



**ATHLETIC COACHES**  
**HANDBOOK**

## **HANDBOOK OF AIMS, PHILOSOPHY AND PROCEDURES**

### **FORWARD**

The goal of this handbook is to bring unity and harmony within the coaching department, school, and community. It has been written to eliminate inconsistencies and bring about clarification regarding the coaching policies. The guidelines in this handbook are to be adhered to by all coaches while carrying out their responsibilities within the athletic program.

### **PHILOSOPHY**

It is the view of the River Valley District and its Athletic Program that coaching athletics is a *privilege*, not a right. As such, this participation carries with it responsibilities and expectations that are extraordinary. Furthermore, it is our belief that coaching can and should be an effective impetus to excellence, both in terms of role modeling and character development, and that coaching athletics has a crucial role to play in motivating students to achieve at higher levels than would be the case without athletics. By signing a contract with the River Valley School District, a coach agrees to uphold and help enforce the Activities Code and the rules and guidelines contained within said code.

### **THE GOAL OF THE ATHLETIC PROGRAM**

The goal of the River Valley Athletic Program is to provide the opportunity for our student-athletes to develop their physical abilities and personal character, to honorably represent their school and community in school-sponsored athletic activities, and to continuously “raise the bar” of academic expectations and achievement over the course of their school career. Therefore, our coaching staff must understand our athletic programs are for the benefit of the student and thus they must accept their role as leaders, teachers and role models.

In doing so, all coaches are required to:

1. Exhibit good sportsmanship and fair play in both practice and competition.
2. Conduct themselves in an exemplary manner at all times, both on and off the playing field.
3. Accept victory or defeat in a mature and emotionally balanced manner.
4. Understand that coaching athletics is a privilege that involves a great deal of personal responsibility and commitment.
5. Understand that their conduct and performance in the athletic arena cannot be viewed separately or in isolation from their conduct and performance in the community or while supervising athletic events.
6. Refrain from the use of profanity.
7. Not use tobacco or alcohol in any school building or on any school premises; in any school-owned vehicle or any other school-approved vehicle used to transport athletes to and from school or school activities; or off school property during any school-sponsored or school-approved activity, event or function where students are under the jurisdiction of the school district. This includes all time between departure from River Valley and subsequent return.

## GENERAL ATHLETIC POLICIES

1. There shall be no practices, contests, or meetings scheduled that would involve students on Wednesday night after 6:30 p.m. or any time on Sunday, unless they are approved by the Principal and/or Athletic Director.
2. Practice schedules and facility use must be turned into the Athletic Director at the beginning of each sport season using the rSchool facility scheduler program.
3. Contest schedules may not be changed without the approval of the Athletic Director.
4. School purchased apparel for the athletic program is to be used for this purpose only. It is not to be worn for physical education class or other activities not part of the athletic program unless directed to do so by the coach.
5. All equipment and supplies must be ordered through the Athletic Director. The request must contain all needed information such as price, equipment name, number and company.
6. The head coach will check the time of departure for buses after the schedule is completed.
7. Coaches are to be certain first aid kits and student medical information is taken to every contest. A coach should only give first aid. Redressing or medication is considered treatment and is not the responsibility of the school. No medication by mouth is to be given at any time.
8. Whenever an individual is dropped from a squad or quits, the coach must check-in his/her equipment immediately, this includes cleaning out his/her locker.
9. If problems arise between coaches, they should discuss them but never in the presence of athletes. When a solution cannot be reached, the problem should be brought to the Athletic Director. If the problem is not settled to the satisfaction of the parties concerned, it may be brought to the attention of the Principal.
10. Coaches should not loan their keys to any student for any reason.
11. A coach must be present whenever there are students working out under their direction, specifically at the place of the activity, not just in the building.
12. The coaches should be the first to arrive and the last to leave practice sessions and games. It is their responsibility to supervise the locker room until all athletes have left the area.
13. WIAA Parent Permission Cards or WIAA Physical Cards must be on file before any athlete may practice. It is the coaches' responsibility to make certain that these cards are collected and turned into the Athletic Director before the athlete participates.
14. Coaches are to provide the athletic director with an updated inventory of all equipment and supplies for their sport at the end of each season.
15. No fundraising activities should take place without permission from the Principal and/or Athletic Director..
16. Away Contests  
When you and your team are visiting another school, the following procedure should be followed upon completing the use of their rooms.
  - a. Have your athletes clean up the area they dressed and showered in.
  - b. Have your managers secure a broom and sweep out the locker room you used (if necessary).
  - c. Have a coach or administrator check your locker room before you leave to come home. In this way your athletes and our school will be clear of any damage.
  - d. Stress to your athletes the importance of respecting the host school's property-win or lose.

