

Rutherford County Schools Athletic Handbook

Revised 8/8/17

Rutherford County has a long, proud tradition of excellence in athletics. This handbook is designed to guide principals, athletic directors, coaches, players and parents that are participants in Rutherford County Athletic programs, as we endeavor to maintain and enhance opportunities for our student athletes. In that quest, we must always be mindful of the balance between academics and athletics, that each should work in concert with the other for the overall positive growth of each student involved. It is noted that the Principal of each school shall be in charge in all matters pertaining to the athletic relations of his/her school, and in the management of the school's athletic program. The execution of these duties and responsibilities are often entrusted to the school Athletic Director. The role of RCS Athletic Director shall be to aid and assist these school leaders to be compliant with TSSAA/TMSAA/RCS rules and guidelines in the most time efficient way possible, thus allowing them maximum time to pursue other essential tasks related to operating a successful school.

Principals shall be responsible for making all coaches aware of the availability of this handbook, and shall oversee compliance of its contents.

Rutherford County Director of Schools

Don Odom

Rutherford County Schools Athletic Director

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<http://www.rcschools.net/athletics>

TSSAA Member High Schools

Blackman HS
Riverdale HS

Central Magnet HS
Siegel HS

Eagleville HS
Smyrna HS

LaVergne HS
Stewarts Creek HS

Oakland HS

Non-TSSAA Member High Schools

Holloway HS

TMSAA Member Middle Schools

Blackman MS
Rockvale MS

Central Magnet MS
Siegel MS

Christiana MS
Smyrna MS

LaVergne MS
Stewarts Creek MS

Oakland MS
W-Buchanan MS

Rock Springs MS
Eagleville MS

Non-TMSAA Member Middle Schools

Thurman Francis AA

Middle School Interscholastic Athletics

- TMSAA Rutherford County Middle Schools are united under the Rutherford County Middle School Athletic Guidelines, which has been adopted as part of the regulation for the operation and control of athletics of these schools. TMSAA rules and regulations shall also be in force for these schools. The TMSAA handbook is found at tssaa.org. It is suggested to copy the handbook from the web site and save it on your computer for quick access.
- Eagleville Middle School plays in the Duck River Valley Conference and is governed by DRVC and RCS guidelines. Thurman Francis AA plays as a full independent and is governed by RCS guidelines.

Athletics Categories

- 1) **RCS Sponsored Sports** – These are recognized by RCS as school sponsored sports. They require all verifications for travel, physicals, concussion law, coaching qualifications, etc. as outlined by TSSAA rules and the RCS Athletics Handbook. These are:
Baseball Basketball Bowling (HS) Cheerleading Cross Country Football Golf
Soccer Softball Swimming Tennis Track Volleyball Wrestling
- 2) **RCS Affiliated Club Sports** – These are affiliated with and approved by the individual school. A medical physical is not required for participation. Each student shall have on file a Consent for Athletic Participation, Travel, and Medical Care form. State law concerning Concussion Protocol and Sudden Cardiac Arrest shall be followed. Coaches must be a faculty member or an approved Non Faculty Volunteer.
*Archery Trap Ultimate Frisbee Bowling (MS) Fishing Ice Hockey***

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Role of School Athletic Director

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The Director of Schools and the RC School Board want to emphasize the role of school administration, including the school AD, in oversight issues dealing with extra-curricular activities. It is important to remember that school administration has full authority and responsibility for all matters pertaining to the school, its staff, its students, its parents, and its spectators. When actions of any of these are inconsistent with the known rules of safety and sportsmanship, it is the responsibility of the administration to take immediate action to remedy the situation.

In conjunction with the school principal, the school athletic director will be responsible for:

- 1) Hiring and oversight of all coaches
- 2) Insuring coaches are properly registered, and compliant with required certifications and trainings.
- 3) Oversee the Non-Faculty Staff application process.
- 4) Insure player eligibility
- 5) Insure that all student participants have completed and submitted required forms for participation.
- 6) Oversee the process which allows Home School student participation.
- 7) Assist coaches in scheduling, managing facilities.
- 8) Assign extracurricular supplements.
- 9) Insuring that each activity has an Emergency Action Plan in place for practice and games.
- 10) Oversee all game management.
- 11) Assisting coaches in acquiring and maintaining necessary equipment.
- 12) Serve as liaison between school and booster clubs.
- 13) Monitor facilities for safety compliance.
- 14) Regularly inform coaches of rules and regulations set for forth by the NFHS, TSSAA/TMSAA, RCS, state law.
- 15) Assist coaches in securing game officials.
- 16) In conjunction with the school bookkeeper, oversee coaches in matters concerning funding.
- 17) Be familiar with RCS Athletic Handbook and RCS MS Athletic Guidelines, and guide coaches to compliance with all included in those documents.

Coaches

Coach's Code of Ethics *Rutherford County Board of Education ADM 1-7*

Athletics is an integral part of the school's educational program. An interscholastic program should be designed to enhance academic achievement and should never interfere with opportunities for academic success. A coach shall promote the entire interscholastic program of the school and direct his or her program in harmony with the total school program. The coach must be aware that he or she occupies a position of great influence on the education of a student-athlete and therefore should never place the value of winning above the value of instilling the highest ideals of character. Coaches must uphold the honor and dignity of their position. In all contacts with student-athletes, officials, school administrators, competitors and the public, coaches shall set an example of the highest ethical and moral conduct. Based upon these principles, all coaches should:

- 1) Show respect for players, officials and other coaches.
- 2) Respect the integrity and judgment of game officials.
- 3) Establish and model fair play, sportsmanship and proper conduct.
- 4) Establish player safety and welfare as the highest priority.
- 5) Provide proper supervision of students at all times.
- 6) Use discretion when providing constructive criticism and when reprimanding players.
- 7) Strictly abide by all rules, regulations and guidelines of any middle school, secondary school or any other athletic regulatory association.
- 8) Refrain from the use of profanity, vulgarity, offensive, and/or other abusive language and gestures. Likewise, refrain from engaging in offensive, inappropriate, or abusive physical contact (shoving, grabbing, hitting, etc.) with any student-athlete, official, or other person.
- 9) Avoid suggesting, providing, or encouraging any athlete to use nonprescriptive drugs, anabolic steroids, or any other substance to increase physical development or performance.

Goals of All Concerned with Rutherford County School Athletics:

1. To encourage the development of our youth into productive citizens and to develop their abilities and attitudes for further learning and success in life.
2. To encourage participation and would like to involve as many students as possible in a competitive, interscholastic experience.
3. To build and maintain athletic programs which seek to educate athletes about community support and encourages them to return that support both now and throughout their lives.
4. To recognize that the goal is to win, but to win the correct way. Never sacrifice character for wins.
5. To emphasize the proper ideals of sportsmanship, ethical conduct, and fair play.
6. To stress the values derived from playing the game or sport fairly.

7. To show cordial courtesy to visiting teams and officials.
8. To establish a respectful relationship between visitors and hosts.
9. To respect the integrity and judgment of sports officials.
10. To achieve a thorough understanding and acceptance of the rules of the game, standards of eligibility regulations and rules as set forth by Rutherford County Schools and TSSAA.

Duties of a Coach

1. Conduct practices and games in a safe physical environment.
2. Use current knowledge of proper skills and methods of instruction.
3. Use safe and appropriate equipment.
4. Proper short- and long-term planning.
5. Proper matching of athletes in practices and games by size, experience and ability.
6. Provision of adequate supervision of athletes.
7. Provide warnings to parents and athletes of risks inherent in sport participation.
8. Sensitivity to the health and well-being of athletes under a coach's care.
9. Provision of appropriate emergency care.

Coaching Citizenship

Coaches are often the most influential person in the adolescent's life, thus we should take this responsibility seriously. Teaching moments are plentiful, i.e. your standards of dress, grooming, posture, politeness, respect for authority should all be addressed. Remember, you can and should be a positive influence on the whole person. Athletics for most will pass in time like a ship in the night.

