

CASTLE HEIGHTS MIDDLE SCHOOL



ATHLETIC HANDBOOK

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Principal: Cynthia Robinson Athletic Director: Stephen Ramey

I. Program

As part of the total school program, the athletic program at Castle Heights Middle School is an important part of providing opportunity for students for growth. The goals of the school's athletic program are to:

- Learn and Improve physical skills.
- Improve personal health and wellness.
- Promote an appropriate understanding of competitive effort.
- Develop interpersonal skills which promote positive teamwork.
- Develop and demonstrate good sportsmanship.

At Castle Heights we support the idea that school athletics promote the values of respect, cooperation, self-discipline, and sportsmanship. It is our goal to have Castle Heights recognized not only for excellent playing skills, but also for outstanding effort and character.

Sports Program

Fall Sports

7th grade football
8th grade football
7th grade volleyball
8th grade volleyball
Football season cheerleading

Winter Sports

7th grade boys' basketball
7th grade girls' basketball
8th grade boys' basketball
8th grade girls' basketball
7th and 8th grade wrestling
Basketball season cheerleading

Spring Sports

7th and 8th grade track
7th and 8th grade softball

The following handbook includes Rock Hill School District 3 and Castle Heights Middle School guidelines for athletic participation.

Student Athletes in the Rock Hill School District are expected to:

- **Promote and uphold good sportsmanship**
- **Behave in a manner that positively reflects their school, team, and community**
- **Refrain from use of profanity, vulgarity, and unsportsmanlike behavior**
- **Show respect to game officials and their judgments at all times**
- **Show respect for opposing players, coaches, spectators, and support groups**
- **Maintain self-control at all times**
- **Accept victory as well as defeat with pride**

II. Eligibility and Fees

Football Restriction:

The South Carolina High School league bans football players playing on a member school team from playing on any other football team whether through a private or recreational league. *“A student whose name appears on a school’s football certificate of eligibility shall not practice with nor participate on another football team for which he has been certified. This restriction includes tryouts. Violation of this rule will render the student ineligible in football for the remainder of the present school year.” (SCHSL handbook – Article VII Section 6-F) There is also a \$500 fine per player per game played and all games are forfeited that the ineligible player participated.*

Castle Heights is a member of the South Carolina High School League. As a member, the school and the athletes involved must follow all rules set by the league, without question. Failure to comply with these rules will result in games being forfeited and the school being fined severely. Please read the statements above and sign/date if the statements are accurate on the back page. Athletes and their parents who sign this contract and then are found to have broken this rule will be responsible for paying any fines the school is subjected to and the athlete will be banned from participating on any other sports teams at CHMS the remainder of the current school year.

In General:

According to SC High School League rules, a student must “meet promotion standards” in order to be eligible to play. Therefore, all students who wish to join a team must have been promoted to their current grade. Students should consider the time that is needed to devote to a team, their interests and what they wish to accomplish, their academic responsibilities, their physical readiness, family responsibilities, and team requirements before committing to a team.

To be eligible to try out for any sports during the school year, a student must have a **physical dated after April 1 of the previous school year.** The physical is not required just for joining the team; it must be completed and signed by a physician before a student is eligible to try out. Forms are available from the front desk of the school or from the athletic directors, and are available on both the Castle Heights and district websites.

The Rock Hill School District collects a sixty dollar (\$60) athletic fee each year from all athletes who are selected and participate in the Middle School and the High

School athletic programs. The fee is due once the athlete is selected to participate on a team and must be paid before a uniform is issued about a week or more before the first game. If this payment is not made, regretfully a student may not stay on the team. Athletes may participate in multiple sport seasons after paying this one-time fee. Ten dollars (\$10) of the fee goes to mandatory supplemental insurance for each participating athlete. The remainder of the fee goes towards replacement of uniforms, equipment, and other athletic-related expenses. In the event an athlete chooses to no longer participate or has to be removed from a team, the athletic fee will not be reimbursed.