- e. Keep the image of River Valley High School District on a high caliber.

17. Home Contests or Practices

Please remember to have your team clean up your locker room after all practices or contests.

- a. Make sure all showers are turned off.
- b. Make sure all trash is in the designated trash receptacles.
- c. Make sure all clothing and equipment are locked in lockers

NOTE: Coaches who fail to adhere to the goals, policies, and responsibilities in this handbook may be subject to disciplinary action.

**AWARDS**

- 1. Numerals: Awarded to all letter winners who satisfactorily complete a season with any athletic team during his/her high school career. This is awarded only once.
- 2. Varsity Awards: Requirements vary with each sport. The head coach will make standards and requirements for these awards known in writing to the athletes at the beginning of each season. Ultimately, the awarding of the varsity award is at the discretion of the head coach as provided in writing.
- 3. For the first sport in which an athlete letters, he/she will receive a letter RV, plus a metal insert for that sport.
  - a. For subsequent sports in which the athlete letters for the first time, he/she will receive a certificate, plus a metal insert for that sport.
  - b. When an athlete letters in a sport more than one year, he/she will receive a certificate and a metal bar insert for each year.

**EQUIPMENT BUDGETING AND CARE**

- 1. One of the values of athletics is to teach responsibility and this should apply to the care of athletic equipment as well as other school property. River Valley School District takes pride in furnishing good quality, safe athletic equipment.
- 2. It is expected that athletes and coaches will take excellent care of their equipment.
- 3. Each athlete is responsible for the school equipment issued to him/her. The athlete is financially responsible for all lost, stolen, or misplaced equipment that was originally issued.
- 4. Each athlete will be responsible for the return of the original equipment issued. Substitutions will not be allowed. Coaches must participate/cooperate with the A.D. in the distribution and collection of all equipment and uniforms.
- 5. No school athletic equipment is to be worn during physical education classes or any other period of exercise outside the item required for practice sessions and /or game situations, unless authorized to do so by the coach.
- 6. Any athlete who is found to be in possession of any athletic equipment from a competing school will be subject to the provisions in the Activities code.
- 7. Uniforms will be ordered according to the uniform rotation plan.
- 8. All purchase requisitions must be turned in to the Athletic Director.

9. Coaches are responsible for equipment care during their season and proper storage at the end of their season. Inventories should be updated each year.
10. Any athlete who is found with any school athletic equipment other than that issued for the present season will be subject to disciplinary action.

<b>ATHLETIC DIRECTOR RESPONSIBILITIES</b>
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The River Valley High School Athletic Director will:

1. Be directly responsible to the District Administrator regarding all athletic matters.
2. Provide general supervision and annual performance evaluations to all head coaches.
3. Schedule all athletic contests.
4. Schedule officials for all home athletic events.
5. Schedule buses for all away athletic events.
6. Schedule practice facilities.
7. Coordinate the use of athletic facilities with outside groups.
8. Ensure compliance with health and safety policies (i.e., blood borne pathogens).
9. Bid and order athletic equipment.
10. Be responsible for athletic department inventory.
11. Order first aid and medical supplies.
12. Set up and administer athletic awards policies.
13. Organize and direct WIAA tournaments assigned.
14. Coordinate communications among SWC conference schools concerning athletic activities.
15. Coordinate public relations concerning athletic matters.
16. Coordinate custodial staff in matters affecting athletics.
17. Report and manage Activities Code violations and due process.
18. Maintain a file on Activities code violations.
19. Collect and have on file WIAA physical and parent permission cards.
20. Administer and correct WIAA rules test for each sport.
21. Be responsible for repair of equipment and facilities.
22. Collect and have on file minimum weight sheets for wrestling.

23. Send entry fees to host schools for all invitationals.
24. Fill out check requests for all workers and officials.
25. Review and approve/deny team rules that vary from the athletic handbook made by individual coaches.

