

## **Rhinebeck Central School District Interscholastic Athletic Program – Goals, Principles, and Philosophy**

The Rhinebeck Central School District's Interscholastic Athletic program has been designed to enhance the educational experience of our students. Sports involvement provides student athletes with the opportunity to develop physically, mentally, and emotionally. The personal characteristics of physical fitness, athletic skill, leadership, discipline, self esteem, loyalty, cooperation, motivation, sense of fair play and the development of long term friendships are promoted by participation in athletics. The objective of the Rhinebeck Interscholastic Athletic program is to complement the objectives and policies of the school in the development of well-rounded individuals who are capable of taking their place in today's society.

### **Expectations, Participation, and Differences Between Varsity, JV, and Modified Teams**

The interscholastic athletic program has three levels of competition. Modified sports are designed for students in grades 7 and 8. The emphasis at the Modified Level is on participation while learning the necessary skills to compete at more advanced levels. Exceptional athletes in the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade may try out for teams at the JV or Varsity level after successfully completing the Selection/Classification Process, as outlined by the New York State Education Department for that particular sport. Selection/Classification should only be used for "exceptional athletes," typically athletes who are expected by the coach start and to play a majority of each game due to their skills and abilities. Selection/Classification will not be implemented to fill out roster spots. Regardless of the reason, the Selection/Classification process will be implemented at the sole discretion of the school district.

Junior Varsity sports are, for the most part, for students in 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grades. 11<sup>th</sup> graders may be allowed to play JV sports, and 12<sup>th</sup> graders are only allowed to participate at the JV level under certain circumstances and with the advance permission of the Mid-Hudson Athletic League. Here the emphasis is on fine-tuning sport-specific skills and participation. Varsity level teams are generally for 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade students, and selection for these teams is based on skill and performance. At the Varsity level, there is a particularly strong emphasis on competitive play.

Each program shall be designed in a manner that is similar to our academic curriculum. The knowledge and skills needed to be successful on the Varsity level should be used to establish the skills and knowledge developed at the JV and Modified Levels.

### **Factors In Selecting Team Members**

Each sport offered has a differing number of opportunities for players. Therefore, it is logical that each sport will be able to comfortably carry a different number of athletes on its teams. Prior to selecting team members, each coach first will establish the maximum number of

student-athletes that are able to be kept on the team, based on the requirements of the sport. During the try-out process, a team of coaches will evaluate potential players based on their skills and knowledge of the game, as well as on their character, coachability, work ethic, and commitment, and will select team members based upon those criteria. Coaches may not use participation or non-participation in a private club or team, in a private off-season or pre-season camp, and/or in a private training program as a selection criterion for membership and/or participation on an athletic team.

Prior to eliminating potential candidates from team membership, the coach will review these proposed cuts with the Athletic Director. At that point, a collaborative decision will be made by the coach and the Athletic Director. Together, they will articulate the reasons regarding the evaluation criteria that have led to a decision not to include the student-athlete from team membership.

### **Decisions About Playing Time**

Playing time is decided by the coach. Factors that go into this decision will be the student-athlete's skill and knowledge of the game, character, coachability, work ethic, and commitment. Prior to each season, each coach will make the factors that will determine playing time clear to all athletes and their parents.

### **Expectations of Coaches**

Coaches shall abide by the Code of Ethics set forth in the bylaws of the Board of Education, 2.360, in accordance with Section 806 of the General Municipal Law.

They shall be directly responsible to the administrator in charge of their program, in terms of school regulations, professional growth, and professional development. It shall be the duty of coaches to keep informed concerning the policies and rules and regulations of the Board. It shall be the responsibility of the district and building administration to keep coaches' handbooks current with up-to-date information.

Coaches shall attend all meetings scheduled by the administrator or athletic director unless excused in advance.

Coaches shall be responsible for the general discipline of athletes on their teams and shall cooperate in the discipline in the building, on school grounds, and at school events. They shall not leave any of their athletes unsupervised.

Specifically, a coach shall:

- Administer the athletic program for his or her team;
- Ensure the safety of student athletes;

- Care for and account for school property;
- Work closely and harmoniously with fellow coaches and teachers;
- Remain current in best coaching practices, game strategies and tactics, and rules changes;
- Use positive and encouraging motivational strategies to inspire and support student athletes; and
- Model good sportsmanship and appropriate behavior on and off the field or court.

### **Expectations of Student-Athletes**

Students must recognize that participation in the athletic program is a privilege, and that representing the school district as an athlete presumes responsibility to the student-athlete, his/her family, his/her teammates, his/her coaches, his/her school, and his/her community.

All athletes are expected to exhibit exemplary behavior in school, at home, at all contests, and in their personal lives, as reflected in the Board policies and procedures included in the Athlete's Contract that each student-athlete receives at the start of each sports season and, with their parent, must sign in order to participate.

### **Expectations of Parents**

Parents should be supportive of their own children, of other student athletes on the team, and of the coaches in the program. Parents should encourage their children to speak with coaches about potential issues and then follow up to ensure that issues have been resolved in a timely manner. Parents should refrain from discussing game issues right after games, but rather, should set up a meeting with the coach the next day. Parents should not discuss student-athletes other than their own children with the coach, nor expect the coach to do so. If a parent believes the meeting with the coach has not resolved the issue, he/she should set up a meeting with the Athletic Director and, thereafter, with the building principal if necessary.