

ATHLETICS

Ruston High School Athletic Rules and Regulations

Ruston High School believes that the athletic program should be an integral part of the total educational process. The mission of the Athletic Department is to ensure and enhance the quality of life for youth by providing competitive activities. Good contests, properly supervised, give youthful competitors the opportunity to gain self-confidence, improve skills, exhibit good sportsmanship, ethical behavior and integrity. Sports programs help the participant to develop physically, morally and mentally. Athletic offerings are competitive and diversified, thereby allowing students the opportunity to realize their full potential relative to growth and development. All programs are designed not only to teach athletic skills, but also to instill good character and teach sound values. It is felt that the success of the athletic program sets the tone for the entire school. It builds a positive self-image of the team, the school, the community and, more importantly, the individual athlete. It is our final goal that sports activities will produce young men and women who will be able to enter the community and become constructive, contributing members of society: citizens that will leave their mark on this world by making it a better place for future generations. In the best of competition, there are no losers.

General Statement

Interscholastic athletics is a voluntary program. Students are not obligated to participate, and participation is not a requirement for graduation. Competition in high school athletics is a PRIVILEGE, not a right. Accompanying that privilege is the responsibility of the student to conform to the standards established by the school. Athletics are conducted subject to the rules and regulations of Ruston High School, the Lincoln Parish School Board, and the Louisiana High School Athletic Association.

Because inter-scholastics are voluntary and because those participating represent their school, we expect the behavior of those who try out and participate to be of the highest order. This is particularly true of academic requirements, honesty, school citizenship, and sportsmanship. The dignity of the school is reflected in its athletic/activity program. Since it is a privilege to participate and represent the school, it is logical that the school has the authority to revoke the privilege for those who do not conduct themselves in a responsible manner. This sense of responsibility extends to the activity as well as to conduct inside and outside the school.

General Policies and Rules for Behavior

A student athlete must observe the following guidelines:

1. Students shall be held responsible for all rules and regulations covered in the Ruston High School Student Handbook.
2. Guidelines are for the school year and refer to infractions which occur in or out of season. Guidelines also apply during the calendar year when the student is actively engaged in school-associated activity. This includes but is not limited to summer athletic camps, summer league play, and weight-training.
3. Any conduct in or out of school that is determined by the Ruston High School administration to be unbecoming of a participant in Ruston athletics will not be tolerated, and the violator will be subject to disciplinary action.
4. Students shall conduct themselves in a sportsmanlike manner at all times. This includes, but is not limited to disrespect for school personnel, profanity, vandalism, stealing, or destruction of school property or school equipment. Offenses will be considered and consequences administered on an individual basis by the Coach, Athletic Director, or Principal.
5. Must show support for fellow teammates in a positive manner on and off the court and show good sportsmanship on and off the court to referees and the opposing teams. Any violation of these rules will result in suspension from the team based on the coach's decision.
6. Must abide by any general team rules instituted by an individual coach (provided that such rules are deemed appropriate and reasonable by the Athletic Director and/or Principal).
7. Hazing/Harassment/Bullying in any athletic/activity program or outside the program is unacceptable. Student involvement in hazing/harassment/bullying may be suspended from athletic/activity contest/events or removed from team.

8. Students participating in school approved activities away from the campus are not counted as absent, and makeup work will be allowed. (A student shall not be allowed to miss any class he/she is currently failing. This does not render the student ineligible, but he/she shall be released early only from classes he/she is passing. This rule applies to any co-curricular activity including athletics or any school approved field trip.)
9. The Principal, Athletic Director, and Head Coach will deal with any irregularities that may occur or any situation not covered by policy.

Disciplinary Action

Disciplinary measures for any action detrimental to the Athletic Program of Ruston High School and/or violation of team rules will be handled by the coach of the sport. Appeal procedures to disciplinary actions by coaches must be directed to the Athletic Director who will render a decision to any appeal.

Athletics are an extension of the educational process for its student-athletes. In order to enjoy the privilege of participating in athletics at Ruston High School, each student-athlete and parent/guardian should read and understand the following stipulations. No student will be permitted to participate in any athletic practice, scrimmage, or contest until copies of the following are on file with the coach and/or Director of Athletics:

1. Proof of age on file at the school office. (Birth Certificate)
2. Pre-participation Physical Evaluation: Medical History and Physical Examination signed by a physician, or nurse practitioner, and parent or guardian and student. This exam must be current, i.e. dated less than one year from the end of the season in which the student-athlete is to participate.
3. Signed Athletic Parental Permission Form.
4. Proof of Insurance: Ruston High School does not carry insurance for personal injury of athletes. The student athlete must have purchased the student accident insurance or have on file in the Athletic Director's office a waiver form which verifies adequate coverage by a family or group policy.
5. Signed Substance Abuse Form: (Both Parish and LHSAA)
6. Academic Requirements: All student athletes must pass a minimum of 6 classes per year and maintain a minimum of a C average.

