



Reading Jr./Sr. High School Athletic Handbook 2008-2009

This handbook is designed to be a guide for our student athletes, parents, and coaches. It will allow each of us to know what we may expect from one another. Please note that not every situation can be covered. If you have additional questions or concerns, please contact the Athletic Director at 842-5236 to set up an appointment. We wish all of you outstanding extracurricular seasons!

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The Sports Season

Each year the Ohio High School Athletic Association establishes dates that every member high school must recognize to begin and end a season. Some sports in the same season can have different starting and ending dates. These dates will be recognized by the Reading Athletic Department. Therefore, a sport's season is defined as the first day of practice (indicated by OHSAA) until the awards banquet or last game of post-season play, whichever comes last.

Academics

All activities of a school are grounded in the educational process. While extracurriculars are part of the educational process, academics will receive the highest priority. Student athletes must meet all eligibility requirements

According to OHSAA bylaws, a high school student must be passing five credits at the end of each 10-week grading period. All Carnegie unity classes count toward this goal with the exception of physical education classes. In addition, a student must have maintained at least a 1.0 GPA at the conclusion of the previous grading quarter (not semester or year). Athletic eligibility cannot be reestablished by taking summer school classes.

According to OHSAA bylaws, a junior high school student must be passing 75% of all classes taken during the previous grading period. For example, if a student is taking a total of eight classes during a grading period, he/she must pass at least six of those classes to be eligible the following grading period. All incoming seventh graders are academically eligible to begin the first quarter of the fall.

All Reading student athletes must also meet weekly eligibility requirements. Student athletes may not be failing more than one subject on a weekly, cumulative basis as determined by the weekly deficiency list. Any student athlete that fails to meet the weekly eligibility requirements must attend the after school study session until the next weekly deficiency list is released and the student is determined to meet the eligibility requirements. The deficiency list is published on Monday afternoons, and the study sessions will be from Tuesday through Thursday. No special assignments, tests, or other considerations are to be given in order to meet this requirement. In the event of an error, students must obtain a grade correction form from the athletic director and have it filled out by the appropriate teacher. If a student athlete has an athletic contest that conflicts with the study session, the student must make up the study session on Monday. If a student athlete is on the deficiency list for three consecutive weeks, he/she may not participate in any athletic contest until the next weekly deficiency list is released and the student is determined to meet the eligibility requirements. If a student athlete is determined to be ineligible for athletic contests, they must continue to attend the study sessions. Also, if a student athlete is present in school and misses any of the study sessions Tuesday through Thursday, they may not participate in any athletic contest until the next weekly deficiency list comes out and the student is determined to meet the eligibility requirements.

Attendance

To participate in a team meeting, practice, scrimmage, or game the athlete must be in school before second period begins. Students arriving later than this or leaving early are not eligible to participate in athletics that day. Exceptions to this rule would include medical appointments (note from the doctor's office is required – parent note is not acceptable), funerals (please inform the attendance office in advance), or other exceptional extremes to be approved in advance by the athletic director, assistant principal, or principal.

Please use these guidelines for a medical visit that necessitates a partial day absence:

- 1) Date and time of appointment are to be stated on the note.
- 2) For an appointment between 10:00 AM and 2:45 PM, the regular attendance policy is in effect for the morning, and then you will receive an early dismissal from the office.
- 3) If the appointment is prior to 10:00 AM and the student will not be in school prior to the appointment, be in school within one hour of the appointment being over – please remember to bring the medical note with you.
- 4) If the student cannot attend school at all due to attending a medical appointment, the student will not be permitted to participate with the team that day.
- 5) In extreme circumstances, the administration may make an exception.

For school-sponsored events that occur on weekends or holidays, the student must meet the attendance requirements on the last scheduled school day before the weekend or holiday occurs.

Any student who has a detention scheduled for a particular day may not skip the detention in order to participate in an extracurricular event on that day. This would include practices as well as the event itself. The student must attend the detention before the event.

CHL Passes

Reading is a member of the Cincinnati Hill League. The CHL sets admission prices and governs league play in all sports. Students may purchase a CHL pass that allows them to attend league contests at reduced prices.