Concerning Student Athletes, Coaches Shall:

- Establish his/her own policy on how he/she selects the team, and make this known prior to selections.
- Explain their team policies to candidates before the season/practice begins.
- Provide training rules and any other unique regulations of the sport to athletes and parents.
- Monitor all student athletes' grades and conduct.
- Be informed about policies concerning injuries, medical attention, and insurance; completes paperwork on disabling athletic injuries on proper forms and submits to the proper personnel.
- Be responsible for all actions of student managers, assistants, and others associated with the team.
- Determine discipline, and be diligent in contacting parents as necessary. i.e. Student ineligibility, student is dismissed from the team, etc.
- Assist student athletes in securing information concerning scholarships or other financial aid.
- Have an emergency plan of action concerning emergency injury situations-both at home and on the road.
- Strictly adhere to safety procedures at all times.
- Refrain from the use of profanity and tobacco while coaching.
- Monitor locker rooms and supervises all team functions.
- Communicate with parents during the entire year.
- Direct unsolved parental grievances to the School Athletic Director / School Principal.
- Supervise all athletes until transportation arrives. Leave only after each student has been picked up
- Check restroom and locker rooms. Turn off lights.
- Contact media with scores, scholarship signings, etc.
- Not make copies of any RCS keys w/o permission of school administration.

Communication

Each coach is required to hold a pre-season meeting with their parents. TSSAA has available "Preseason Meeting Handbook", "Guidelines for Spectators (Parents)" and "The Role of the Parents in Athletics", which are valuable tools to disseminate at these preseason meetings. Topics to be covered in this meeting should include but not be restricted to:

1. Expectation of the coaches, players and parents
2. Chain of command. Rules for players – late for practice, missed practice, grades, school behavior, dress/grooming
3. Required signed documents
4. Full schedule. (Inc. meetings, practice, games)
5. Safety practice. i.e. Concussions, Heat Index, Lightning, etc.
6. Academic requirements
7. Sportsmanship, Hazing, Bullying, etc.
8. Costs involved – what happens to funds if player quits/dismissed
9. Other deemed appropriate

I would suggest taking a look at the NFHS free online course entitled "The Role of the Parent in Sports." I have included a link for you to review. The course comes with printable resources that may be valuable to your efforts. The course is free and does not take very long to complete. You can view a preview at this link<http://www.nfhslearn.com/electiveDetail.aspx?courseID=18000>

- Many problematic issues can be avoided by having open avenues of communication open throughout the season. Coaches are encouraged to communicate with parents on a regular basis.

Player Checklist

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Head coaches shall have in their possession a completed RCS Player Checklist (available from the school AD) form of the before first day of practice.

AD Checklist / Coaches –Sports/Activities

Head coaches shall submit to the school AD a completed RCS AD Checklist/Coaches–Sports/Activities form (available from the school AD) before first day of practice.

Non Faculty Staff Coaches:

- 1) *All NFS must be approved yearly.* Your school AD has the proper forms for applicant approval and will submit these completed forms to the RCS AD. Re-approval from the previous year is a very simple procedure. However, it **MUST** receive school board approval. Keep in mind that the board often meets just once a month, so approval can take weeks after receipt at the Central Office.
- 2) All NFS that were not approved the previous year must go through background check and fingerprinting, which requires a \$36.31 fee. This can take 5-7 days. That adds to the time it will take for approval. **PLAN AHEAD –SAVES FRUSTRATION.**
Note: Volunteers and service providers who are employees of universities, public school systems or law enforcement agencies will not be fingerprinted if the volunteer or service provider presents a letter from their employer stating they have undergone a TBIFBI background check with no indicators reported.
 - Before practicing with any team, all Non Faculty Volunteers must be approved by the RCS Board as set forth in RCS policy ADM 1-6. This requires principal's recommendation to the RCS AD using forms that have been provided. Non Faculty Staff Coaches and First Year Coaches must be submitted to TSSAA online.
 - The \$50 fee (HS) per Non-Faculty Coach must be submitted to the TSSAA office. **MS fee is \$40 per Non-Faculty Coach - \$100 maximum per school regardless of # of Non-Faculty Coaches.
 - Education Requirements - It is the responsibility of each school to verify that all of their non-faculty coaches have met their coach's education requirements. This means a non-faculty coach must have completed the ASEP courses prior to May 15, 2013 OR completed the NFHS courses prior to coaching. All non-faculty coaches must complete the NFHS "Fundamentals of Coaching" and "First Aid, Health and Safety for Coaches" online prior to his/her employment. All coaches must be submitted and registered with TSSAA prior to coaching

Per RCS Administrative Policy (this supersedes new '16-'17 TMSAA/TSSAA guidelines):

The number of Non-Faculty Staff may not exceed these limits per sport (not per team – i.e. Freshmen, JV, Varsity):

Football – 3	Basketball – Boys 2; Girls 2	Baseball – 2
Softball – 2	Track – Boys 2; Girls 2	Golf – Boys 1; Girls 1
Cross Country – Boys 2; Girls 2	Soccer – MS Boys 1; MS Girls 1; HS Boys 2; HS Girls 2	Volleyball – MS 1; HS 2
Wrestling – MS 1; HS 2	Bowling – Boys 1; Girls 1	Tennis – Boys 1; Girls 1
Cheerleading – MS 1; HS 2	Swimming – MS Boys 1; MS Girls; HS Boys 2; HS Girls 2	

Retired educators shall follow the NFS application process, and will be counted against the stated NFS numbers limit. It shall be the responsibility of the school principal to monitor and be in compliance with this policy.

NOTE: TSSAA (High Schools) allows for NFS to serve as head coach for Golf, Cross Country, Volleyball, Soccer, Wrestling, Bowling and Tennis. The number reflected above is the limit for a NFS position, not head coach. **TMSAA (Middle Schools)** allows NFS to be a head coach in any sport.

Temporary NFS Approval Process

In many areas, particularly the fine arts, clinicians are often brought in on a one/two time basis to work with the students. In another example, an approved accompanist is ill and unable to attend a rehearsal. Do these non-faculty persons have to go through the full approval process? The answer is no. With permission from the building principal, a certified teacher may allow a clinician, performer, instructor, etc. to work with their students on a "temporary basis" provided that a certified teacher is in a full supervisory mode at all times the guest is in contact with the students.

The principal should:

1. Review an overall account of the event (What, Where, When, Why, Schools Involved, Number of students, etc.).
2. Clearly identify RCS person assigned for oversight.
3. Have the following information for the temporary NFS:
 - A) Name.
 - B) Current (or most recent past assignment if retired) professional assignment.
 - C) Contact information (Address, Phone, e-mail).
 - D) Names and contact information of provided references.
 - E) Other information the principal deems necessary.

Provided everything is in order, principal may grant permission for the temporary NFS to work with students immediately.

Review of key points:

- With prior approval from the building principal, a clinician, performer, instructor, etc. may work with RCS students on a "temporary basis" (one/two times).
- A certified teacher must be in full supervisory mode at all times the temporary NFS is in contact with the students.

TSSAA Rules Meeting Attendance (High School Only)

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A member of the coaching staff in each sport or AD shall attend a state rules meeting (if held) or complete the online course (if available) in the sport involved. The penalty shall be a fine of \$50 if this requirement is not met in 2 consecutive years.

Coaching Supplements

Information on current coaching supplements may be found in the RCS Administrative Handbook - ADM 1.12(b)

Schedules and Rosters

The coach shall complete conference and non-conference athletic events, within applicable TSSAA/TMSAA and applicable association guidelines. Scheduling should be with schools within a reasonable driving distance so that students will miss minimal class time. All TSSAA/TMSAA sports are required to file eligibility (roster) and schedules online w TSSAA, deadline is first listed contest date. Head coach shall be responsible.

Recruiting Rule

Guidelines for Understanding the Recruiting Rule 2016-17 (From TSSAA Handbook p. 17-18).

1. Athletes or prospective athletes should be treated no differently than students who are not athletes. Students should be seen as students and not singled out based on their potential athletic ability.
2. To avoid the appearance of impropriety, a coach who is contacted by any student or family or individual about attending a school where he or she is the coach should inform that person that he or she needs to contact the administrative official or officials of the school who normally deal with the admission process.
3. To avoid the appearance of impropriety, any meeting with coaches regarding athletes or prospective athletes should be a part of the admissions process at the school and should take place at the school.

