



**2020-2021**

**Athletic Handbook**

## Forward

The Russellville Cyclones Athletic Handbook is presented to you because you have indicated a desire to participate in the athletic program of the Russellville School District. It serves as an information guide for all concerned parents who have expressed a willingness to permit their child to participate. Participation in interscholastic sports provides a wealth of opportunities and experiences that assist students in personal growth and maturation.

As educators, coaches, and administrators, our goal is to organize and administer a broad-based athletic program that will allow students with athletic interest an opportunity for safe participation in the sports of their choice. Our programs will provide experiences that enhance each student's growth and maturity academically, socially, and physically. The Russellville athletic program will also serve as a source of pride for participants, our school district, and our community.

Our staff is committed to providing;

1. An opportunity to earn a roster position through a tryout process.
2. Adequate equipment and facilities.
3. Well trained coaches.
4. Equalized competition.
5. An atmosphere of fairness and sportsmanship through competition.

Likewise, as a student-athlete, you must commit to a standard of conduct and effort that exemplifies the fulfillment of certain responsibilities and expectations of the proud tradition of the Russellville Cyclones Athletic Program. While this handbook merely serves as an overview and does not attempt to cover every situation that could arise, it is our hope that through this information guide our students and parents will have a better understanding of these responsibilities.

## **UNDERSTANDING OF RULES AND REGULATIONS OF THIS HANDBOOK**

We hope that the parents and athletes understand the rules and regulations covered in this handbook. If a rule or regulation is broken and dismissal from a team is necessary, then the parent will be notified why the dismissal took place. It should be understood that the coach and administration has the final say and the final authority regarding dismissal from a team.

**Any athlete or family members of an athlete that are removed from an athletic event by an official, police or administrator is subject to suspension from all athletic events for the remainder of that season or that year.**

**Any fan that disrupts an athletic event is subject to suspension from all athletic events for the remainder of that season or that year.**

## **PHILOSOPHY OF THE RUSSELLVILLE ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT**

The philosophy of the Russellville Athletic Department is to maintain a broad-based program that will afford all students with athletic interest an opportunity for safe participation in the sports of their choice. The coaches shall deal with the athletes with firmness and fairness in order to establish the leadership they respect and admire.

## **GOAL OF THE RUSSELLVILLE ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT**

The student athlete will develop the skills necessary to become independent problem solving adults and become a positive influence in society, not just a good athlete.

## **REQUIREMENTS FOR PARTICIPATION**

Remember that as an athlete you are not eligible to participate in any sport until the following items have been completed.

1. **Physical examination** completed and on file in athletic office.
2. Completed **Emergency Consent Authorization** Form.
3. Completed **Consent for Drug Testing** Form.
4. All **eligibility requirements** have been satisfied as established by the Arkansas Activities Association.

## **ATHLETES RESPONSIBILITIES**

1. **In the classroom:** In the academic area, the athlete is expected to become a good student. A good student does not mean all "A's". A good student means doing the best in academics.
2. **Practice & Games:** The athlete is expected to attend regardless of holidays, job commitment, social activities or week-ends.
3. **Absences:** An athlete should consult his/her coach before missing practice. Missing practice or an event without good reason will be dealt with severely. An athlete missing for any reason is expected to make up the practice session. Disciplinary action will be at the discretion of the coach.
4. **School Attendance:** Students who miss school or check out on the day of an athletic event will not be allowed to participate unless they missed for an emergency or the building principal excused their absence.
5. **Out of School and In School Suspension:** If an athlete is suspended from school or is assigned to In School Suspension, they may not attend, play, or practice in any school extra-curricular activity and no coach or school personnel will be allowed to work them out until they have completed their suspension.
6. **Eligibility Guidelines and SIP School:** The athletic department encourages the academic excellence of all athletes. The eligibility requirements are those set forth by the Arkansas Activities Association and the State Department of Education. Students that are not eligible can practice with the team as long as they have permission from the head coach. The student can practice, but they are not permitted to play in a game or travel with the team.

Rules are as follows: All first semester 7th and 8th grade students have no requirements to be eligible as long as they have been promoted for any reason. Second semester 8th grade students and first semester 9<sup>th</sup> grade students must pass (4) academic courses the previous semester as specified by the Arkansas Dept. of Education's Standards for Accreditation of Arkansas Public Schools. If you are in 10th, 11th or 12th grade you must pass (4) courses and have a 2.0 GPA. If a student passes (4) courses but doesn't have a 2.0 GPA, he/she can attend

SIP classes. **Head Coaches and the Athletic Director can provide information regarding the SIP Program.**

7. **Care and Responsibility for Equipment**: Equipment should be turned in within one week following the end of the season. An athlete is financially responsible for all equipment checked out to him/her. The cost of destroyed/lost equipment will be replacement costs. An athlete must treat school equipment as though it were his/her personal property. It should never be abused. If an athlete is involved in the theft of school equipment, he/she could be dismissed from the team.