Inclement Weather

On such days that school is cancelled, all seventh and eighth grade games and practices are automatically cancelled. Junior varsity and varsity events will be determined by the administration by 1:00PM. Junior varsity and varsity practices may be conducted if weather conditions improve with permission of the administration. These practices are not mandatory.

Expectations and Behavior

Student participation on an athletic team sponsored by the Reading Community Schools is a privilege; therefore, those who choose to participate are expected and required to conduct themselves properly at all times. Student athletes must always remember that they represent not only themselves, but also their team, school, and community. Student athletes are held to the intent and letter of all athletic department policies, school policies, and Reading Board of Education policies.

Coaches may set their own team standards, rules, and regulations at a more stringent level than the aforementioned policies, consistent with what is deemed appropriate for that sport. Any student athlete who violates any of the policies mentioned above is subject to disciplinary action including suspension and/or removal from the team. While the coach may address minor infractions, more serious infractions may result in the following actions:

First violation

The student athlete may be suspended for the number of contests equal to or greater than the penalty imposed by the OHSAA for the first-time ejection from a contest. The administration and/or coach will notify the student athlete and his/her parent of the suspension with the stipulation that a second violation will result in the following:

Second violation

The student athlete may be suspended from all team activities and be removed from the team. The student athlete and his/her parents will be notified of this action.

A violation, which in the opinion of the coach or administration is flagrant, may result in the immediate removal from the team for the first violation. Other penalties may be imposed by the administration as the situation warrants. Inappropriate behavior includes, but is not limited to, the following: obscene gestures, inappropriate language, fighting, theft, vandalism, repeat violations, insubordination, disruptive or uncooperative attitude, hazing, failure to meet team or athletic department responsibilities, ejection from a contest, conduct in the community which reflects negatively on the team and/or school, violation of the Substance Abuse Policy, conduct unbecoming a student athlete, or any behavior which the student athlete knows or should know is inappropriate.

Substance Abuse Policy

Beginning with the date that the student athlete becomes a student in Reading Junior/Senior High School and lasting until the conclusion of his/her athletic career at Reading Community Schools, this substance abuse policy will be in effect: The student athlete pledges not to use drugs, alcohol, or tobacco, and to do everything he/she can do to encourage and help their teammates and fellow students not to use drugs, alcohol, or tobacco. Included in this prohibition are any substances represented as a controlled substance, nonalcoholic beers, steroids, tobacco, and tobacco products and drug paraphernalia.

The student athlete will be held accountable for the Substance Abuse Policy on a year round basis and cumulatively throughout his/her interscholastic career grades seven through twelve. There is no "off season." For example: a violation during the eighth grade year followed by a violation in the tenth grade would constitute a second offense. Any infraction outside the school year will be referred to the Substance Abuse Policy Team.

Violations of the Substance Abuse Policy will lead to a denial of participation and/or removal from the Reading School District interscholastic athletic program.

Reading's Substance Abuse Policy is in effect for all the student athletes' grades seven through twelve. By definition, this includes all groups within the athletic department.

To participate in Reading's interscholastic athletic program, both the athlete and parent/guardian are required to sign the Substance Abuse Policy Acknowledgment form. These dated forms will be kept in the athletic office.

If a Substance Abuse Policy violation occurs after completion of the athlete's sporting season but during the effective calendar year of policy coverage, the athlete must fulfill all requirements of the program of reinstatement before his/her next sporting season. If it is a first offense violation, that athlete will be denied participation for a minimum of fourteen days of the next season of participation.

Student athletes under the fourteen-day denial of participation penalty for an out-of-season substance abuse violation will be permitted to try out for an interscholastic squad. If the student makes the squad, the fourteen-day denial of participation penalty will be enforced once the regular competition season begins (this does not include scrimmages). As with all violations, the athlete must complete all components or reinstatement procedures to be considered for reinstatement.

If a student athlete is implicated in a Substance Abuse Policy violation, the athletic director and/or assistant principal will fully investigate the situation to substantiate or rebuke the allegation.