#### **HEAD COACH RESPONSIBILITIES**

River Valley High School head coaches will:

1. Organize and coordinate the entire high school program for their sport.
2. Supervise assistant coaches and assign duties to the assistants.
3. Have a well-organized season plan.
4. Have a well-organized plan for each practice.
5. Ensure that assistant coaches have received and understand applicable policies, procedures, and expectations.
6. Provide general supervision and annual performance evaluations to all assistant coaches.
7. Be fully aware of legal responsibilities of your activity; take precautions against negligence. Keep staff fully informed of this. Be safety-minded.
8. Ensure adequate provision for care and maintenance of equipment and facilities for the entire program.
9. Submit a list of participants for the information sheet at least one week before the first contest. Include height, weight, name, year in school, and his/her uniform number. The Athletic Director must also be informed of any athlete who joins the team late.
10. Make sure that the WIAA physical and/or parent permission card and the user fee are turned in before the athlete is allowed to practice.
11. Review the Activities Code with the athletes and report any/all violations to the A.D.
12. Recommend to the Athlete Director transportation times. Keep in mind that loss of school time should be kept to a minimum.
13. Be responsible for the packing and storing of all equipment for his/her sport.
14. Keep an accurate inventory for all the equipment for his/her sport.
15. Submit a budget worksheet to the Athletic Director, including all equipment, medical supplies, etc., at the appropriate time according to the school's budget timeline.
16. Be responsible for the security of the building following practice or a contest when no custodial service is available.
17. Cooperate with the news media and keep them informed-win or lose. Communicate scores at home games.
18. Treat opponents as guests at home events.

19. Issue athletic awards and letters. (All awards programs and receptions must be scheduled through the Athletic Director.)
20. Submit to the Athletic Director an award list of all letter and other award winners at the end of the season.
21. Submit to the Athletic Director the team's win-loss record and the score of each game at the end of the season.
22. Turn in all checked out equipment not specifically assigned to his/her sport at the end of the season.
23. Attend WIAA rules interpretation meeting.
24. Bring to the attention of the Athletic Director any need for the repair of equipment.
25. Properly administer first aid to athletes under his/her supervision when necessary. Also, ensure proper filing of accident/injury forms in the main office.

<b>ASSISTANT COACH RESPONSIBILITIES</b>
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River Valley High School assistant coaches will:

1. Cooperate with and assist the head coach.
2. Organize and run the program of his/her level as outlined by the head coach.
3. Assume responsibility for equipment, facilities, and personnel under his/her jurisdiction.
4. Have a well-organized plan for each practice.
5. Administer game details for home and away contests.
6. Notify the head coach of any injuries and/or conduct code violations by athletes under his/her jurisdiction.
7. Be aware of legal responsibilities and take precautions against negligence. Be safety-minded.
8. Use the plays and formations designed by the head coach with deviation unless permission is granted by the head coach.
9. Treat opponents as guests at home contests. Check the locker room for cleanliness before coming home from an away contest.
10. Make sure WIAA physical and/or parent permission cards are turned in before any athlete may practice.
11. Submit a list for the information form to the Athletic Director at least one week prior to the first contest: include name, weight, height, and year in school, and number of uniform.
12. Submit to the Athletic Director the team's win/loss record and the score for each contest at the end of the season.
13. Properly administer first aid when necessary. Also, ensure the proper filing of accident/injury forms in the main office.

## ACCIDENT/INJURY FORMS

Whenever an athlete is injured, the coach in charge must fill out a River Valley High School Injury Report Form. This should then be placed on file in the main office. Following any injury to an athlete, coaches are to be certain that the athlete has been released by his/her doctor for further competition. This must be DOCUMENTED in writing by the medical authority in charge.

## CONTEST POSTPONEMENT

If a contest must be postponed due to weather or any other factor not conducive to good game conditions, the coach will confer with the Athletic Director or, if not available, the Principal. After considering the factors, it will be up to the Athletic Director or Principal to play the game or to postpone it in accordance with Board Policy. The contest will then be rescheduled by the Athletic Director or Principal.

## WIAA TOURNAMENT POLICY

If an athlete qualifies for the state meet in an individual sport, he/she will be accompanied by the head coach and assistant coaches of that sport. No non-qualifying team member will accompany the qualifying athlete unless considered necessary by the Athletic Director or Principal. In the case of team sports, all coaches normally used in the conduct of practice and contests will accompany the squad, along with the regular complement of varsity managers.

Money for meals will be given to athletes and coaches attaining the state level according to the WIAA manual for costs in that particular year.

The coaching staff members in attendance are directly responsible for the conduct of the athletes charged to their custody for the entire duration of the trip.

## RECEPTION FOR INDIVIDUAL STATE CHAMPION OR TEAM FINALIST

When an individual attains state champion status, or a team participates in the state finals, recognition for the person/persons should be uniform. Meeting these individuals with a fire truck, for a "victory ride" into town and a reception at the high school is our procedure.

Competitions that are completed other than late Saturday nights do not pose a problem. Complications arise when the competition is completed late Saturday night or, in certain cases, when school is not in session (eg: softball, baseball, track and field, golf).