This fee does not guarantee playing time for any specific athlete nor does it exempt spectators from payment of the entrance fee to any sporting event.

III. Travel

During the course of a season there may be required travel to games located at different schools or locations. Students are required to travel with the team---both to and from the away locations.

If an emergency situation exists and a student must leave with a parent, a written note, dated and explaining the situation must be submitted to the coach. A student may leave only with a parent; he/she may not leave with a family friend, relative, or older siblings.

IV. Responsibilities of student athletes

Rock Hill School District #3 Athletes Code Of Conduct

The Privilege of Participation - Participation in extracurricular activities is a privilege, not a right. School officials may deprive a student of the privilege of participation when they determine that the student's continued participation is not consistent with the high standards of conduct expected of all participants. In particular, whenever a student violates this code of conduct, the student is subject to losing the privilege of participation in extracurricular activities.

Students are expected to be "heroes in the classrooms and hallways" as well as on the court and the field. Student athletes have an obligation to make every effort to excel in citizenship and academics as they do in athletics.

- Student athletes are members of a team, and they are expected to support team efforts. Interaction with other team members is to be courteous and supportive.

- Students are expected to be positive representatives of the school. Fair play and good sportsmanship are expected of all athletes.
- Students are expected to be present and on time for every practice. A coach should be notified if a student must leave school during the day. Absences or tardies to practice may result in less playing time or dismissal from the team.

A student shall not participate in a contest or practice on the day he/she has been absent from school without just reason. Just reason shall be anything beyond the control of the student (ex: school field trip, doctor/dental appointments, bereavement, religious holiday, etc.). However, confirmation notes will be required by the sponsor or coach of that activity.

- If a student has been assigned to the Behavior Intervention Program for any portion of the day, he/she is expected to be at practice but is not eligible for competition. If the BIP assignment comes on the day of a game, the student athlete will go home at the end of the day and is not eligible to attend or participate in competition. Any BIP assignment will result in ineligibility for that day's or the next upcoming game, match, or meet.
- If a student is assigned out-of-school suspension, he/she is not eligible to attend practice or competition during the day(s) of suspension. Any OSS will result in the missing of two games, matches, or meets
- A student athlete must maintain positive behavior within the school and community as well as in athletic activities. The coach and administration reserve the right to immediately dismiss any student athlete from a team due to flagrant poor sportsmanship, extreme misbehavior within the school, negative interaction with team members, or criminal behavior within the school or community.
- Student athletes are expected to maintain satisfactory academic progress. All student athletes must meet promotion standards (a passing grade in the four content areas of math, language arts, science, and social studies) in order to be eligible to try out for a team.

A. The prohibition of unacceptable conduct: Certain conduct by any participant is absolutely unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Examples of such unacceptable conduct include, but are not limited to, theft, vandalism, disrespect, hazing, harassment, violation of alcohol, tobacco and illegal substances restrictions, major

infractions of The Student Code of Conduct, or violations of law. This unacceptable conduct rule shall be in force twelve months of the year. This means that the school district may penalize or punish a participant who engages in unacceptable conduct during the school term, over a holiday break, or while school is out of session. This also means that the school district may impose sanctions for unacceptable conduct which occurs at school, at a school sponsored event, or off school grounds. The penalty for engaging in unacceptable conduct can include revocation of the privilege of participating in extracurricular activities.

