

Rich Hill Middle & High School Activities Handbook



Presented to BOE on June 9, 2021

Philosophy

The Rich Hill R-IV District believes that interscholastic activities supplement the secondary curricular program and are a vital part of the student's total educational experience. Student activities, athletics, and organizations are an integral part of the total education system and provide experiences not otherwise available. These activities and programs enable students to acquire additional knowledge, a sense of responsibility to self and others, problem solving skills, and emotional regulation necessary to contribute to our community at a high level.

Purpose

This handbook pertains to participation in student activities, athletic programs, and organizations of Rich Hill Schools. Individual eligibility determinations will be made at the discretion of administrators. Student participation in any of our activities is a privilege, and carries a responsibility to the team/organization, to the school, to the community, and to other students.

Athletics and activities are an important part of a comprehensive educational program. Student involvement provides access to experiences that are not otherwise obtained in formal courses of study. Activities offered are based on the needs, talents, and interests of students, and are found in a variety of areas within the district. Participation in extracurricular activities supplement classroom instruction and promote student growth academically and socially.

Competition/Participation Expectations

Middle School: Each student will be given the opportunity to participate. Teams may be split into A and B squads when practical at the discretion of the coach/sponsor.

Junior Varsity: It is the responsibility of the coaching staff/sponsor to prepare participants for success at the varsity level, while maintaining a competitive squad.

Varsity: It is the responsibility of the coaching staff/sponsor to employ players and utilize strategies in a manner which maximizes success for the team as a whole.

Academic Eligibility and Participation Guidelines

All students must meet both the academic eligibility standard and the academic participation standard.

Academic Eligibility Standard for High School Students

For high school eligibility, the participant must be enrolled as a full-time student. The student must have received 3.5 units of credit and shall not have received a failing grade in any subject during the preceding semester. Academically ineligible students who are becoming eligible for the current semester will be eligible on the fifth day of classes of the new term. Summer school credit may be considered for eligibility if administrator approval is granted.

Academic Eligibility Standard for Middle School Students

For middle school eligibility, the participant must be enrolled as a full-time student. The student shall not have received a failing grade in any subject during the preceding quarter. Academically ineligible students who are becoming eligible for the current quarter become eligible on the fifth day of classes of the new term.

Academic Participation Standard

All students, 6-12, will have grades checked at the end of each quarter and at each mid-term. At that time, students with grades D+, D, or D- will be allowed to participate in activities, performances, and contests as long as they attend after school tutoring at least twice weekly until this grade is brought up to a C-. Once the grade is raised, the student is released from mandated tutoring. If students choose to skip tutoring, they will lose their ability to participate in activities, performances, and athletic contests until all missed sessions are attended. Students receiving an F, in any class, will be allowed to practice, but will not be able to participate in performances or contests until the grade raises to a D- or higher. Tutoring is required for these students to maintain their ability to practice with the team.

Co-curricular Activities

Certain courses require students to participate in performances as part of their graded coursework. Students who fail to meet the academic eligibility and/or participation standard will not be eligible to participate in MSHSAA sanctioned activities. However, those students will still be required to participate in graded coursework or complete an alternate assignment as approved by the principal. A list of activities which will be graded will be approved by the principal prior to the start of the school year.

Attendance

School

A student must be in attendance for all seven instructional hours when he/she is participating in an extracurricular activity that day. Exceptions can be made by special arrangement and must be addressed in advance with the principal or athletic director. Failure to make prior arrangements for any missed minutes will result in non-participation for the event occurring on that day. If a student misses class(es) without being excused by the principal or athletic director, the student shall not be considered eligible on any subsequent date until the student attends a full day of classes (MSHSAA by-law 2.2.3). Students are also expected to attend school for the entire day following participation. Absences following a contest may result in the student becoming a non-participant for future contests.

Practice and Contests

Attendance at all practice sessions and contests are mandatory. If a participant will be absent or tardy, he/she must personally speak to the coach/sponsor prior to missing practice or competition. Participants are not permitted to leave early without prior approval from the coach. If a student attends school, he/she is expected to attend practice. Going home due to illness will disqualify a student for that day's practice/contest. All coaches will have their own team policies that outline procedures to be followed in the event of missed practices and contests.

Transportation and Equipment

Transportation

All students are expected to travel to activities via transportation provided by the district. Participants may leave events with parents/guardians only after the student's parent or legal guardian signs the Activity Release Form with the sponsor/coach. Other arrangements for student release must be approved by an administrator prior to the event. Students will not be allowed to sign out with other students or anyone under the age of 18.

Care of Equipment

To provide the student with a sense of responsibility and appreciation for his/her equipment, each individual will be held accountable for the abuse or loss of items. Lost or stolen equipment must be paid for by the student in whose name it is checked out. If equipment is not turned in, the athlete will be ineligible for future activities until items are either returned or paid for in full.

Citizenship

Students representing a school in interscholastic activities must be credible citizens and judged so by the proper authority. Those students whose character or conduct reflects discredit upon themselves or their schools are not considered “credible citizens.” Conduct shall be satisfactory in accord with the standards of good discipline.