A student athlete, who feels that he/she has a substance abuse problem, may personally report this circumstance to the athletic director, a coach, or a member of the school teaching staff. The athlete must submit to a professional assessment and undergo three substance abuse counseling sessions but may continue to participate in athletics. All self-referral information will remain confidential. If the assessment indicates treatment, the athlete must follow through with the program to remain on the squad. Parents may also make referrals on their own student athletes. Procedurally, parent referrals will be treated as self-referrals. All assessment/treatment will be at parent/guardian expense.

A self-referral or a parent referral cannot be made in an attempt to circumvent an active investigation into a Substance Abuse Policy violation. (One "self-referral" is permitted during an athlete's interscholastic career at Reading.) A self-referral counts as the first substance abuse violation but the athlete can participate. A second subsequent violation of the Substance Abuse Policy will result in a denial of participation for the minimum of fourteen days. Subsequent referrals follow the sequence.

Self-referrals cannot be made when there has been evidence of police or staff intervention surrounding a violation of the Substance Abuse Policy.

Consequences of Substance Abuse Policy Violations

First Offense: possession and/or use

Student athlete is denied participation in Reading's interscholastic athletic program for a minimum of fourteen day beginning on the first date the student athlete's sport may compete in a contest.

To be eligible for reinstatement in the interscholastic athletic program, the following requirements must be met.

1. The student athlete must submit to a professional drug/alcohol assessment. Proof of assessment completion must be provided to the athletic director within 10 days of the initial hearing. The professional assessment agency must be accredited and acceptable to the school district (L/CCDC I, II or III). Lists of acceptable agencies can be made available.
2. If the assessment indicates treatment procedures, the athlete must follow the prescribed program to be eligible for athletic reinstatement. Parents are permitted to seek qualified "second opinions" of professional assessments. Regardless of assessment findings, three counseling sessions may extend over a period of time longer than fourteen days. The student athlete will need to provide proof of enrollment in a specific counseling program to proceed with the reinstatement process.
3. With a tobacco violation, the student athlete will be denied participation for a minimum of fourteen days and be required to attend a smoke/tobacco cessation program. All proof of program attendance must be reported to the athletic director and is the responsibility of the student athlete.
4. For all Substance Abuse Policy violations, the final phase of athletic reinstatement will require a hearing with the parent/guardian accompanying the student athlete.

It is the student athlete's responsibility to schedule the appeal hearing with the athletic director. The appeals board will consist of the building athletic director, principal or designee, head coach of the athlete's sport, member of the guidance department and/or the district substance abuse coordinator.

Upon hearing the appeal made by the student athlete and his/her parents, the appeals board will make a recommendation to the principal as to whether reinstatement to the interscholastic program is justified. If the student athlete is reinstated, he/she must re-sign the substance abuse pledge form. If the reinstatement appeal is refused, the student athlete will be denied participation for a minimum of fourteen days.

If the first offense occurs after the end of the athlete's season but prior to the awards program, the student athlete will not attend the awards program. The student athlete will receive his/her awards only upon successful reinstatement to interscholastic athletics.

Student athletes under denial of participation for Substance Abuse Policy violations may practice with the squad but will not be in uniform for any contests.

Positions of team leadership are forfeited by violations of the Substance Abuse Policy.

Financial responsibility of the professional assessment and counseling/treatment session(s) lie with the parent/guardian of the student athlete.

Second Offense: possession and/or use

The second offense penalty will be enforced regardless of the time interval between the first offense and the second offense. The student athlete is accountable for adherence to the Substance Abuse Policy continuously from grades seven through twelve.

The student athlete is denied participation in Reading's interscholastic athletic program for one calendar year from the date of the infraction.

Second offenses can be any combination of drug or alcohol or tobacco substance abuse violations. For example: one alcohol violation plus one tobacco violation equals a second offense and the consequences as defined under policy guidelines.

In order to be reinstated to the interscholastic program after one year of denial of participation, the student athlete must complete all aspects of the reinstatement criteria as outlined in the first offense section.

It is the student athlete's responsibility to communicate with the athletic director concerning all aspects related to the completion of the reinstatement criteria.