Q. How is influence for athletic purposes interpreted in the recruiting rule?

- *Examples of influence for athletic purposes may include, but are not limited to:*
 1. Offers of or acceptance of any special privileges not afforded to other students, whether athletes or not.
 2. Offers of financial aid based on need to any prospective student-athlete by any member of the coaching staff. All financial aid questions should be referred to the principal or person in charge of financial aid.
 3. Inducing or attempting to induce or encourage any prospective student-athlete to attend any member school for the purpose of participating in athletics even when the special remuneration or inducement is not given.
 4. Any initial contact or prearranged contact by a member of a coaching staff or representative of the school and a prospective student-athlete in the seventh grade and above.
 5. Offering or acceptance of any item with school advertisement (shirt, caps, jackets, etc.) to a prospective student; provided that this example does not apply to items of only nominal value (pencils, etc.) that a school gives to all families that participate in the school's admission process.
 6. Admitting students to athletic contests free of charge based on their participation in athletics with non-school teams.
 7. Recognizing students at athletic contests based on their participation in athletics with non-school teams.
 8. Coaches or their representatives sending questionnaires, cards or letters, contacting, or visiting prospective student-athletes and/or their families at their homes. For purposes of the example, the terms "coach" assumes that the individual initiating the contact is acting in his or her capacity as a coach. If that person serves another role at the school and is not acting in his or her capacity as coach, then there may be no violation, unless the contact is really a method for what is in face the use of influence for athletic purposes.
 9. Coaches or their representatives providing refreshments, gifts, and/or asking prospective student-athletes or family members for contact information.

Student Athlete Zone Verification

According to Rutherford County Board Of Education Policy ADM5-66.5 (Interscholastic Athletics), it is required that all coaches verify that athletes' addresses are within the school attendance zone prior to beginning practice each year. Proof of Verification form shall be on file for each athlete prior to any participation, including tryouts.

Game Postponement / Rescheduling

The head coach shall determine, in consultation with the Athletic Director / School Principal, when games should be postponed because of inclement weather or issues beyond reasonable control. The head coach shall be responsible for contacting the head coach of the opponents with that decision. Rescheduling shall follow this same protocol. The head coach shall notify the following immediately with these decisions:

- School Administration
- Game Officials
- Officials' Booking Agent / Supervisor
- Athletes, parents, media, SRO, Ticket Mgr., Concessions Mgr., Announcer, Sports Medicine Staff, RCS AD.

Officials

Head coaches are responsible for scheduling officials for all home games and scrimmages, and arranging for required payment. Payments schedule is listed on tssaa.org. Any complaints or problems with officials should be directed to the Athletic Director. DO NOT UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCE MAKE A COMMENT TO THE MEDIA ABOUT OFFICIATING! If after reviewing the game film action is deemed appropriate, a written grievance shall be sent to the booking agent and/or TSSAA.

Dressing/Locker Rooms

Coaches will supervise their dressing facilities. Require to the extent reasonable athletes to secure all valuables. This includes away scrimmages and games. The athletic department will not be responsible for lost or stolen personal belongings.

Equipment Accountability

Each coach shall be held accountable for the equipment and uniforms issued to his/her players, including cleanliness and maintenance. Coaches should be able to identify each item assigned to the player, who then shall be held accountable for it. The athlete will be charged for any item which is not returned at the end of that season. Uniforms, warm-ups and other school issued equipment should be worn during practices and games. Game day jerseys or uniforms may be worn during the school day prior to the event.

Facility/Field Maintenance

Maintenance and care of athletic facilities is a never-ending task. Coaches must be willing to accept responsibilities to assist in this task. It is your responsibility to see that your game and practice areas are safe, properly maintained, painted and ready for play as necessary.

- Care of Equipment: Please return all equipment to its proper place and report problems to the AD ASAP.
- Any use of facilities by groups outside not sanctioned by RCS must have use of facility approval per RCS School Board Policy 3.206.

Injuries

Coach should follow school protocol for reporting all injuries. Be sure parents are contacted for any injuries that may require follow-up treatment. If in doubt, contact parent. Be mindful that your sincere concern will likely minimize problems.

TSSAA Catastrophic Insurance

The TSSAA provides a Catastrophic Insurance Policy that covers students and/or student athletes for member schools in all TSSAA/TMSSAA sanctioned activities including travel to and from. The policy is underwritten by Loomis & LaPann, Inc. and has a \$500,000 Limit with a \$10,000 deductible. Please note that sanctioned activities are activities that comply with all TSSAA rules and regulations and the TSSAA Catastrophic Insurance Coverage is extended for those activities only.

When Athletes, Coaches, and Athletic Directors are Covered:

1. Participating in a TSSAA sanctioned sport during the time outlined in the TSSAA Sports Calendar.
2. Practicing in a TSSAA sport during the time that conforms with the rules, regulations, and season outlined in the TSSAA Sports Calendar.
3. Summer Practice – Must be a school team practicing as a unit during the time specified in the TSSAA Sports Calendar with a school coach in charge.
4. Weight lifting and conditioning – Is only covered during the season when teams are allowed to practice.
5. Preseason Scrimmages
6. Team travel to and from an athletic practice and/or contest with a school coach in charge. Independent travel is not covered, i.e. athletes driving their own vehicles.
7. Coaches and athletic directors are covered working all TSSAA sanctioned activities including travel to and from.

When Athletes, Coaches, and Athletic Directors are Not Covered:

1. Open Facilities
2. Weight Training and Conditioning – At no time during the off-season are players and coaches covered.
3. Summer Camps – Any sport team attending camp must have coverage or the camp must cover the athletes and coaches. TSSAA catastrophic insurance does not cover team camps.
4. Student-athletes are not covered when they are supervised by a non-approved coach or a coach who has not met coaching requirements.

Further information can be found at tssaa.org

Cheerleader Coach's Checklist

- ***TSSAA Requirements***

1. Concussion (required annually) training for coaches verified. Concussion Information and Signature Form for Coaches (Adapted from CDC "Heads Up Concussion in Youth Sports")
- AND**
- either the NFHS online course entitled "Concussion in Sports, What You Need to Know" or the CDC online course entitled "Heads Up Concussion in Youth Sports".
- 2.. Non Faculty Volunteer Coaches and First Year Coaches must be submitted to TSSAA online. The \$40 fee per Non-Faculty Coach (\$100 maximum per school regardless of # of Non-Faculty Coaches) must be submitted to the TSSAA office.
 3. Education Requirements - It is the responsibility of each school to verify that all of their non-faculty coaches have met their coach's education requirements. This means a non-faculty coach must have completed the ASEP courses prior to May 15, 2013 OR completed the NFHS courses prior to coaching. Consult tssaa.org for further information.
 4. (HS Only) TSSAA On-Line Rules Meeting, usually available in September. Go to tssaa.org for more information.
 5. Annual Online Education for Coaches – All coaches must complete an approved course for Sudden Cardiac Arrest Training. The NFHS course entitled "Sudden Cardiac Arrest

- ***RCS Requirements***

1. Signature Page from RCS Athletic handbook
2. All cheerleader coaches/sponsors shall be AACCA certified.

3. Non-Faculty Volunteer Coach Approval by RCS verified
4. Booster Club information, if applicable
5. Student Insurance Policy 3.601
6. Safety Plan submitted to school AD annually
7. Coach / Parent Pre-Season Meeting held annually

- **Forms**

1. Proof of Residence Form
2. Preparticipation Physical Evaluation Form (Must be available at all team related functions)
3. Consent For Athletic Participation, Travel, and Medical Care (Must be available at all team related functions)
4. Concussion Memo w All Applicable Signatures
5. Baseline Test administered for all participants in football, basketball, baseball, softball, soccer, wrestling, volleyball and cheerleading
6. Sudden Cardiac Death Memo (New Law) w All Applicable Signatures
7. Coach / Parent Pre-Season Meeting held annually

Middle School Head Coach's Checklist

First day of practice, first day of contests are identified in the Rutherford County Middle School Athletic Guidelines adopted by the RCS Middle School principals. Deadline to file eligibility and schedules online is first listed contest date.

