

Dear Student/Parent/Guardian:

Welcome to Raccoon Devil Sports. We believe that a fun, challenging, and competitive extracurricular experience will help to create strong community and school pride. The opportunities offered at Raccoon School by the Board of Education are designed to promote unity, morale and appropriate struggle for students to develop fundamental skills that will help to foster life-long values and fitness.

Please take time to thoroughly read this handbook. Any questions or need for clarification should be directed to the coach or sponsor. This handbook serves as the general guidance on all sports matters associated with Raccoon School. The Board of Education reserves the right to modify these rules as needed to maintain and support the mission statement of the school. All rules outlined in this handbook may exceed the level of expectation of the Illinois Junior High School Athletic Association.

In addition to this handbook, there are forms included that must be understood, signed, and returned to the coach or sponsor before your son or daughter may participate in any Raccoon sports.

Thank you for your support of Raccoon sports. We are looking forward to a great year of activities. With your help, this could be the best year ever!

Valerie Sherman, Athletic Director

Mission Statement: The Raccoon Board of Education will provide the guidance to maintain equitable and safe athletic opportunities so that our students can develop skills for fitness, teamwork, work ethic, and winning attitudes.

I. PROGRAMS OFFERED

Basketball-Boys and Girls
Baseball-Boys
Softball-Girls
Cheerleading-Coed
Cross Country-Boys and Girls
Track and Field-Boys and Girls
Volleyball-Girls

II. PARTICIPATION AND ATTENDANCE

Membership on a Raccoon team is a privilege and an honor. Students should hold the belief that representing Raccoon PRIDE is of primary importance both on and off of the court or field.

Any student who is eligible and in grades 5-8 may participate in Raccoon JV/Varsity sports. From time to time, when a shortage occurs on a team, a coach may host a tryout for students in 4th grade to try out for the sport. Students playing “up” a level may only play up to the next successive level offered in each sport. All students must be given notice and the opportunity to try out if it is necessary for students to be pulled from 4th grade. The need to “pull up” students will be based on the coach’s assessment, during tryouts, to field a team of at least seven (7) players in basketball, fourteen (14) in baseball and softball, and a necessary number in cross country, and volleyball. Furthermore, with regard to 5th grade basketball, 5th grade girls shall be used to fill vacancies prior to looking to the 4th grade boys. Coaches may not cut students at a grade level and then host a tryout to “pull up” students from the 4th grade. Students who make the new team may not play on more than one team and must choose (for instance, Pee Wee basketball and 5th grade basketball).

Tryout Attendance-Students who choose to go out for any sport must attend all days of tryouts, provided there are tryouts, unless they have a documented medical excuse, a pre-arrangement with the coach, or are a transfer student. The dates of tryouts will be posted ahead of time and will be completed as announced. Students must be eligible (academics and discipline) in order to attend tryouts. Students who are transfer students are subject to the by-laws of the Illinois Junior High School Athletic Association.

Practice and Game Attendance-Students must secure permission from the coach before missing scheduled practices if they are not already excused from school for the day. Unexcused absences from school will also be unexcused from practices (truancy). The coach will determine the validity of each absence. Unexcused practices will be handled as follows:

- 1st Offense-“Benched” one game/contest (very next game/contest)
- 2nd Offense-Benched two games/contests (next two contests)
- 3rd Offense-Student dismissed from team

During time in which a student is “benched” he/she will remain seated behind the coach for court games. The exception to this will be Cross Country and Track. Students “benched” for either Cross Country or Track will remain at school or at home.

There are to be no practices on New Year’s Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Thanksgiving, or Christmas. Two (2) days advance notice will be given to parents for all weekend practices. Open gyms are not mandatory and will not result in consequences for students.

All students must gain permission from their coach prior to missing games/contests. Coaches will determine whether or not the student’s absence is valid. Students who are unexcused from any scheduled game or contest will earn the following consequences:

- 1st Offense-Benched for one game/contest (next game/contest)
- 2nd Offense-Student removed from the team

Practices are closed to all visitor and helpers unless approved by the Board of Education. All helpers and coaches are required to have a background check.

Multi-Sport Participation Attendance

Students may participate in more than one sport at a time (except cheerleading and basketball); however, the following provisions apply:

- Games/contests will supersede practices.
- Current season practices and games take precedence over new seasons.
- Regular season practices supersede post season games/contests that are not a part of IJHSAA sanctions.
- School-sponsored team commitments will supersede outside team commitments.
- Unforeseen issues will be resolved by the athletic director.
- Discipline measures earned by the student will apply to the season that is most advanced.
- When two sports seasons overlap, students who quit the current sport may not participate in the upcoming sport.

School Attendance

Students who are absent from school on the day that a game/contest is to be held, will not be permitted to play unless the absence is due to a verifiable issue not linked to illness.