If the second offense occurs after the end of the athlete's season but prior to the awards program, the athlete will not attend the awards program and will not receive interscholastic awards.

Financial responsibility for all professional assessment and counseling/treatment session(s) lie with the parent/guardian of the student athlete.

Selling of Alcohol or other controlled substances

The student athlete will be denied the privilege of participating in the interscholastic programs and practices for one calendar year from the date of the infraction.

For reinstatement to Reading's interscholastic athletic program, the student will be required to successfully complete all components of the reinstatement program. This would include: submitting to a professional assessment, attending a minimum of three counseling sessions, and appearing before the interscholastic appeals board.

A second offense involving the sale of alcohol or controlled substances will result in a permanent denial of participation in Reading's interscholastic athletic program.

H.I.P.P.A.

The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act is a federal law governing the confidential nature of your child's medical information. We are required to share the following "Notice of Privacy Policy."

Notice of Privacy Practices

This notice describes how medical information about you may be used and disclosed, and how you can get access to this information. By signing the Reading Participation Permission Sheet, you acknowledge that you have received this copy of Orthopaedic Physical Therapy Associates, Inc.'s Notice of Privacy Practices.

As the parent/guardian of my child who has chosen to participate in activities sponsored by the Reading Community Schools. In the event of an injury I authorize the release of medical information to the coaching, teaching, and/or administrative staff for the period from July 1 of this year through July 1 of next year.

My signature on the Reading Participation Permission Sheet authorizes the release of medical information (verbally or in writing) necessary to facilitate treatment. My signature also gives permission to the staff of Orthopaedic Physical Therapy Associates Inc. to obtain information (verbally or in writing) if necessary to facilitate treatment.

In keeping with H.I.P.P.A. guidelines I have received this "Privacy Policy Notice" outlining my rights in regards to the confidential nature of my child's medical information. My signature on the Reading Participation Permission Sheet confirms my understanding that a unique relationship exists between the athletic trainer, student, and staff of the Reading Community Schools and that medical information must be exchanged so that appropriate levels of participation can be established.

Notice of Privacy Practices (Consent)

The Notice of Privacy Practices provides information about how we may use and disclose protected health information about your child. The notice contains a Patient Rights Section describing your and your child's rights under the law. You have the right to review this notice before signing the consent. The terms of this notice may change. If the notice does change, you may obtain a revised copy by contacting the office of Orthopaedic Physical Therapy Associates, Inc. or the athletic director's office.

You have the right to request that we restrict how protected health information about you is used or disclosed for treatment, payment, or health care operations. We are not required to agree to this restriction, but if we do, we shall honor that agreement.

By signing the Reading Participation Permission Sheet, you consent to our use and disclosure of protected health information about your child for treatment, payment, and health care operations. You have the right to revoke this consent, in writing signed by you. However, such a revocation shall not affect any disclosures we have already made in reliance on your prior consent. Orthopaedic Physical Therapy Associates, Inc. and Reading Community Schools provide this form to comply with the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPPA)

Your signature on the Reading Participation Permission Sheet indicates that you understand:

- Protected health information may be disclosed or used for treatment, payment, or health care operations.
- Orthopaedic Physical Therapy Associates, Inc. has a Notice of Privacy Practices, and the patient has the opportunity to review this notice.
- Orthopaedic Physical Therapy Associates, Inc. reserves the right to change the Notice of Privacy Practices.
- The patient has the right to restrict the use of their information, but Orthopaedic Physical Therapy Associates, Inc. does not have to agree to those restrictions.
- The patient may revoke this consent in writing at any time, and all future disclosures will then cease.
- Orthopaedic Physical Therapy Associates, Inc. may condition treatment upon execution of this consent.

NCAA Clearinghouse

Any athlete wishing to participate in division I or II collegiate athletics needs to follow NCAA Clearinghouse regulations. It is the responsibility of each athlete to follow recruiting regulations. Information may be obtained by seeing your guidance counselor. It is recommended that you register for the NCAA Clearinghouse through your guidance counselor by the end of your eleventh grade year.