- **TMSAA Requirements**

1. Eligibility (Roster) Must be filed on-line at tssaa.org
2. Schedule Must be filed on-line w tssaa.org
3. Concussion (required annually) training for coaches verified. Concussion Information and Signature Form For Coaches (Adapted from CDC "Heads Up Concussion in Youth Sports")

AND

either the NFHS online course entitled "Concussion in Sports, What You Need to Know" or the CDC online course entitled "Heads Up Concussion in Youth Sports".

4. Non Faculty Volunteer Coaches and First Year Coaches must be submitted to TSSAA online. The \$40 fee per Non-Faculty Coach (\$100 maximum per school regardless of # of Non-Faculty Coaches) must be submitted to the TSSAA office.
5. Education Requirements - It is the responsibility of each school to verify that all of their non-faculty coaches have met their coach's education requirements. This means a non-faculty coach must have completed the ASEP courses prior to May 15, 2013 OR completed the NFHS courses prior to coaching. Consult tssaa.org for further information.
6. Annual Online Education for Coaches – All coaches must complete an approved course for Sudden Cardiac Arrest Training. The NFHS course entitled "Sudden Cardiac Arrest"

- **RCS Requirements**

1. Signature Page from RCS Athletic handbook
2. Non-Faculty Volunteer Coach Approval by RCS verified
3. Booster Club information, if applicable
4. Student Insurance Policy 3.601
5. Game Administration Review (see p. 4 of the Rutherford County Schools Athletic Handbook)
6. Safety Plan submitted to school AD annually

- **Forms**

1. Proof of Residence Form
2. Preparticipation Physical Evaluation Form (Must be available at all team related functions)
3. Consent For Athletic Participation, Travel, and Medical Care (Must be available at all team related functions)
4. Concussion Memo (New Law) w All Applicable Signatures
5. Baseline Test administered for all participants in football, basketball, baseball, softball, soccer, wrestling, volleyball and cheerleading
6. Sudden Cardiac Death Memo (New Law) w All Applicable Signatures

High School Head Coach's Checklist

Check TSSAA handbook for coaching requirements, including education requirements, first day of practice, and deadline to file eligibility and schedules online.

- **TSSAA Requirements**

1. Eligibility (Roster) Must be filed on-line at TSSAA/TMSAA (tssaa.org)
2. Schedule Must be filed on-line w TSSAA/TMSAA (tssaa.org)
3. TSSAA Rules Meeting Attendance
A member of the coaching staff in each sport or AD shall attend a state rules meeting (if held) or complete the online course (if available) in the sport involved. The penalty shall be a fine of \$50 if this requirement is not met in 2 consecutive years.

4. Concussion (required annually) training for coaches verified. Concussion Information and Signature Form For Coaches (Adapted from CDC "Heads Up Concussion in Youth Sports")
AND
either the NFHS online course entitled "Concussion in Sports, What You Need to Know" or the CDC online course entitled "Heads Up Concussion in Youth Sports".
5. Non Faculty Volunteer Coaches and First Year Coaches must be submitted to TSSAA online. The \$50 fee per Non-Faculty Coach must be submitted to the TSSAA office.
6. Education Requirements - It is the responsibility of each school to verify that all of their non-faculty coaches have met their coach's education requirements. This means a coach must have completed the ASEP courses prior to May 15, 2013 OR completed the NFHS courses prior to coaching. Consult tssaa.org for further information.
7. Annual Online Education for Coaches – All coaches must complete an approved course for Sudden Cardiac Arrest Training. The NFHS course entitled "Sudden Cardiac Arrest"
 - **RCS Requirements**
 1. Signature Page from RCS Athletic handbook
 2. Non-Faculty Volunteer Coach Approval by RCS verified
 3. Booster Club information, if applicable
 4. Student Insurance Policy 3.601
 5. Game Administration Review (see p. 4 of the Rutherford County Schools Athletic Handbook)
 6. Safety Plan submitted to school AD annually
 7. Coach / Parent Pre-Season Meeting held annually
 - **Forms**
 1. Proof of Residence Form
 2. Preparticipation Physical Evaluation Form (Must be available at all team related functions)
 3. Consent For Athletic Participation, Travel, and Medical Care (Must be available at all team related functions)
 4. Concussion Memo (New Law) w All Applicable Signatures
 5. Baseline Test administered for all participants in football, basketball, baseball, softball, soccer, wrestling, volleyball and cheerleading
 6. Sudden Cardiac Death Memo (New Law) w All Applicable Signatures

Academics

Academics

Coaches are expected to monitor student-athlete academic progress. The By-Laws of the Tennessee Secondary School Athletic Association shall be adopted as a part of the regulation for the operation and control of athletics in the schools of Rutherford County. To be eligible to participate in interscholastic athletic activities during any semester, the middle / high school student shall at least meet current TMSAA / TSSAA standards.

Class Time

Coaches should be respectful of the athletes' class time. Instructional time is valuable and every effort should be made to insure that the loss of class time is minimal. Please remember that your fellow faculty members see their time with students to be just as valuable as you see time with players. The head coach shall contact the principal concerning times and dates for any activity that will require athletes to miss instructional time. It is recommended that all coaches submit a list of squad members, managers, etc. to be excused, at least one day in advance. Coaches shall remind athletes that they are responsible for any work they miss during their absence.

Grades

To be eligible to participate in athletic contests, a student shall have been academically promoted to the next higher grade. Any student repeating a grade is ineligible to participate. A student who is ineligible at the beginning of the school year may gain eligibility the second semester by passing five (5) subjects, or the equivalent, the preceding semester, provided the student is not repeating the same grade.

NCAA Eligibility Center (Clearinghouse)

- ❖ High school coaches should make potential college athletes and their parents aware of the need to contact their school guidance counselor about the NCAA Eligibility Center. It is designed help student-athletes prepare for the rigors they will face in college. Coaches and guidance counselors play an integral role in the initial-eligibility certification process for a college-bound student-athlete, which means the relationship between the high school and the Eligibility Center is very important.
- ❖ The following Guidance Counselors should be consulted at your school in all matters pertaining to these issues:
Oakland HS – Missy Blissard; Siegel HS – April Edging; Smyrna HS – Steven Lay; Riverdale HS – Bentley Shofner
Eagleville HS – Annie Williams; SCHS – Johanna Matthews; Blackman HS – Stephanie Van Winkle and Sara Lynn Clawson
LaVergne HS – Lauren Little; Central Magnet – Mary Oldham

TSSAA Academic Achievement Award

Member schools are encouraged to recognize academic achievement through participation in this program. TSSAA offers Academic Achievement Award certificates to all TSSAA member schools. The program is based on grade point averages of students and teams participating in fall sports, winter sports, spring sports, and cheerleading. The forms, available at www.tssaa.org, should be filled out and

sent to the TSSAA office at the conclusion of the semester in which the sport is played and be based on the grade point averages at the conclusion of that particular semester. TSSAA will then send the certificates to your school. The team awards are based on the team's collective GPA. A collective team GPA of 3.0 to 3.24 will entitle the team to receive the Outstanding Certificate, and a collective team GPA of 3.24 to 4.0 will entitle the team to receive the Distinguished Certificate. The school will receive a certificate recognizing the team, and each member of the team will also receive a certificate. The Individual Academic Achievement certificate will allow any student-athlete who earns a GPA of 3.5 or above to receive a certificate. Therefore, if a student participates in more than one sport, he or she may receive a certificate for each sport in which he or she participates.

SAT and ACT College Test Prep Programs Available

TSSAA has partnered with eKnowledge and are offering deeply discounted SAT and ACT college test preparation programs (online and/or DVD). Supported by caring professional athletes from the NFL and MLB, eKnowledge is offering \$200 - \$250 SAT and ACT PowerPrep Programs for just the cost of providing the programs (under \$20). The fee covers everything, including: materials, shipping, student support, and streaming. You may request your programs online: www.eKnowledge.com/TSSAA

Safety

Safety Coaches

The Athletic Safety Coach will observe team and individual practices, inspect facilities and equipment and assess any needs for improvements, analyze current training techniques, track injuries related to their assigned sports and make recommendations to minimize/eliminate those, and clearly communicate local, state and national safety regulations.