Student Responsibility

Each student is responsible to notify the school of any and all situations that would affect his/her eligibility under any of the included citizenship standards. A student who commits an act for which charges **may be or have been filed** by law enforcement authorities shall not be eligible until all legal proceedings have been concluded and any penalty or special condition of probation has been satisfied, per MSHSAA by-law 2.2.2. Failure to notify administration prior to the school’s discovery will result in MSHSAA ruling the student ineligible for up to 365 days, per MSHSAA by-law 2.2.5.

If an administrator is not notified, the team will be required to forfeit any games a student has participated in from the date of the offense to the date of the school’s discovery.

Controlled Substances

At any time after a student begins 6th grade (from the first day of summer vacation to the last day of school) students shall not possess, use, consume, sell, distribute, or be under the influence of any beverage containing alcohol, illegal drug, tobacco product, or nicotine delivery product.

A student will be in violation of this policy if the violation is substantiated verbally or in writing by:

- A law enforcement official
- A medical official
- A faculty member
- A school administrator
- The parent of that student/athlete
- The confession of the student/athlete
- A coach/sponsor

Hearsay and anonymous sources will not be used to substantiate violations of this policy.

1st Violation Penalty: The student shall lose eligibility to compete for a minimum of 20% of competitions scheduled for the season. Penalties will overlap seasons when necessary. The suspension shall begin with the first contest following discovery of the policy violation. Practice requirements will be at the discretion of the coach or sponsor.

2nd Violation Penalty: The student shall lose eligibility to compete for a minimum of 50% of competitions scheduled for the season. Penalties will overlap seasons when necessary. The suspension shall begin with the first contest following discovery of the policy violation. Practice requirements will be at the discretion of the coach or sponsor.

3rd Violation Penalty: The student shall lose eligibility for a minimum of 180 days beginning from the date of discovery.

Additional team discipline may be assigned by the coach or sponsor.

Student Conduct

Students who earn either an after school detention or in school detention will serve the detention, at the discretion of the principal, regardless of practice or contest. A student shall not be considered eligible while serving an out-of-school suspension.

Hazing

Student hazing is expressly prohibited by Board of Education policy. Hazing is defined as the willful conduct directed at another student, whether occurring on or off school property, for purposes of initiation or admission to any school related activity or team. Students violating this policy will be subject to suspension/expulsion from school and exclusion from all activities.

Quitting

A student who begins participating in an activity and later quits on his/her own accord will not be eligible to start practice or pre-season conditioning for another activity before the conclusion of the one that was dropped. An exception can be made if the head coach of the sport that was dropped releases the participant from their team and the head coach of the new activity accepts the participant.

Sportsmanship

Participant Conduct

If a student receives a technical foul or unsportsmanlike conduct foul for intentionally harmful actions, the following consequences will result:

1st Offense: Student will meet with coach and athletic director

2nd Offense: Student will be suspended for one contest

3rd Offense: Student will be dismissed from team for the remainder of the season

MSHSAA by-law 5.5.1c states that any student who is ejected from a contest for unsportsmanlike conduct shall be prohibited from playing in the next contest at that level.

Spectator Conduct

Students, parents, and patrons must demonstrate positive behavior on and off the field of play. If a spectator chooses to enter the field of play, team huddle, or bench area, he/she will be prohibited from attending any district activities for a period of 14 days following the violation. A subsequent offense will result in an inability to attend activities for up to 365 days.

If a spectator is identified by administration or officials for unsportsmanlike behavior, administration has the ability to discipline the offender. This can include a suspension for up to 365 days.

Communication

Parent/Coach Meetings

Communication between parents, coaches, and students is beneficial for logistics, conflict resolution, and maintaining positive relationships. Appropriate concerns to discuss with coaches include the treatment of your child by coaches, the treatment of your child by other participants, and ways to help your child improve. Playing time, team strategy, play calling, or other students are not appropriate items to discuss with the coach.

24 Hour Rule

No meetings between parents and coaches will be conducted immediately following an event. This includes contacting the coach or sponsor via text message or social media. To schedule a meeting, a parent/guardian shall contact the coach or sponsor by using the school's communication system. This can be done through phone or email the day following a contest.

If a parent/guardian chooses to confront a coach immediately following a contest or without first allowing 24 hours to pass, he/she may be prohibited from attending all Rich Hill R-IV activities for a period of two weeks (14 days) following the confrontation. A subsequent offense can result in an inability to attend activities for up to 365 days.

Physical Exam/Insurance

Prior to the first practice session, all athletes are required by MSHSAA to have a current pre-participation evaluation form (MSHSAA physical form) completed and signed by a physician, parent/guardian, and the student. The physical evaluation is valid for 730 days (2 years). Annual pre-participation documentation is still required prior to practice. A student will not be permitted to practice until it is verified that the student has basic athletic insurance coverage.

Changes in the Activities Handbook

The Rich Hill R-IV School Board of Education reserves the right to make changes in the Rich Hill Middle and High School Activities Handbook as deemed necessary. A handbook cannot cover all possible scenarios that may take place. Items not covered are left to the discretion of the principal and athletic director in consultation with the superintendent, under the direction of the Rich Hill R-IV School Board. The handbook is a part of the Rich Hill R-IV School Board of Education's policy and rules incorporated therein by reference.