Reading Community Schools Participation Fee Notice

A participation fee will be required of all student-athletes participating in athletics at Reading Jr./Sr. High School. This fee must be paid in full on the designated date assigned to that sport, which will be ten calendar days from the date set by the OHSAA for the first official day of practice. In the event this date falls on a weekend, the due date will be the first weekday after this date. Any student who has not paid their participation fee at this time will not be permitted to engage in any team activities until full payment is made. There are no exceptions to this policy.

- Fees are to be paid to the supervising coach of that sport.
- Checks are to be made out to the Reading Jr./Sr. High School.
- Supervising coaches will issue a receipt for money paid by the athlete.
- The participation fee is \$50.00 per student per sport.
- The third (or more) sport in which any student participates during the same school year requires no additional participation fee.
- The cap for the school year for any family is \$300.00.
- Students will not receive refunds unless one of the following conditions arises:

- An athletic injury prior to the first contest keeps the student athlete from participating in games or practices for the remainder of the season. (A statement from a medical facility is required.) This will result in a 100% refund.
- An athletic injury that occurs during the first half of the season (once games begin) keeps the athlete from participating in games or practices for the remainder of the season. (A statement from a medical facility is required.) This will result in a 50% refund. Students injured during the second half of the season will not receive a refund.
- A student tries out for a team but is cut due to limitations of numbers will receive a 100% refund.
- An activity is cancelled due to lack of numbers to have a team will receive a 100% refund.

Students who at any time during the season are removed from an activity (or quit) will not receive a refund. Reasons for removal include, but are not limited to, academic ineligibility, removal by the coach or administration, injuries sustained off the playing field, suspension, expulsion, or other unwarranted reasons.

Insurance

All athletes must be covered by medical insurance. Athletes not covered by a parent's insurance may purchase insurance through the school. Information is available in the front office.

Leaving a team prior to the end of the season.

Once a student athlete has joined a team and has taken part in a regular season practice, that student athlete may not switch to another team unless both head coaches agree upon the switch and all the student athlete's obligations are completed. Any student athlete who is kicked off a team may not participate in any way with another team, until the first team's season is over. This includes any type of open gym or work as a team in the weight room.

OHSAA regulations

The OHSAA is the governing body for all athletes in the state of Ohio. Reading will always meet or exceed the regulations established by the OHSAA. In order to participate in interscholastic athletics, a student athlete must meet the following requirements:

- Be academically eligible as defined earlier in this handbook.
- Reside with your legal guardian in the Reading School District.
- When transferring schools, to enroll during the first fifteen school days and to obtain a superintendent's release if necessary.
- Not to exceed the eight semesters of high school eligibility once entering the ninth grade. Please note that semesters count whether or not the student participated in athletics.

- A student may not turn nineteen years of age prior to August 1st of this year in order to participate in high school sports. A student may not turn fifteen years of age prior to August 1st of this year in order to participate in junior high sports.

Sportsmanship

It is expected that all athletes, coaches, parents, and all others in attendance at all athletic events display good sportsmanship at all times. The Reading administration or their designee has the right to remove anyone from the facility for displays of poor sportsmanship or any activities they feel are disruptive to the event.

Good sportsmanship is expected from all who attend the event. Everyone makes mistakes on the field of competition. As a spectator, please be positive at all times and show respect to all athletes, coaches, officials, and other spectators. Inappropriate behavior and/or language will not be tolerated. This applies to before, during, and after an event.

Please...

- Never jeer or taunt players, coaches, or officials.
- Never use abusive or inappropriate language.
- Learn the rules of the game.
- Be courteous and respectful to the opposing team and their support groups.
- Respect the integrity and judgment of the officials.
- Show your appreciation for good play from both teams.
- Set a good example for those around you, especially for our young students and athletes.

Transportation

Athletes will be transported to and from athletic events via school provided transportation. In exceptional extremes and only with written permission from a parent and pre-approval of a coach, a student athlete may be released to return from a contest with his/her parent. Any exceptions to the above must be pre-approved by one of the administrators.