Possible solutions for these extenuating circumstances:

1. Meet with the fire truck having a "victory ride," and hold a reception Sunday afternoon. **OR**
2. School in session – Schedule fire truck, have "victory ride" with reception held Monday morning at school.  
School not in session – Schedule fire truck, have "victory ride" with reception held the next available evening (excluding Sunday or Wednesday).

## CLINIC POLICY

Coaches who wish to get release time to attend a clinic must make an application in writing to the Athletic Director at least two weeks prior to the clinic. The Athletic Director will consult with the Principal. Approval will be based on the merit of the clinic at the discretion of the Principal.



## **WIAA REGULATIONS**

Coaches should familiarize themselves with the WIAA regulations that apply to their sport. Good reference materials are the WIAA Handbook, WIAA Season Edition of Regulations, and the WIAA Bulletin. If you are unsure of a regulation, check with the Athletic Director or call the WIAA office.

## **ATTENDANCE AT WIAA STATE TOURNAMENT**

Students will be allowed to attend (with an excused absence from school) a WIAA State Tournament when the following criteria have been met.

1. note from home
2. advanced makeup slip completed the day before with all pertinent signatures
  - a. *Reference: Student-Parent Athletic Policy Handbook*

## **POLICY #112 - NONDISCRIMINATION**

The River Valley School District is committed to a policy of nondiscrimination on the basis of race, color, sex, national origin, handicap or disability, or any other factor provided for by state and federal laws and regulations.

Complaints regarding the interpretation or application of this policy shall be referred and processed in accordance with established procedures.

## **ELL STUDENTS**

Students participating in sports and have ELL needs should be identified by the head coach. Once the coach knows the needs of the student they should contact the Activities Director so appropriate Activity Code materials can be translated and given to the athlete.

## **TRANSFERS**

A full time student may be afforded up to eight consecutive semesters of interscholastic eligibility upon entry into Grade 9. Transferring schools at any time may result in restrictions being imposed on eligibility, or in some cases a denial of eligibility. For the purpose of this rule, attendance at one day of school and/or attendance at one athletic practice shall determine "beginning of school year.: Under this rule a student who transfers after the beginning of the school year shall be ineligible for varsity level competition at the new school unless approval is granted by the Board of Control in accordance with the waiver provisions as described in Section 5. These additional provisions relate to transfer cases:

1. A student who transfers from any school into a member school after the fourth consecutive semester following entry into Grade 9 shall be ineligible for practice and competition for one calendar year, unless the transfer is made necessary by a total change in residence by parent(s). The calendar year will be determined from a student's last day of attendance at school and/or last day of attendance at athletic practice.
2. A student who transfers from any school into a member school within the first four consecutive semesters following entry into 9th grade, unless the transfer is made necessary by a total change in residence by parents, must do so before attending one or more days of school or one or more athletic practices at the school the student is ineligible to compete for the remainder of that school year.
3. If within the first four consecutive semesters following entry into Grade 9, and with written consent from both schools directly involved, a first time transfer student (transferring after beginning of school year) shall be eligible for non-varsity competition only for one calendar year, unless a waiver is provided as outlined in Section 5 of this

Article.

NOTE: Open enrolled and/or tuition paying students entering 9th and/or 10th grade at the beginning of the school year and who are within the first four consecutive semesters of high school will be afforded unrestricted eligibility, provided all rules governing student eligibility are satisfied.

4. Unless transfer, including an accompanying change of parents residence, is effective at the outset of a semester, a student cannot establish eligibility at his/her new school until the fifth calendar day of such transfer.
5. A student who transfers more than once in any given school year shall be ineligible for all interscholastic competition for the remainder of that current school year and will be eligible for non-varsity opportunities only for the balance for the calendar year.
6. A student may not have eligibility in more than one member school at the same time. A parent or parents who move from a primary residence within one school's attendance boundaries, to a secondary residence within another school's attendance boundaries, may be required by the board of Control to provide evidence of a total move.
7. A student who transfers from any school, whether or not a member school, with a status of ineligibility for disciplinary reasons, academic reasons and/or as a result of another State Association's regulation or sanction, retains such status at his/her new school for the same period as decreed by the former school.
8. No eligibility will be granted for a student whose residence within a school's attendance boundaries, with or without parents, or whose attendance at a school has been the result of undue influence (special consideration due to athletic ability or potential) on the part of any person, whether or not connected with the school.