B. Definitions of specific kinds of unacceptable conduct:

- Theft- stealing or taking personal property that belongs to another person, school, team, or organization.***
- Vandalism- willful or malicious breaking, destruction, or defacement of public or private property.***
- Disrespect- actions that show or express a lack of high regard or respect for others (fellow students, opponents, teachers, coaches, administrators, parents, or adults). This includes actions that result in OSS and the use of unacceptable language (cursing).***
- Hazing- any action that humiliates, degrades, abuses, or endangers another person, regardless of that person's willingness to participate. These actions may include initiation rituals into a team, club or organization.***
- Harassment- actions, comments, threats, verbalizations, coercion, jokes, teasing, or intimidation that is based on or takes place because of the race, color, sex, religion, or national origin of another person, who reports the actions as unwelcome.***
- Alcohol, tobacco, and illegal substances restrictions – Any illegal use or possession of alcohol or tobacco or use, sale, possession, or purchase of any illegal or controlled substance, including prescription drugs.***

This list of examples is not intended to be exhaustive and the appropriate staff members may impose disciplinary action for conduct not specifically listed here.

C. Punishment for Unacceptable Conduct:

Generally, when a school official has reason to believe that a student participant has engaged in unacceptable conduct as described in this code of conduct, the responsible school official shall notify the student of the violation and provide the student with the opportunity to present his or her account and explanation. The responsible school official will then confer with the Athletic Director or designated administrator to determine the appropriate sanction or penalty to be imposed. The level of discipline imposed is at the school official's discretion, and sanctions may range from reprimands to suspension from a game or contests, or in the most serious incidents of misconduct, dismissal from a team or permanent denial of participating for the remainder of the student's high school career.

Suspension means that the student is not allowed to dress out or participate in a contest or event. It may also include suspension from practice. However, the participant may be required to continue to practice with the team or program.

Dismissal means that the student is no longer a part of the team or program. If dismissed, the participant's uniform and equipment will be taken up and his/her name will be removed from the team or program roster.

Out-of-School Suspension (OSS) – During the period that any participant is serving an out-of-school suspension, the student will not be allowed to participate in practice or games or contests. The participants may return to participation in any activity only after being readmitted to school and attending school for one day.

Student Disciplinary Actions on Eligibility for Extracurricular Activities

An extracurricular activity often entails activities of public interest, visibility, and focus of attention. Students who take part in such activities, in effect, serve as special ambassadors of the school they represent. Consequently, the behavior of those students who choose to participate in these activities draws such public interest and attention that it is unique in its capacity to elevate or diminish the School District's standing in the public mind. Strong public education programs cannot exist without strong public support. Therefore, all students participating in extracurricular activities who are charged by law enforcement authorities with criminal conduct¹ or who engage in other acts of "gross misbehavior", e.g. (A) possession or use of controlled substances at school or at school-sponsored activities, (B) acts of disrespect to a teacher or other school authority, (C) acts of cruelty or violence either physical or emotional, (D) use of profane or vulgar language shall, at the discretion of the principal, be subject to suspension and/or possible exclusion from participation in extracurricular activities.

***The U.S. Supreme Court has ruled that random drug testing for students who participate in extracurricular activities is constitutional as long as certain procedural steps are followed. Before taking disciplinary action, pursuant to this rule, the principal shall meet and confer with the student's teacher and extracurricular sponsor(s). The principal's decision shall be final unless reversed or modified on appeal to the Superintendent or the Superintendent's designee, in which event the decision of the Superintendent or the Superintendent's designee shall be final. If a student is found to be in violation of the above rule the following consequences shall be applied:**

1st Offense: The student shall be suspended from all extracurricular activities for not less than five (5) consecutive school days. If the offense involves use or possession of a controlled substance, the student is referred to the Keystone program and must complete the program. If, at any point, the student fails to follow all rules and regulations for attendance and participation in the program, he/she will immediately become ineligible to participate in any activity until the program is fully completed. The student's eligibility to resume participation is contingent upon his/her agreement to participate in a random controlled substance testing program for a period of not less than six school months.

2nd Offense: The student shall be suspended from all extracurricular activities for the remainder of the school year. If, however, the second offense occurs with less than nine (9) weeks remaining in the school year, the principal may, if he/she chooses, extend the suspension period to include the first nine (9) weeks grading period of the ensuing school year.