- **Essential Functions:**
 - 1) Observe team and individual after school practices
 - 2) Analyze and provide guidance for proper practice techniques
 - 3) Make regular checks for proper equipment
 - 4) Verify compliance with required coaching training
 - 5) Educate coaches in proper strength and conditioning techniques
 - 6) Insure that proper concussion protocol is followed
 - 7) Track injury reports related to their assigned sports and make recommendations to minimize/eliminate those
 - 8) Coordinate and present an annual safety forum for RCS parents and students
 - 9) Oversight of on-line tutorial productions to enhance compliance with safety protocols
 - 10) Inspect facilities and equipment and assess any needs for improvements
 - 11) Clearly communicating local, state and national safety regulations
 - 12) Serve as a mentor for inexperienced coaches
 - 13) Identify & relay availability of coaching clinics, safety courses, and other resources available that promote athletic safety
 - 14) Other athletic safety functions as identified by the RCS Athletic Director
- **'17-'18 Safety Coach Assignments:**
 - Football / Greg Wyant and Ed Pass
 - Cross Country / Patrick Stoecker
 - Soccer / Mark Gonyea
 - Cheerleaders / Julie Atkin
 - Volleyball / Patrick Stoecker
 - Wrestling / Mark Gonyea
 - Swimming / Greg Wyant
 - Basketball / Patrick Stoecker
 - Softball / Ed Pass
 - Baseball / Ed Pass
 - Track / Greg Wyant

Cheerleaders

1. All cheerleader coaches/sponsors shall be AACCA certified.
2. Cheerleading squads must abide by the AACCA Safety Guidelines while practicing or participating in a TSSAA sanctioned event
3. All cheerleader coaches shall follow the TSSAA rule pertaining to on-line rules meeting available in the fall, typically in September.
4. The immediate environment for all activities shall be taken into consideration prior to the performance of any skill during practice games, competitions, or other performances. If a suitable and safe location, including required equipment, is unavailable for tumbling, partner stunts, pyramids, jumps, etc., then activities must be limited to what is allowed, commonly referred as "Ground Bound".
5. All cheerleader coaches shall follow Tennessee Law in regards to concussions, including signed documents as required.
6. When tryouts are completed and the squad has been selected, all cheerleaders shall be given the opportunity to participate in the ImPACT baseline testing program provided by RCS.

Lightning

- Assign staff to monitor local weather conditions before and during practices and contests.
- Develop an evacuation plan, including identification of appropriate nearby safe areas.
- Develop criteria for suspension and resumption of play:
- When thunder is heard or a cloud-to-ground lightning bolt is seen, the leading edge of the thunderstorm is close enough to strike your location with lightning. Suspend play for thirty minutes and take shelter immediately.
- Thirty-minute rule. Once play has been suspended, wait at least 30 minutes after the last thunder is heard or flash of lightning is witnessed prior to resuming play.
- Any subsequent thunder or lightning after the beginning of the 30-minute count will reset the clock and another 30-minute count should begin.
- Review annually with all administrators, coaches and game personnel.
- Inform student athletes of the lightning policy at start of season.

Tornado Watch and/or Warning

This area of middle Tennessee is sometimes placed under a tornado watch or warning. While a tornado watch is not as significant as a warning proper steps should be followed just the same. During a tornado watch administrators should monitor weather forecasts. The administrators should also consult with their supervisors to make the most informed decisions regarding athletic events and/or practices. During a tornado warning all extra-curricular activities shall be suspended and everyone should seek safe shelter.

Concussions - Tennessee Law

Effective January 1, 2014 the Tennessee Legislature placed as state law requirements in regards to managing concussions for athletes. The link to the new law in its entirety can be found here: <http://www.tn.gov/sos/acts/108/pub/pc0148.pdf>

New Requirements from this legislation:

- ***Coaches, Parent / Student Athlete Forms*** - The new requirements of this law include forms for coaches, parents, and students athletes to sign acknowledging that they are aware of the signs, symptoms, and dangers of concussions. **We would encourage each school to include these forms in your Pre-Participation Physical Examination/Parental Consent paperwork.**
Link to Coaches Form: <http://health.state.tn.us/TBI/PDFs/CONC%20Coach%20signature%20form%20final%202013-10-22.pdf>
Link to Parent / Student Athlete Form:
<http://health.state.tn.us/TBI/PDFs/CONC%20parent%20athlete%20sign%20final%202013-10-22.pdf>
- ***CDC Concussion Signs and Symptoms Checklist*** - Persons who remove athletes from competition for showing signs and symptoms of a concussion are now required to use the CDC Concussion Signs and Symptoms Checklist when evaluating the athlete. We would suggest that your coaches have these forms on hand at practices and competitions in the event that an athlete has to be removed from an activity after displaying signs or symptoms of a concussion. The completed form should be made available to the physician that evaluates the student for return to play. The procedures and return to play guidelines in the new law are very similar to those required in the TSSAA Concussion Policy. In fact, the TSSAA Concussion Policy is slightly more restrictive. Therefore, by continuing to follow the TSSAA Concussion Policy, along with utilizing this checklist, you should be in compliance when removing athletes from competition and returning them to play.
Link to CDC Concussion Signs and Symptoms Checklist: http://www.cdc.gov/concussion/pdf/TBI_schools_checklist_508-a.pdf
- ***Concussion Return to Play Form*** – This is required to be signed by an appropriate health care provided as indicated on the form before an athlete is allowed to resume any physical activity.
- ***Annual Online Education for Coaches*** – Coaches must complete either the NFHS online course entitled "Concussion in Sports, What You Need to Know" or the CDC online course entitled "Heads Up Concussion in Youth Sports" annually. Persons wishing to complete the NFHS course will have to register at the following link: <https://www.nfhslearn.com/Registration.aspx>. After you have registered, you may access the course by logging in at the following link: <http://www.nfhslearn.com/electiveDetail.aspx?courseID=38000> Persons wishing to complete the CDC course entitled "Heads Up: Concussion in Youth Sports" may access the course at the following link: <http://www.cdc.gov/concussion/Headsup/training/index.html> All coaches are encouraged to complete the NFHS course. It is geared more for the interscholastic coach and allows you log in and out without having to start over. Both courses are about 20-25 minutes in length.
- ***It is the responsibility of the school principal to verify that all matters concerning this law are followed. All required forms shall be held on file at each school at the direction of the school principal.***

Baseline Testing

Middle school and high school athletes participating in football, basketball, soccer, wrestling, volleyball, baseball, softball, and cheerleading shall be offered the opportunity to participate in concussion baseline testing. Testing is done bi-annually for an individual student and is valid for all sports/activities. Testing services will be contracted through IMPACT APPLICATIONS, INC. Rutherford County Schools Athletic Director, Tim Tackett, and Tennessee Orthopedic Alliance's Brad Rohling, head trainer for Rutherford County Schools, will oversee the testing program. Each school will have a test coordinator to implement the program at the school level. Parents may opt out of this testing program via expressed written statement.

CPR / First Aid Training

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As of August 1, 2016, all coaches and/or activities directors/sponsors (including non-faculty staff) in named activities shall be certified to perform CPR and First Aid. For purposes of this procedure athletics shall include all TSSAA/TMSAA sanctioned sports and swimming; and activities shall include marching band and JROTC. Certification sessions are available through RCSchools. E-mail Barb Herrell (formerly Slacks) at herrellb@rcschools.net for more information. *****Newly hired faculty will have a 45 day grace period to become certified from the date of their employment. During this grace period, they will be allowed to actively coach as long as a CPR/First Aid person is present.***

Sudden Cardiac Death - From TSSAA: New Legislation (Effective January 1, 2016).

The link to the new law in its entirety is: <http://www.tn.gov/sos/acts/109/pub/pc0325.pdf>

School ADs required to oversee full compliance of these new requirements from this legislation.