#### **CAPTAINS POLICY**

The choosing of captains is the coaches responsibility, however if any of the following occur, an athlete is ineligible to be a captain or may be stripped of a captainship:

1. The athlete is suspended for not meeting River Valley High School's academic standards.
2. The athlete is suspended for a violation of our athletic code due to use of illegal substances, conduct unbecoming of an athlete, chronic truancy, or three (3) or more discipline referrals.

We believe that being a captain is a privilege, not a right. Captains are asked to be leaders of the sports program in which they have been appointed captains, they need to be the team members that hold others accountable and lead by example.

#### **OUT OF SEASON PARTICIPATION PHILOSOPHY**

It is the belief of the athletic department of River Valley High School, that our high school athletes should be dissuaded from participating in out of season sports during the natural season of a school sponsored sport. It is our belief that we need our student athletes to participate in multiple sports at the high school level and not specialize. Due to this need, we feel that running leagues, clubs, and camps during the season of another high school sport is putting too much of a strain on our student athletes who already need to balance academics and the in-season sport. We feel that it is unacceptable to ask students to participate year-round in a sport, in order to get playing time the next season. We are trying to produce well rounded individuals who have had a chance to experience and be successful in many different activities in high school.

That being said our philosophy is that summer is open to participation in all sports. Coaches are encouraged to sit down and designate certain days that will be set aside for certain sports. We want to allow athletes the chance to participate

and improve in all activities that they participate in, during the school year in the summer. Summer participation may not be mandatory, but may be recommended.

## **ATHLETE AND PARENT/GUARDIAN CONCERNS AND COMPLAINTS**

The Board encourages athletes or parents/guardians to discuss their concerns and complaints through an informal conference with the appropriate coach. Concerns should be expressed as soon as possible to allow early resolution, however, parents/guardians shall adhere to the 24-Hour Rule (below), except in extenuating circumstances affecting a student-athlete's health or safety.

### The 24-Hour Rule

Because of the highly emotional nature of any athletic related conversation, the District has a 24 hour rule for all discussions between parents and coaches. Parents/guardians are not allowed to confront a coach, team or league official to discuss any game or practice situation with the coaching and management staff until at least 24 hours has passed from the completion of the game or practice. This is to provide a 24 hour cushion for both parents/guardians and coaches to reflect and to be able to calmly address any problems.

If an informal conference regarding a complaint fails to reach the outcome requested by the athlete or parent, the athlete or parent/guardian may initiate the formal complaint process. Depending on the circumstances, parents may also be directed to another complaint process (e.g., bullying complaint), which may supersede this complaint process.

### **A. FORMAL COMPLAINT PROCESS**

#### Areas That Are Not Appropriate for Formal Complaint Process

1. Team strategy
2. Play calling
3. Other student athletes

Even after initiating the formal complaint process, athletes and parents/guardians are encouraged to seek informal resolution of their concerns. An athlete or parent/guardian whose concerns are resolved may withdraw a formal complaint at any time. The District will determine whether another complaint process should supersede this complaint process. If so, the District may require the athlete to pursue the complaint under an alternative process and may not proceed under this process.

#### **Level One**

An athlete or parent complaint shall be filed with the athletic director. Upon receiving the formal complaint, the athletic director will set up and facilitate a meeting with the coach and parent/guardian of the athlete within ten working days. It is strongly encouraged that the athlete is involved with this meeting. The athletic director will issue a decision to the athlete and parent within ten (10) working days, unless special circumstances require additional time.

#### **Level Two**

If the athlete or parent/guardian did not receive the relief requested at Level One, the athlete or parent may request a conference with the building principal to appeal the Level One decision. The appeal must be filed in writing, within ten (10) days of the date of the written Level One response, or, if no response was received, within ten (10) days of the Level One response deadline. The building principal will issue a decision to the athlete and parent within ten (10) working days, unless special circumstances require additional time.

#### **Level Three**

If the athlete or parent/guardian did not receive the relief requested at Level Two, the athlete or parent/guardian may appeal the decision to the District Administrator. The appeal must be filed in writing within ten (10) days of the date of the written Level Two response, or, if no response was received, within ten (10) days of the Level Two response deadline. The District Administrator will issue a decision to the athlete and parent within ten (10) working days, unless special circumstances require additional time. This decision will be final.

**Level Four**

If the athlete or parent/guardian did not receive the relief requested at Level Three, the athlete or parent/guardian may appeal the decision to the School Board. The appeal must be filed in writing within ten (10) days of the date of the written Level Three response, or, if no response was received, within ten (10) days of the Level Three response deadline.

I have read the coaches handbook and understand the expectations and duties for my coaching position.

Coach Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Coach Name (Write): \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Sport: \_\_\_\_\_