight

Coaches

Coaches play an essential role in developing student-athletes and creating a positive athletic environment at Royal Palm Academy.

Coaches are selected by the Athletic Director based on:

- Knowledge of the sport.
- Ability to teach and develop student-athletes.
- Leadership qualities.
- Commitment to the values and mission of Royal Palm Academy.

All coaches must:

- Complete required safety training and background screening.
- Demonstrate appropriate behavior, communication, and professionalism.
- Model good sportsmanship and respect.
- Maintain a positive and supportive environment.
- Follow the expectations and standards outlined in the Athletic Handbook.

Coaches are responsible for:

- Planning and conducting practices.
- Teaching skills and strategies.
- Communicating expectations with student-athletes and families.
- Promoting teamwork, discipline, and sportsmanship.
- Working with the Athletic Director throughout the season.

Before each season, coaches will meet with the Athletic Director to review:

- Team expectations.
- Safety procedures.
- Communication expectations.
- Athletic policies.

Section Nine

Athletic Director

The Athletic Director serves as the leader of the Royal Palm Academy Athletic Program and works to ensure that all athletic activities align with the mission and values of the school.

The Athletic Director is responsible for:

- Serving as the liaison between the RPA Athletic Department and other schools in the Sunshine Athletic Conference.
- Scheduling athletic contests.
- Securing facilities for practices and home competitions.
- Coordinating officials for home games.
- Communicating with coaches, families, and school administration.
- Determining student-athlete eligibility.
- Working with coaches to establish team rosters.
- Managing athletic policies and procedures.
- Supporting coaches and student-athletes throughout each season.

Current Athletic Director contact information:

Anthony Vargas - Avargas@royalpalmacademy.org