8. **Student Athletes and Social Networking**: As a student-athlete, one is a representative of the school and community and always in the public eye. The Athletic Department advises student-athletes to exercise extreme caution in their use of social networking (i.e.; Facebook, Twitter, MySpace, YouTube, etc.). Student-athletes should not post inappropriate information or pictures on social networking websites that damage or embarrass individuals, teams, the Athletic Department or the school.

Student-athletes should keep the following information in mind before participating in social networking:

- Always represent oneself and one's school respectfully.
- Once any text, photo, tweets, or video is placed online, it is completely out of your control, regardless of whether you limit access to your page. Assume that everything posted is permanent.
- Do not post information, photos, tweets or other items online that could embarrass you, your family, your team, the athletic department or school. This includes information, photos, tweets and items that may be posted by others on their page or on your webpage.
- Do not post disrespectful comments or engage in inappropriate behavior such as the following:
  - Derogatory or defamatory language;
  - Derogatory or defamatory comments about teammates, coaches, officials, opponents, athletics or the school.

Student –athletes could face disciplinary action and even dismissal for violation of school, team, athletic department, or Arkansas Activities Association policy or rules.

9. **Bullying and Hazing**: Bullying and hazing of any kind will not be tolerated. (Refer to the Russellville School District Handbook.)

10. **Proper Conduct and Sportsmanship**: Proper conduct and good sportsmanship are expected at all times. Athletes should be good role models both in and out of the classroom.

As ambassadors of Russellville Public Schools, student-athletes and coaches should strive to represent the very best spirit and tradition of athletics. Remember that athletes not only represent oneself, but one's teammates, coaches, the entire athletic department, the school and community. Student-athletes shall exemplify good sportsmanship on and off the field of play, during pre- and post-game comments to the media, and when traveling and participating at other institutions. Profanity, derogatory comments or other intimidating actions directed at officials, student-athletes, coaches or team representatives will not be tolerated.

## **ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT POLICIES**

### **1. Athletic Participation**

- Students will be encouraged by the coaching staff to participate in any sport they desire.
- The head coach in each sport has complete discretion as to who plays, how long they play, and under what circumstances they play or do not play.
- Try-outs: Sports that are limited in number of participants will conduct try-outs based on ability, potential and grade level. Selection of the team will be at the discretion of the coach.

### **2. Dropping And Transferring Sports**

- Student who drops a sport may not rejoin the team until the next tryout period. (Exceptions will be granted for reasons deemed worthy of appeal by the Athletic Director)
- An athlete who quits a sport is not allowed to participate in another sport without the consent of both coaches involved or until the season of the sport he/she quit has ended. (Exceptions will be granted for reasons deemed worthy of appeal by the Athletic Director)

### 3. Travel

- All athletes must travel to and from athletic contests in transportation provided by the athletic department or must have prior approval by their coach and signed parental consent on approved form.
- Athletes will remain with their squad and under the supervision of their coach when attending away games or events.
- All regular school bus rules will be followed, including those pertaining to food, noise, remaining in seats, and care and respect for equipment.

### 4. College Recruitment Policy

- The Russellville Athletic Department and our coaches will work with college coaches to provide them with the information and material needed for a complete evaluation. Our staff does not make decisions regarding who gets recruited or offered scholarships.  
We have multiple college coaches that evaluate Russellville athletes in all sports every year. Ultimately, it is their decision as to who they recruit.

### 5. Injuries/Illness Notification

- In effort to provide safe participation in all athletic activities, it is of the utmost importance that our coaches and training staff be informed of all injuries or illnesses no matter how minor. Please provide timely notice of any doctor's orders or recommendations pertaining to participation.

### 6. Conflicts in Extra-Curricular Activities

- Coaches recognize that each student should have the opportunity for a broad range of experiences in the area of extra-curricular activities; and to this end, will attempt to schedule events in a manner so as to minimize conflicts.
- Students have a responsibility to do everything they can to avoid continuous conflicts. This would include being cautious about participating in too many activities.

- When conflicts do arise, coaches will do their best to work out a solution. If it becomes obvious that a student cannot fulfill the obligation of a school activity, the student should withdraw from that activity. However, before the withdraw occurs, the student, parents, coaches, and administration should strive to reach a solution if possible.

### **GENERAL INFORMATION CONCERNING ATHLETICS**

**SUMMER WORKOUTS:** All athletes are expected to maintain their physical conditioning throughout the summer. Coaches should inform athletes of any special workout programs to be followed. Weight rooms and gyms will be open as scheduled through the summer.