Felony Criminal Charges: Charges of felony criminal offenses brought by law

enforcement shall result in immediate ineligibility from all extracurricular activities for a calendar year from the date of the charge. If a student is found not guilty of such charges, he/she shall be eligible, following review by the principal, for immediate reinstatement. If a charge brought forth by law enforcement is of high and serious nature, but may not be classified as a felony, the charge may be determined, by review of the principal, to be treated just as a felony for purposes of this rule. Any violation of this rule under a court ordered penalty or performance obligation (i.e. pre-trial intervention) of some kind would render the student ineligible, as the rule should apply, until the court order has been fully satisfied.

Notice of Decision and Right to Appeal: Notice of a decision by the principal to suspend or exclude shall be given to the student's parent/guardian in writing. In those instances where the principal's decision is to suspend the student from participation in activities for more than five (5) consecutive school days, the notice shall conclude with a final sentence that stands alone and in bold print that reads as follows:

This decision may be appealed to the Superintendent or Superintendent's designee within five (5) days of this decision by submitting the following request in writing addressed to:

**Superintendent
Rock Hill Schools
P.O. Box 10072
Rock Hill, SC 29731**

**Please schedule at the earliest available time a hearing to review the decision of _____, Principal
Of _____ School, to (suspend) (exclude) my
son/daughter, _____, from participating in activities.**

Nothing herein shall be construed as limiting the responsibility or authority of school officials to initiate standard disciplinary processes or to take other disciplinary actions as may be deemed appropriate.

***Any student formally charged by law enforcement with criminal conduct about which school officials neither know nor are able, through their own investigative efforts, to determine the facts will be required to cease participating in extracurricular activities pending resolution of the criminal charge.
Upon resolution of the charges, the matter will be reexamined and a decision will be made regarding any further exclusion from extracurricular activities.**

V. Responsibilities of athletic coaches

Coaches are to serve as professional role models. They are expected to maintain appropriate language and demeanor in all situations and to be positive and professional representatives of the school and district.

- Coaches are expected to be knowledgeable of the sport and to be aware of the rules as well as conference and state league guidelines. They are to be knowledgeable about skill development and guidance as well as competitive strategies.
- Coaches must meet high school league competency requirements regarding concussion prevention and guidelines for participation. They must also meet safety guidelines for weather issues and/or student well-being.
- Coaches are expected to supervise student athletes effectively. Students will be supervised as they wait for rides as well as during practice activities and competitions.
- Coaches will make an effort to play as many students as possible during competition. There is no requirement that every student athlete is to play in every competition.
- Coaches are expected to communicate well with players, parents, officials, and the coaches and/or administrators of other school teams.
- Coaches are expected to supervise and guide the activities of any volunteer coaches accepted for the team. Each team is allowed a maximum of two volunteer coaches. These coaches must be pre-approved by the principal.
- Coaches will expect outstanding effort, team cooperation, and excellent public sportsmanship from all student athletes.

VI. Responsibilities of parents

It is the goal of the relationship between the parent and the coach to promote positive support of the student athletes and team identity and spirit. Cooperation among coaches and parents will result in a stronger and more positive experience for student athletes.

- Parents should read the athletic handbook with their children and ensure that there is full understanding of all expectations. A signed form that a student and parent have read the handbook is required of all athletes before any participation in competition. A signed form that the parent has read the

Concussion Fact Sheet (attached at the end of the handbook) is also required.