Students who attend at least the second half of the day will be permitted to participate in games/contests that are scheduled the same night. Students who are absent on Friday due to illness, must be fever free for at least 24 hours (without the help of medication) prior to participating in weekend games/contests. The school office should be contacted in such cases to seek play-time approval surrounding all such absences.

III. ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY

All student athletes, regardless of level of play, shall maintain a "C" average of 75% or better in order to maintain athletic eligibility. Students failing one core subject are ineligible for athletics. Core subjects are English, Math, Social Studies, Reading, and Science. Core academic averages will be checked every Monday at 3:00 PM based on the grade point earned to that point in the quarter. Eligibility will run from Tuesday to Monday. Four grade book grades shall be taken prior to eligibility being assessed at the beginning of any quarter. In order to avoid a situation of double jeopardy of consequences for students who are involved in two seasons due to overlap, consequences will pertain to the season/sport that is most advanced.

Students **must maintain at least a "C-"** in citizenship will not be eligible to attend practices, **but will attend games/events and be seated behind the coach until the grade is raised to a "C-."** Citizenship eligibility will be checked weekly and in the same manner as academic eligibility. Four grade book grades shall be taken prior to eligibility being assessed at the beginning of any quarter.

Students must also meet eligibility requirements to participate in the Pee Wee program.

English, Math, Social Studies, Spelling, Reading, and Science, will be used to compute eligibility.

Academic eligibility of students with an Individual Education Plan (IEP) will be governed by terms expressed in the IEP.

Students on eligibility probation are **not allowed** to attend practice, but must attend events/contests and remain seated behind the coach.

IV. DISCIPLINARY ELIGIBILITY

Alcohol, drug, weapon and/or look-alike possession, use or transference will cause students to be ineligible for athletics for the remainder of the current season.

It is vitally important that student athletes represent their school and community with pride and maintain acceptable behavior. Students who routinely misbehave at school or are guilty of acts of gross disobedience earn disciplinary referrals that have consequences. These consequences will affect a student's eligibility to participate in sports at Raccoon School in the following manner:

- 1st Disciplinary Referral-suspended for next game/contest
- 2nd Disciplinary Referral-suspended for the next three (3) games/contests
- 3rd Disciplinary Referral- removal from the team for the remainder of the season

Students on eligibility probation are **not allowed** to attend practice, but must attend events/contests and remain seated behind the coach. The exception to this will be Cross Country and Track. Students "benched" for either Cross Country or Track will remain at school or at home. If a game or contest is more than three days after the date of the infraction, the student may begin practicing after missing three consecutive practices but will still miss the next game/contest. In order to avoid a situation of double jeopardy of consequences for students who are involved in two seasons due to overlap, consequences will pertain to the season/sport that is most advanced.

Students who violate this rule will be removed from the team.

Students who are suspended from school may not attend any school sponsored events during the time of their suspension. Violation of this rule will result in addition consequences for the student.

Students who are removed from a sports team may try out for the next successive sport that same year, permitting that they are eligible, thus offering the student the chance to learn from his or her experiences. For instance, a student who is removed from the basketball team for earning three disciplinary referrals may later try out for track or summer basketball that same academic year.

V. TRAINING RULES

Coaches must provide a set of training/conduct rules for each athlete prior to the beginning of the season. These rules must be approved by the Athletic Director prior to the beginning of the season. The Athletic Director will maintain consistency with rules across all sports offered at Raccoon School.

VI. PARENT AND ATHLETE ORIENTATION

Prior to and as a part of tryouts, Parents will be required to attend a tryout meeting in which the Sports Handbook will be completely reviewed by the coach. A parent sign off will be required prior to playing. Parents who cannot make the scheduled meeting will need to arrange a time to meet with the coach of the Athletic Director before tryouts.

VII. TRANSPORTATION

Transportation to and from games/contests is normally not provided by the school district. Parents are expected to arrange for transportation to and from sporting events. Please make these arrangements in advance of the school day. The exception to this rule is for games/contests that begin during regular school hours. When this is the case, the school provides transportation to the game/contest and parents provide transportation home. Please understand that when you offer transportation for child outside of your family, your insurance becomes the primary coverage for the additional child. In other words, you become liable for indemnification. Parents are expected to pick up their students on time and coaches are expected to start and dismiss students on time.

VIII. PLAYER, SPECTATOR, AND COACH CONDUCT

Player Conduct

All athletes are expected to follow the Training Rules set forth by their coaches and the Raccoon Code of Sportsmanship. Both of these documents are located at the back of this handbook. Students who choose not to follow the rules outlined by their coaches will be subject to fair discipline by their coaches.