1. *Coaches, Parent/Athlete Forms* – The new requirements of this law include forms for all coaches, parents, and students athletes to sign acknowledging that they are aware of the signs and symptoms of Sudden Cardiac Arrest. Each school should include these forms along with the similar forms from the Concussion Legislation in your Pre-Participation Physical Examination / Parental Consent paperwork. Links to the Coaches Forms and the Parent/Student Athlete Forms can be found on a website that the state of Tennessee has created as a part of this legislation. Spanish versions of the form are included on the website. The link to this website is: <http://www.tn.gov/health/topic/sudden-cardiac-arrest-prevention-act>

2. *Return to Play Policy* - A youth athlete who has been removed from play shall not return to the practice or competition during which the youth athlete experienced symptoms consistent with sudden cardiac arrest. Those symptoms are as follows:

- (i) Unexplained shortness of breath;
- (ii) Chest pains;
- (iii) Dizziness;
- (iv) Racing heart rate; or
- (v) Extreme fatigue

*****Before returning to practice or play in an athletic activity, the athlete must be evaluated by a Tennessee licensed medical doctor or an osteopathic physician. Clearance to full or graduated return to practice or play must be in writing. We are not aware of a standardized return to play form at this time.***

3. *Annual Online Education for Coaches* – All coaches must complete an approved course for Sudden Cardiac Arrest Training. The NFHS course entitled “Sudden Cardiac Arrest” is an approved course and can be accessed for free. The course takes approximately 15 minutes to complete. Persons wishing to complete the NFHS course will have to register at the following link: <https://www.nfhslearn.com/Registration.aspx>.

Heat Conditions

The rising temperatures are a cause of concern for everyone in middle Tennessee especially our athletes. Extreme caution should be taken when conducting outdoor activities during these times. The following are minimal guidelines which should be followed when making decisions regarding conducting outdoor activities: <http://tssaa.org/wp-content/uploads/heatpolicy.pdf>

- *Under 95 degrees heat index*
 - Provide ample amounts of water
 - Optional water breaks every 30 minutes for 10 minutes in duration
 - Ice-down towels for cooling
 - Watch/monitor athletes carefully for necessary action.
- *95 – 99 degrees heat index*
 - Provide ample amounts of water
 - Mandatory water breaks every 30 minutes for 10 minutes in duration
 - Ice-down towels for cooling
 - Watch/monitor athletes carefully for necessary action
 - Contact sports and activities with additional equipment*
 - Helmets and other possible equipment removed if not involved in contact.
 - Reduce time of outside activity. Consider postponing practice to later in the day.
- *100 degrees heat index*
 - Provide ample amounts of water. Water should always be available and athletes should be able to take in as much water as they desire.
 - Mandatory water breaks every 30 minutes for 10 minutes in duration
 - Ice-down towels for cooling
 - Watch/monitor athletes carefully for necessary action.
 - Alter uniform by removing items if possible / Allow for changes to dry t-shirts and shorts
 - Reduce time of outside activity / Postpone practice to later in the day
 - Contact sports and activities with additional equipment*
 - Helmets and other possible equipment removed if not involved in contact or necessary for safety, suspend activity.
- **ABOVE 104 heat index ALL OUTSIDE ACTIVITIES CANCELED!!!!**

TSSAA Heat Policy - Modifications for Golf Competitions and Practice 95°-104°

Players should have immediate access to water regardless of their location on the course. Water bottles should be kept with players at all times. Pace of play should be so that players are resting at least one minute for every three minutes that they are walking. The time taken between shots and the transition time on the tee-box between holes can be considered resting time.

TSSAA Heat Policy - Modifications for Soccer Competition when the Heat Index is 95°-104°

The referee shall stop the game for a heat time-out lasting no less than five minutes during the first and second half. The time-out will be called at the first logical time to stop play after the 20 minute mark of each half.

TSSAA Heat Policy - Modifications for Football Competition when the Heat Index is 95°-104°

Officials shall stop the game for a heat time-out at the first dead ball after the halfway point of each quarter. If either team has possession of the ball inside the other team's twenty yard line, officials may delay this time out until either the offensive team scores or the ball is turned over.

TSSAA Heat Policy - Modifications for Cross Country Competition when the Heat Index is 95°-104°

Athletes should have access to unlimited water before and after competition. Athletes should be monitored closely for signs of heat illness following the conclusion of the competition. Athletes should be encouraged to re-hydrate and seek shade as soon as the competition is complete.

TSSAA Heat Policy - Modifications for Track and Field Competition when the Heat Index is 95°-104°

Athletes should have access to unlimited water before, during and after competition. Athletes should be monitored closely for signs of heat illness during the competition. No mandatory stoppage of play required unless the heat index exceeds 104°. Athletes should re-hydrate and seek shade at each available opportunity during the competition.

TSSAA Heat Policy - Modifications for Baseball Competition when the Heat Index is 95° - 104°

Athletes should have access to unlimited water before, during and after competition in the dugout area. No mandatory stoppage of play required unless the heat index exceeds 104°.

TSSAA Heat Policy - Modifications for Softball Competition when the Heat Index is 95° - 104°

Athletes should have access to unlimited water before, during and after competition in the dugout area. No mandatory stoppage of play required unless the heat index exceeds 104°.

TSSAA Heat Policy - Modifications for Tennis Competition when the Heat Index is 95° - 104°

Athletes should have access to unlimited water before, during and after competition. No mandatory stoppage of play required unless the heat index exceeds 104°. Regular periods of rest between games and/or sets should be long enough to maintain a ratio of 1 minute of rest for every 3 minutes played.

Staph Bacteria - MRSA

Staph is a common bacteria found on the skin or in the nose of healthy people. Methicillin-Resistant Staph Aureus (MRSA), on the other hand is a variation of this staph and also can live on the skin and in the nose, but is resistant to certain antibiotics. MRSA originated in a hospital setting years ago, infecting the patients who were immunocompromised due to illness or surgery. At that time the bacteria developed a resistance to certain antibiotics. Now it is no longer found just in a hospital setting, but is seen throughout the community such as at the movies, in the grocery and retail stores, as well as in the schools, all across the country. MRSA is now here to stay in the community.

Coaches should take all reasonable care to control the environment surrounding team activities and practice good hygiene, including:

- Keep hands clean by washing thoroughly with soap and water or using an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that has a concentration of 60-95 alcohol. Encourage and role model this behavior to your students.
- Keep cuts and scrapes clean and covered with a bandage until healed.
- Avoid contact with other people's wound or bandages.
- Observe your students and encourage them to report "sores" to you. Coaches particularly need to be on the lookout for sores as MRSA is prevalent in the athletic population due to the sharing of equipment and close contact. All students with a sore should be sent to the school nurse or other health care professional.
- Locker rooms, bathrooms, water fountains, and cafeterias are to be cleaned daily.

Official Rules

- The official rules books as published by the National Federation of State High School Associations shall be used in football, basketball, baseball, girls softball, wrestling, girls soccer, soccer, track and field, cross country, and girls volleyball.
- The official rules of the USGA shall be used in golf.
- The official rules of the USTA shall be used in tennis.
- The official rules of the USBC shall be used in bowling.
- Cheerleading squads must abide by the AACCA Safety Guidelines while practicing or participating in a TSSAA sanctioned event.

For all unsportsmanlike acts, TSSAA/TMSAA bylaws as it relates to unsportsmanlike behavior and officials' jurisdiction supersedes any other rules book.

TSSAA/TMSAA Sports Regulations

Many sports have adopted regulations. Examples: Mercy Rule in Football and Basketball, Pitching Rules in Baseball, Weight Class Guidelines in Wrestling. Each coach should be well-versed in these specific regulations that would apply to their particular sport.

Sports Calendar

For each sport there shall be a beginning practice date, a date for the first contest, a limit for the number of regular season contests, rules in regard to tournaments where applicable, rules in regard to off-season practice, and rules in regard to summer practice. These vary sport to sport. Each can be found at tssaa.org

- High Schools and Middle Schools have different guidelines.
- Middle Schools should consult with the Rutherford County Middle Schools Athletic Handbook as well as tssaa.org.