- Parents are responsible for providing timely transportation and pick-up of students after games and practices. If timely pick-up becomes a concern, a coach will notify the parent directly of this concern. After this notice, if the situation is not improved or resolved, a student may not be eligible to continue on the team.
- Communication with coaches is important. If a parent wishes to communicate with the coach, he/she should call the school for an appointment. (Approaching a coach during practice or at the end of a competition is not appropriate while a coach is involved with supervision of students.) Parents should communicate with coaches concerning advice on how to help the athlete improve with extra practice, concerns about a student athlete's physical well-being, concerns with academic progress, or positive comments about the team. It would not be appropriate for parents to attempt to discuss team strategies, individual playing time, or the performance of other student athletes with the coach.
- Parents are welcome at all games and matches---and are encouraged to attend. Practices, however, are closed to spectators and guests.
- Spectators may not coach from the stands or sidelines to the degree that it interferes with or distracts players from the directions of the school coach.
- Parents, by their presence at competitive events, are also representatives of the school. The expectation of good sportsmanship and positive public decorum sets a model for our athletes and your children.
- No action on the part of a spectator should repeatedly pull attention from athletic play. If the administrator on site or the school resource officer feels that any action on the part of a spectator contributes to a hostile or unsafe environment, that spectator will be required to leave the athletic event and school grounds. Failure to do so may result in criminal charges.

Parent/Guardian Athletic Code of Conduct and Expectations

We are challenged with the educational development of young men and women through participation in athletics. A well-organized program has the potential to promote a student's development, mentally, physically and socially. It is our commitment to provide such a program in the Rock Hill Schools.

The goal of the interscholastic program in the Rock Hill Schools is to teach the student athletes sportsmanship, commitment, fairness, sacrifice, hard work

and team work. An essential part of that teaching process is for those qualities to be demonstrated by all those involved with the program including the coaches, parents and the student athletes themselves.

To ensure that our programs are a positive experience for all involved, the following list of expectations has been developed. By allowing your child to participate in interscholastic sports within the Rock Hill School District, you have committed yourself to certain responsibilities and obligations, which are, but not limited to;

- 1. Understanding that participation in athletics is a privilege and not a right. Student athletes risk being removed from a team if the expectations set by RHSD3, the home school's athletic department and the Coach are not met.***
- 2. Athletes take part in interscholastic sports for their enjoyment, not yours. Support your child win or lose and be realistic about his/her talents. Do not force a child to participate if it is not their desire.***
- 3. Communicate positively with your child about the program, including talk about the coaches, officials and other team members.***
- 4. Show respect for everyone involved in the program---the coaches, team members, the parents of other athletes, the opposing team members, score keepers, and referees. Sportsmanship is more important than winning and that is the message we should send with our actions at all times. The use of profanity or yelling obscenities at the officials during contests is prohibited.***
- 5. Promptly pick up your child after all practices and contests.***
- 6. The use of drugs, alcohol and tobacco products while attending all athletic events is prohibited and will result in your removal and possible arrest.***
- 7. Support the concept of being a student first and an athlete second. Athletic eligibility is dependent on the student meeting academic guidelines set by the SCHSL and home school. Monitor your child's progress in the classroom. Commit to your child's education and be sure to convey that commitment to them. Athletic scholarships are a dream for many, but before it can become a reality, they must have the grades to be admitted to the college and/or university.***
- 8. Parents are welcome at all games and matches - and are encouraged to attend. Practices, however, are closed to spectators and guests. Parents, by their presence at competitive events, are also representatives of the school. The expectation of good sportsmanship and positive public decorum sets a model for our athletes and your children.***

The staff of Castle Heights strongly believes in the potential of every student, and every effort is made to ensure that every student find areas of success. Good communication of expectations contributes to our students' success, and the athletic handbook is an effort to contribute to good communication among our staff members, our parents, and our students.

Please sign and return to your child's team coach.

I have read and understand both the Castle Heights Middle School Athletic Handbook and the FILE: JLCEG-E pages dealing with Concussions and Student Athletics.

I give permission for my child to travel to and from all scheduled games not held at Castle Heights via a district activity/school bus. This signed agreement for both rules and concussion policies will be valid for any team in which the student participates the entire school year.

For those involved in the football program, I have also read and understand the SCHSL football rules and regulations that apply to participation.

Student Signature: _____

Date: _____

Grade: _____

Parent/Legal guardian signature: _____

Date: _____