Players who are ejected from a game/contest for unsportsmanlike conduct will be ineligible for the next interscholastic contest at that level of competition, or any other interscholastic contests at any level in the interim. During a game suspension, players **may** attend games/contests and travel with the team to and from games/contests from which sport they are suspended. The player must sit on the bench in street clothes (not in uniform) while in attendance (SIJHSAA Rule).

Spectator Conduct

Spectators are all people in attendance at the game/event who are not present in an official capacity or who are not participating. The primary emphasis is placed on parents, since parents have a profound influence on the attitude and conduct of students. Parents

are expected to follow the Raccoon Parents Sportsmanship Contract and the Raccoon Code of Sportsmanship. All spectators will be asked to follow the Raccoon Code of Sportsmanship. Both documents are included in the back of this handbook. The Raccoon Code of Sportsmanship is also clearly painted on the wall of the gymnasium.

Any fan ejected from a game/contest for unsportsmanlike conduct shall not be permitted to attend the next interscholastic contest at that level of competition, or any other SIJHSAA interscholastic game/contests at any level in the interim (SIJHSAA Rule). Spectators who are removed from an event more than one time per year will be barred from school events (home or away) for the remainder of the year regardless of where the removal occurred (home or away). Spectators who are barred in a previous year and who are removed again the next year will be barred from all school events for that year. All incidents will receive a fair hearing from the Athletic Director. A hearing may be sought from the School Board prior to a full-year ban.

Inappropriate or vulgar language, gestures, and general rudeness or acts of intimidation will be grounds for immediate removal from games and contests. Any matters of this nature that happen prior to or after the competition that did not result in an ejection will be handled by the Athletic Director, Superintendent and School Board and may result in additional disciplinary actions, including ejection. An additional violation within the same year will result in the loss of school activity privileges for the remainder of the school year. A hearing may be sought from the School Board prior to a full-year ban.

Coach Conduct

The coach sets the tone for the performance and conduct of the student athletes, and the coach's behavior should serve as a model to the crowd, and most of all, to the athletes.

Raccoon coaches are expected to reflect a positive attitude in all their approaches to and their interactions with officials, opponents, parents, fans and athletes.

There can never be justification for physical or verbal abuse of an athlete, nor for personal mistreatment in any form. Coaches are expected always to treat every athlete with dignity and respect. All written correspondence to parents and students, other than general details such as scheduling, must be approved by administration. Swearing and the use of obscenities are always inappropriate, whether at practice or during an event.

Any coach ejected from a game/contest for unsportsmanlike conduct shall not be permitted to attend the next interscholastic contest at that level of competition, or any other SIJHSAA interscholastic game/contests at any level in the interim. During a suspension coaches may not attend games/contests or travel with the team to and from games/contests from which sport they are suspended (SIJHSAA Rule).

IX. ATHLETIC EQUIPMENT

Students are responsible for all equipment and uniforms issued to them for their use. Students must pay, at replacement cost, for all damaged or lost equipment/uniforms. All uniforms and equipment must be returned no later than (1) one week after the end of the sporting season. If a student is removed from a team or chooses to quit, he/she must return all equipment/uniforms within (1) week. Failure to return uniforms or to compensate the school district for lost or damaged equipment/uniforms will result in a student not being eligible for future participation in any school sporting programs until the situation is remedied.

X. PHYSICAL EXAMINATIONS

No student at Raccoon School will be permitted to compete in a practice (including tryouts) or a game unless he/she has filed with the School Nurse, a certificate of physical fitness by a licensed physician, a physician's assistant, or a nurse practitioner, not more than (1) one year (12 months/365 days) preceding such practice or game/contest. A record of the physical examination shall be on file in the school office (SIJHSAA Rule).

XI. QUALIFICATIONS OF COACHES AND ASSISTANTS

All coaches and assistants must undergo a background check through the District office and shall be certified in the use of CPR, First Aid, the use of an AED, and the Concussion Training. All coaches and assistants must be approved by the Raccoon Board of Education. **Practices are closed to parent and helper participation.**

XII. PEE WEE BASKETBALL

Pee Wee basketball operates under the authority of the Raccoon Pee Wee Association, which carries its own set of by-laws. It is understood; although, that there is a direct association between the Pee Wee Organization and the school given that only Raccoon students may participate in the program. Given this, it is imperative that students, fans, and coaches all meet the same standards outlined within the Raccoon School Sports Handbook. PeeWee teams may play a total of 25 games per year.

XIII. INSURANCE AND INJURIES

Parents are encouraged to obtain accident insurance for their students prior to participation. The school does hold a supplemental accidental policy that will pay the cost of injury treatment above your personal policy. Students who are injured during a sporting event or practice should report the injury to the coach immediately.

XIV. COMPLAINTS

All complaints should follow the proper chain of command. If you have a complaint regarding a coach, start with that coach. Secondly, move to the Athletic Director. Third,