TSSAA Eligibility Regulations

All members of the coaching staff shall follow the rules and regulations of the TSSAA/TMSAA. TSSAA/TMSAA handbooks are available for the head coaches, and may be found on-line at tssaa.org. Ignorance of state regulations is NO EXCUSE. Principals/ADs should not condone deliberate violations of state rules and/or RCS policies. All efforts shall be made by all involved to attempt to work within the spirit and intent of these regulations.

Tryouts

Only students officially enrolled at your school are eligible to participate in athletic activity, including tryouts. Effectively this means tryouts for incoming students must be held after the official end of a school year. Exception: Cheerleaders may hold tryouts for zoned students anticipated to attend a school prior to the end of school. Tryouts are considered a practice under TSSAA/TMSAA rules. Therefore, tryouts are subject to off-season practice dates and rules. All forms necessary for participation, including physicals, are required prior to tryouts.

Open Facilities

Schools may use their facilities for students in their building prior to or at the conclusion of the school day. Coaches may serve in a supervisory capacity only. There is no instruction, no teaching, no coaching, etc. Coaches may not participate or play in any manner. It is a free play type atmosphere. This must be available to all students, without being mandatory to any. Only students officially enrolled at your school are eligible to participate in open facilities.

Weight Training / Conditioning

This must be a generic type program that would be beneficial to all students and not sport specific. Students officially enrolled at your school are eligible to participate, as well as zoned students anticipated to attend a school prior to the end of school. Exception: Baseball and girls softball players may throw to condition arms.

Student Insurance

RCS Policy 3.601 states that the principal shall ensure that each student, before participating in interscholastic athletics, either purchases the insurance policy offered or presents a statement signed by the parent(s), which assures the school that the parent(s) has personal insurance or is willing to accept all financial responsibilities related to participation and travel. Personal Affidavit In Lieu Of School Insurance is included in the Consent for Athletic Participation, Travel, and Medical Care form, indicating that all students who participate in any school-sponsored athletic sport must take out school insurance or file with the principal an affidavit form that they or their insurance company will be responsible for payment in case of injury sustained at said school while participating in school-sponsored sports. The head coach shall make school insurance information available to the parents all student athletes.

Home School Eligibility

Home school students may be eligible to participate on RCS/TSSAA athletic teams if they meet the requirements set forth by the TSSAA. Those guidelines are listed on tssaa.org. If the homeschool student is eligible under TSSAA rules, RCS administrative procedure allow them the opportunity to participate on teams at their zoned school. These eligible students shall participate in the tryout process, and upon making the team shall follow all rules and guidelines as required by all team members.

- Inquiries from parents concerning eligibility should be directed to the TSSAA office or the RCS Athletic Director.

School Closing for Inclement Weather

There are times when Rutherford County Schools will close for inclement weather. It is the policy of Rutherford County School System for all school extra-curricular activities to be postponed when schools are closed or dismissed early for inclement weather. It is recognized that in this area there are times when schools are closed for inclement weather and the weather conditions improve throughout the day. Because of this, the Director of Schools may grant, upon request by a school principal, permission to the school principal for activities to continue. All reasonable means should be taken to contact all involved the status of these decisions.

Game Administration

- Coaches should be appropriately dressed for all contests. Be Professional!
- Event Staff: Coaches shall assist the Athletic Director in securing clock and scoreboard operators, public address announcers, chain crews, necessary security etc. to assist with game management. Out of season coaches are encouraged to attend as many games as possible to assist with supervision and administration. Pre/post game music shall be monitored by coach/AD. DO NOT rely on student judgment.
- The head coach shall accompany students to all away games unless school principal grants an exemption.
- Sufficient security must be provided by the host school to ensure orderly conduct on the part of all spectators.
- Game Administrator must be appointed by each host school principal to supervise every varsity athletic contest in football, basketball, and soccer. This person must be someone other than a participating coach and is required to conduct one meeting prior to the start of each contest in the sports mentioned above with the coaches, officials, and security personnel.
- Public address announcements are being conducted to address sportsmanship. A copy of suggested PA announcements is available from the TSSAA.
- Review your post-game procedures and security plan to address the growing concern of confrontations after athletic contests. These confrontations are occurring between fans and officials or even coaches or administrators approaching officials inappropriately following an athletic contest.

"Guidelines for Game Administrators" and "Guidelines to Address Unsportsmanlike Conduct" and a small white card for the Game Administrator is available from the TSSAA.

Sportsmanship

As coaches, you have a unique ability and responsibility to encourage and expect proper behavior from your fans, particularly your student body. Do all you can to influence appropriate fan behavior. A clear beginning point is to expect appropriate behavior from your players, and model appropriate behavior yourself.

Post-Game Procedure

The head coach must contact the proper news media immediately following each contest. Mail or have available a copy of your roster and schedule, proper media coverage can be an asset to our athletic program. We know that they will not announce or publish the results if we do not contact them.

Bus Use / Transportation for Team Events

RCS strongly discourage employees from transporting students in private vehicles. If this becomes necessary, permission must be granted by the principal. RCS our policy requires that certain insurance limits will be met. Each one of these requests/approvals must also be copied to Angel McCloud, RCS staff attorney. Transportation should generally be done by parents for their own children or by bus.

Fireworks

No fireworks may be displayed at games w/o written permit from the local authority and administrative approval.

Use of Facilities

Rutherford County Board of Education policy 3.206 outlines Community Use of School Facilities. Requests for the use of school facilities shall be made at the office of the principal prior to the date of use. Student clubs and activities, parent-teacher associations, and other organizations affiliated with the schools shall be permitted use of school facilities without charge. The principal is authorized to approve and schedule scouts, 4-H and parent groups. Groups receiving permission for building use are restricted to the dates and hours approved and to the building area and facilities specified, unless requested changes are approved by the principal. When school kitchens are used, at least one member of the cafeteria staff must be present to supervise the use of the equipment. The Board will approve upon recommendation of the director of schools, a fee schedule for the use of school facilities by community or civic organizations and other non-profit, recreational, religious, political or philosophical groups. School facilities shall not be used by such community, civic, religious groups, etc. on a permanent basis. All use of facilities requests for non-school related activities must be accompanied by a certificate of insurance showing the Board of Education as additional insured with a minimum limit of \$2,000,000 liability insurance. A limit of \$1,000,000 may be considered at the discretion of the director of schools.

Fund Raising and Promotions

Coaches must receive expressed permission from the school AD / Principal to participate in team fund raising projects and submit RCS Fund Raising form to their Principal. Head coaches should also discuss with the Athletic Director any special promotional arrangements before making a commitment.

Budget

It shall be the responsibility of the head coach to know and abide by the guidelines and policies of RCS in regards to budget, including all receipts and expenditures. Further, the head coach shall consult with the school AD / Principal as to the policies specific to his/her school. Coaches shall be attuned to all procedures set forth by the school administration in regards to all monetary receipts and expenditures.

Booster Clubs

Per RCS School Board Policy 2.404. Only a group or organization that has entered into a written cooperative agreement with the Board may use the name, mascot or logo of a school or the school district to solicit or raise money, materials, property, securities, services, or other things of value. Any agreement between the Board and a school support organization shall be in writing and signed by the director or the director's designee and an authorized agent of the school support organization seeking authorization. A meeting will be held early in the school year, typically Sept., to review all procedures. All booster clubs must have a representative present at this meeting.

Note: A civic organization operating concessions or parking at school-sponsored events is not a school support organization subject to this policy.

Required Forms for Student Participation**RCS Athletic Directors OneDrive Folder**

All forms noted in the RCS Athletic Handbook, some but not all noted below, are available to the school AD and principal in the RCS Athletic Directors OneDrive folder found in Outlook 365 on the RCS Web Site.