Alcohol Use/Possession

RHS has a significant interest in discouraging the use of prohibited substances to provide a safe and healthy environment conducive to learning. The use of alcohol is detrimental to health and conditioning and it is considered a violation of the athletic code if a student possesses or uses alcoholic beverages. All student-athletes' use or possession of alcoholic beverages will not be tolerated, and the violator will be subject to disciplinary action. In addition, the athlete will remain on probation for one calendar year from the date of the offense. (See pg 16 for more information about Alcohol/Drug Use Policy)

- Voluntary Admission of a 1st Offense: A student may admit that he/she violated the code provisions regarding alcohol only one time in his/her high school career. The voluntary admission to the coach or athletic director must occur on the first school day following the rule violation. Parents/guardians will be notified of the admission. The coach or athletic director may suspend the student from one or more contests.
- 1st Violation: A conference will be held including the student-athlete, the parents/guardians, any coaches involved, and the Athletic Director. A two-week suspension where, for the first week the athlete will be banned from all team functions. For the second week, the athlete will practice but will not participate in any contest or scrimmage.
- 2nd Violation: A conference will be held including those same parties who met as a result of the first violation. An athlete must complete a chemical-dependency education program and will be suspended for four weeks from all athletic participation. It is the responsibility of the student to provide the athletic director with evidence of the required assessment/evaluation prior to reinstatement of athletic privileges.

- 3rd Violation: Suspension from all sports programs for the remainder of the student's high school career. If the student successfully completes a drug-and alcohol treatment program, the student may petition the Superintendent for a hearing on reinstatement. However, the minimum suspension from all extra-curricular activities for the 3rd violation shall be one calendar year.
- 4th Violation: Expulsion from participation in any and all extra-curricular activities for the remainder of the student's high school career with no options for appeal.
- Out-of-Season: Same policy as above with the suspension to be served in first interscholastic contest of next season.

Attendance

A student/athlete cannot participate or compete on a day in which you were absent or suspended from your regular classes. Field trips and similar school-related functions are not considered an absence. On any given day, you must be in attendance for 4 of the 7 periods to be eligible for practice or competition on that day. An exception may be granted if the principal or the athletic director is informed prior to the absence and it is considered legitimate. (Doctor's appointment, dentist's appointment, funeral attendance) Prior notice is required for exceptions. It is the responsibility of the student athlete/parent to see that his/her absences are properly explained to the Athletic Office

A student who is absent on Friday may participate on Saturday or Sunday only at the discretion of the principal or athletic director. Athletes who violate this rule will be suspended from the next competition following the discovery of the violation.

Banquet – Athletic

If an athlete has quit a sport the athlete will not be given the privilege to attend the banquet. If an athlete has been suspended from a sport and the sport banquet falls within the suspension period, the athlete will not be given the privilege to attend.

Class Cuts

The focus of school is learning. A student belongs in class. Any student-athlete guilty of cutting class during his/her sport season will be subjected to disciplinary action by the coach.

Criminal Action

When the school has substantiated knowledge that a student has been charged with a criminal offense, he/she will immediately be temporarily suspended from participation in all extracurricular activities. The high school administration and athletic director will consider duration of the suspension and reinstatement of the student to a program based upon a review of the information. A student convicted of a misdemeanor or felony that results in probation or parole will be suspended from all athletic events for the duration of the probation or parole.

Drugs

Please refer to Lincoln Parish School Board Policy.

Detention / Extended School

Athletes assigned to detention or extended school will serve the same duration as any student.

Multiple Sports

The RHS Athletic Department supports the concept of participating in more than one sport. Coaches shall not establish expectations "out of season" which would prohibit or restrict a student's participation in another sport which is "in season." When an athlete competes in more than one sport, until a student is cleared from a sport by the head coach, he/she is not eligible for another sport. Clearance would include but is not limited to payment of bills, return of uniform and equipment, and the ending of the season of the sport. An athlete will not be allowed to participate (practice or contest) on another team during the same season if he/she quits a team without permission from the head coaches and the A.D.

Suspensions from School

A student suspended from school for any reason is ineligible to participate in athletics (practice or contest) until he/she has been reinstated in school and has attended regular classes for one full school day.

Suspensions (In-School)

A student assigned to in-school suspension for any reason is ineligible for athletics (practice or contest) until he/she has attended regular classes for one full school day. Athletes assigned to In-School Suspension will serve the same duration as any student.

Tobacco Products (including smokeless tobacco)

The use of tobacco in any form, at school or any school activity is prohibited. The use of tobacco products (cigarettes, cigars, snuff, chewing tobacco, etc.) is detrimental to health and conditioning and not consistent with the goals and philosophy of athletics. Any athlete found using or in the possession of tobacco products will receive counseling by the coach or athletic director and the parents/guardians will be notified. In addition the violator will be subject to disciplinary action.

Transportation

Team members must ride to and from activities on school provided transportation under the supervision of school personnel. EXCEPTION: Students may return on other than school provided transportation with their own parent/guardian if the parent/guardian is at the event and personally informs the coach/sponsor in writing. However, the coach maintains the right to deny any or all such requests.

Conclusion

Please understand that this handbook is not all inclusive. There are rules and regulations that are not included and, of course, each coach has the right to make reasonable rules that are more stringent than those outlined in this document. These rules will be communicated verbally and in writing to the student-athletes and will be on file in the Athletic Director's office.

All athletic programs at RHS are sanctioned by the Louisiana High School Athletic Association. Students showing athletic ability are encouraged to participate in school sports and should contact the coach of the sport for details. Every school wants to field a team of its best athletes. Students interested in athletics are reminded that eligibility rules exist for age and scholastic achievement. To be eligible to play ball a student must pass six subjects and have a 1.51 grade point average. Student athletes are reminded that each time they play they represent our school. Therefore, athletes are expected to exhibit behavior of the highest order and serve as an appropriate example for other students. Since participation in athletics is a privilege, athletes who encounter disciplinary problems with any teacher or the office may be subject to removal from the athletic team.