**TEAM CAMPS:** Coaches may enroll their teams in organized team camps during the summer. Athletes are encouraged to attend if possible.

**INCLEMENT WEATHER:** If school is cancelled due to inclement weather, practices will also be cancelled. Playing of games will be decided by administration of Russellville School District.

**DRUG TESTING:** Any athlete who participates in extra-curricular activities will be subject to a random drug test. Names of the athletes are selected by an outside agency. Any athlete who tests positive to a drug test will be disciplined according to the Russellville School District Drug Testing Policy. (See Drug Testing Policy.) Students that are disciplined for vaping have the option of being tested to show that no illegal substances were vaped. If a vape test comes back positive for an illegal substance, the student will go into the drug testing protocol.

**TEAM TRIPS:** All students must travel to events in transportation provided by Russellville School District. Special arrangements can be made for travel if approved by the building administrator. Sign-out sheets will be provided by the coach, sponsor or teacher for students to go with their parents after the event. **Parents can sign out only their child with the Coach.**

**SPIRIT GROUPS:** This entire Athletic Handbook pertains to all members of any spirit groups.

- A. AACCA Safety guidelines will be followed.
- B. The primary goal is to promote school spirit in the school and at athletic events.
- C. All Try-outs will be held in the spring.
- D. Competition is at the discretion of the Coach.

E. Spirit Groups are allowed to have handbooks with additional rules and regulations. However, they must remain consistent with the rules for dismissal of students as other sport and also follow the guidelines of the other sports in the athletic department.

#### **PARTICIPATION OF ATHLETES IN DIFFERENT SPORTS:**

1. The athletic department's philosophy is that each sport complements the other, both physically and competitively.
2. Students will be encouraged by the coaching staff to participate in all sports.
3. Try-outs: Sports that are limited to a number of participants will conduct try-outs based on ability and grade level. Selection of the team will be at the discretion of the coach.
4. An athlete must complete his/her season in the sport they are involved in before they can try-out for another sport.

**UNDERCLASSMEN PLAYING ON VARSITY TEAMS:** Only special circumstances would allow a student to participate in a sport higher than their grade level unless they are in the 9th grade and they are trying out for a sport not offered at the Junior High level. Circumstances would be evaluated by the coaching staff, athletic director, and the student's parents.

ONLY ATHLETES THAT ARE ELIGIBLE TO PLAY IN VARSITY EVENTS WILL BE ALLOWED TO DRESS OUT FOR THE VARSITY EVENTS. THEY WILL BE ALLOWED TO DRESS OUT FOR JUNIOR VARSITY EVENTS.

#### **HOW TO REPORT A COMPLAINT**

When reporting a complaint, the procedures are as follows:

1. Contact the coach who had direct supervision of the athlete at the time. If satisfactory resolution of the complaint is not made, then;
2. Contact the Head Coach of the sport in which the athlete was participating. If satisfactory resolution of the complaint is not made, then;
3. Contact the Athletic Director of the Russellville School District. If satisfactory resolution of the complaint is not made, then;
4. Contact the building principal of the school. If satisfactory resolution of the complaint is not made, then;
5. Contact the Superintendent of the Russellville School District

**RUSSELLVILLE SCHOOL DISTRICT ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT ATHLETIC CONSENT FORM**

I hereby give my consent for \_\_\_\_\_ to compete in interscholastic sports; participate in related practice sessions and to travel with the team/coach for such functions. I acknowledge that even with proper instruction and supervision, proper use of equipment and strict observance of the rules, injuries and accidents are still a possibility. I understand that the Russellville School District or its employees will not be liable if an injury or accident occurs. I give my consent for treatment at the best medical facility available in case of injury, accident or illness. I understand that I am required to have Primary Insurance Coverage. Russellville Schools has purchased Blanket Interscholastic Insurance Coverage for all participants. This policy provides secondary or supplemental coverage to students actively engaged in the play or practice of activities sponsored by the Arkansas Activities Association. Claims must be made within 30 days of the accident. I understand that the Russellville School District will not be responsible for payment of any medical bill that the family's personal policy or the district's athletic insurance does not pay. I also agree to be responsible for the return of any athletic equipment issued to the above named student in quality condition.

I have read the Russellville Athletic Handbook and do hereby agree to comply and follow the guidelines set forth in order to participate in Russellville School Athletics.

I ACKNOWLEDGE THAT I HAVE READ AND UNDERSTAND THE ABOVE STATEMENTS.

\_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Parent/Guardian Date

\_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Athlete

**NOTE: This form must be signed and returned to the Coach before an athlete may participate in any athletic activity. Please sign, detach and return to your Coach.**

UPDATED May 14<sup>th</sup>, 2020.