Athletic Participation Packet

The Athletic Participation Packet must be completed on dragonflymax.com prior to any school athletic participation, including tryouts. The Packet can be found at rcschool.net/athletics:

- Consent For Athletic participation, Travel , and Medical Care
- Preparticipation Medical Evaluation / Physicals – 4 pages
- Proof of Residence
- Concussion Information & Signature Form for Student/ Athlete & Parent/Guardian – 3 pages.
- Sudden Cardiac Death Information & Signature Form for Student/ Athlete & Parent/Guardian – 2 pages

Consent for Athletic Participation, Travel, and Medical Care

A Consent for Athletic Participation, Travel, and Medical Care form shall be on file with the head coach prior to any team participation, including tryouts. Athlete Profile Information, Emergency Contact Information, Legal Parent (Guardian) Consent for Participation and Travel, and a Personal Affidavit In Lieu Of School Insurance are included in this form.

Preparticipation Medical Evaluation / Physicals

It is required that no student be permitted to participate in practice sessions or in athletic contests until there is on file with the principal a preparticipation medical evaluation form signed by a doctor of medicine, osteopathic physician, physician assistant, or certified nurse practitioner stating that the student has passed a physical examination, not prior to April 15, and that in their opinion the student is physically fit to participate in interscholastic athletics. In lieu of the form, the principal may accept a signed statement from the health care provider certifying that the student has passed a physical examination that encompasses all elements on the preparticipation medical evaluation form and attesting that in their opinion the student is physically fit to participate in interscholastic athletics. No student shall be required to submit to a physical exam if his/her parent(s) or legal guardian shall file with the principal a signed, written statement (affirmed under the penalties of perjury) declining such physical examination on grounds of sincerely held beliefs or practices. It is required that no student be permitted to participate in practice sessions or in athletic contests until there is on file a parental consent certificate signed by a parent or legal guardian stating that the student has the consent of his/her parent(s) or legal guardian to participate.

Proof of Residence *Form can be found at rcschool.net/athletics*

According to Rutherford County Board Of Education Policy ADM5-66.5 (Interscholastic Athletics), it is required that all coaches verify that athletes' addresses are within the school attendance zone prior to beginning practice each year.

Concussion Information & Signature Form for Student/ Athlete & Parent/Guardian *Form can be found at rcschool.net/athletics*

This form is to be properly signed and on file at your school for each athlete in accordance with the Tennessee Law on Concussions, acknowledging that they are aware of the signs, symptoms, and dangers of concussions.

Sudden Cardiac Death Coaches, Parent/Athlete Forms

The new requirements of this law include forms for all coaches, parents, and students athletes to sign acknowledging that they are aware of the signs and symptoms of Sudden Cardiac Arrest. Each school should include these forms along with the similar forms from the Concussion Legislation in your Pre-Participation Physical Examination / Parental Consent paperwork. Links to the Coaches Forms and the Parent/Student Athlete Forms can be found on a website that the state of Tennessee has created as a part of this legislation. Spanish versions of the form are included on the website. The link to this website is: <http://www.tn.gov/health/topic/sudden-cardiac-arrest-prevention-act>

Tennessee Law on Concussions

<http://www.tn.gov/sos/acts/108/pub/pc0148.pdf>

Concussion Coaches Form:

<http://health.state.tn.us/TBI/PDFs/CONC%20Coach%20signature%20form%20final%202013-10-22.pdf>

Link to Concussion Parent / Student Athlete Form:

<http://health.state.tn.us/TBI/PDFs/CONC%20parent%20athlete%20sign%20final%202013-10-22.pdf>

Link to CDC Concussion Signs and Symptoms Checklist:

http://www.cdc.gov/concussion/pdf/TBI_schools_checklist_508-a.pdf

TSSAA Heat Policy Chart

<http://tssaa.org/wp-content/uploads/heatpolicy.pdf>

Athletic Participation Packet

<http://www.rcschools.net/education/page/download.php?fileinfo=QXRobGV0aWNfUGFydGJjaXBhdGlvbI9QYWNrZXQucGRmOj06L3d3dzUvc2Nob29scy90bi9ydXRoZXJmb3JkY291bnR5L2ltYWdlcy9kb2NtZ3lvNTY2ZmlsZTMwNDMucGRm§iondetailid=16238>

Sudden Cardiac Death - From TSSAA: New Legislation (Effective January 1, 2016).

<http://www.tn.gov/sos/acts/109/pub/pc0325.pdf>

Organizations**NFHS**

The National Federation of State High School Association is the overseer of state athletic associations, such as TSSAA/TMSAA; Coaches; Officials; and Music Directors and Adjudicators, Speech, Debate & Theater Directors & Judges. NFHS rules are adopted by TSSAA/TMSAA for all sanctioned sports. All RCS schools, regardless of TSSAA/TMSAA affiliation, are bound to follow NFHS rules. NFHS rule books for many sports are annually distributed to member school. Check nfhs.org for more information.

NFHS Education Courses

NFHSLearn.com is the source for courses designed to enhance your coaching credibility and performance. Courses include those TN Coaching Requirements, approved by TSSAA/TMSAA: First Aid, Health And Safety For Coaches and Fundamentals of Coaching. Dozens of other courses are available, such as 'Creating a Safe and Respectful Environment', 'Coaching Volleyball (and every sport)', 'NCAA Eligibility', and 'Positive Sport Parenting'. You are encouraged to go on the site to capture the full range of topics.

NFHS Publications and Products

A catalogue of a full range of publications and products is available at nfhs.com or 800-776-3462. Rulebooks, DVDs, CDs, booklets, manuals, and handbooks are available to develop higher levels of competency in areas such as stat keeping, sports medicine, coaching, and inspiration. Products include scorebooks, competitors' numbers, and line-ups sheets.

NIAAA

The National Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association preserves, enhances and promotes the educational values of interscholastic athletics through the professional development of its members in the areas of education, leadership, and service. The NIAAA's commitment to leadership programs, resources and services support the athletic administrator's efforts in providing quality athletic participation opportunities for students. The NIAAA promotes a positive working relationship with state athletic administrator and State and national athletic/activity associations in addition to developing strategic alliances with other education based agencies. Membership in this organization is encouraged for all RCS Athletic Directors. Check niaaa.org for more information.

TIAAA

The Tennessee Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association.. The TIAAA is a TSSAA affiliated professional organization administered for and by athletic administrators for the purpose of promoting professional growth of interscholastic athletic administrators, creating a professional network among athletic administrators across the state, preserving the educational integrity of athletics in school, discount registration fee for State Athletic Director's Conference, discount on Leadership Training Course (& possible TASL Credit) requirements for NIAAA Athletic Administrators Certification. The 25th annual TIAAA state convention will be held in Murfreesboro April 19-21, 2015. Those involved in administering interscholastic athletics at either the high school or middle school level should consider joining TIAAA.

TACA

The Tennessee Athletic Coaches Association is dedicated to enhancing the profession for Coaches, Retired Coaches & Associate Members. Benefits include \$1,000,000.00 Liability Insurance Policy, Professional Educational legal liability for teaching responsibilities in the classroom should no other coverage be in place, access to hospitality areas at state championships, gaining access to TSSAA Championship Events, and having a player selected to participate in the TACA All-Star games. All RCS coaches should consider becoming a member. Visit taca.org for membership form and more information.

TISCA

Swimming is not a TSAA/TMSAA sanctioned sport. TISCA, The Tennessee Interscholastic Swim Coaches Association governs Tennessee school swim teams, including all RCS school teams, and related activities. More information is available on their website: tisca.net.

NCAA Eligibility Center (Clearinghouse)

High school coaches should make potential college athletes and their parents aware of the need to contact their school guidance counselor about the NCAA Eligibility Center. It is designed help student-athletes prepare for the rigors they will face in college. Coaches and guidance counselors play an integral role in the initial-eligibility certification process for a college-bound student-athlete, which means the relationship between the high school and the Eligibility Center is very important. Missy Blissard, guidance counselor at Oakland High School, currently oversees RCS course entries with the NCAA Eligibility Center.

Coaches Signature Page

THIS PAGE SHOULD BE SIGNED YEARLY BY ALL COACHES AND KEPT ON FILE AT YOUR SCHOOL

ACCEPTED and AGREED

Valid for the _____ school year.

I have read and understand all expectations outlined in the Rutherford County School Athletic Handbook.

Print Full Legal Name _____ Signature _____

School _____ Date _____

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