Uniform and equipment responsibilities

It is the responsibility of each student to take care of and return all equipment issued by the school. Lost or damaged equipment due to improper care or neglect becomes the financial responsibility of the athlete and his/her guardian. Any student who has not turned in or paid for equipment will not be allowed to work out with any other team, including open gym or weight room activities.

Required Forms

Prior to the start of practice, each athlete must have completed and returned the following forms to the coach or athletic director: 1) athletic physical form, 2) emergency medical form, and 3) the Reading Participation Permission Sheet.

Recognition

Blue and White Club: Students are eligible if they have not missed a day of school or have not been tardy to school during their sports season. The sports season is defined as the first day of practice (indicated by OHSAA) until the awards banquet or last game of post-season play, whichever comes last. In addition, students have not appeared on the ineligibility list nor have they had an office discipline referral during their sports season.

12 Season Athlete: Students are eligible if they have participated on an athletic team in each season of the school year (fall, winter, and spring) all four years of their high school career. Special recognition will also go to any athlete who accomplishes this as well as participating all three seasons of their junior high years as well.

Sportsmanship Award: Each sports season one male and one female athlete, at the junior high and high school level, are selected by the coaches for their display of sportsmanship during the preceding season.

CHL Academic Award: The Cincinnati Hills League recognizes those student athletes who earn a varsity letter while maintaining a 3.25 GPA during the season by issuing a CHL Academic Patch. Junior High students will receive a CHL certificate for maintaining a 3.25 GPA during their season as well. The athletic department will recognize all other levels of athletic competition by issuing certificates to those athletes who maintain a 3.25 GPA during their season.

Athlete of the Year Award: Each year the coaches vote on one senior male and one senior female to represent the school as the athlete of the year. In addition to athletic performance, character, service, sportsmanship, and work ethic are taken into consideration.

Parents' role in interscholastic athletics

Communicating with your children

- Make sure your children know that win or lose, scared or heroic, you love them, appreciate their efforts, and are not disappointed in them. This will allow them to do their best without fear of failure. Be the person in their life they can look to for constant positive reinforcement.
- Try your best to be completely honest about your child's athletic ability, competitive attitude, sportsmanship, and actual skill level.

- Be helpful, but don't coach them. It's tough not to, but it's a lot tougher for the child to be flooded with advice and critical instruction.
- Teach them to enjoy the thrill of competition, to be "out there trying," to be working to improve their skills and attitudes. Help to develop the feeling for competing, for trying hard, for having fun.
- Try not to relive your athletic life through your child in a way that creates pressure. You were frightened, backed off at times, and were not always heroic. Athletic children need their parents so do not withdraw. There is a thinking, feeling, free spirit in that uniform who needs a lot of understanding, especially when their world turns bad. If they are comfortable with you win or lose, then they are on their way to maximum enjoyment.
- Don't compete with the coach. If your child is receiving mixed messages from two different authority figures, he/she will likely become disenchanted.
- Don't compare the skill, courage, or attitude of your child with other members of the team.
- Get to know the coach(es). Then you can be assured that his or her philosophy, attitude, ethics, and knowledge are such that you are happy to have your child under his/her leadership.
- Always remember that children tend to exaggerate, both when praised and when criticized. Temper your reaction, and investigate before reacting.
- Make a point of understanding courage and the fact that it is relative. Some of us climb mountains and are afraid to fly. Some of us will fly but turn to jelly if a bee approaches. Everyone is frightened in certain areas. Explain that courage is not the absence of fear, but a means of doing something in spite of fear and discomfort.

Communicating with the Coach

Communication you should expect from your child's coach.

- Philosophy of the coach
- Expectations the coach has for your child as well as all players on the squad
- Locations and times of all practices and contests
- Team requirements (fees, special equipment, off-season conditioning)
- Procedure should your child be injured
- Discipline that results in the denial of your child's participation

Communication coaches expect from parents.

- Concerns expressed directly to the coach
- Notification of any schedule conflicts well in advance
- Specific concerns in regard to a coach's philosophy and/or expectations

Appropriate concerns to discuss with coaches

- The treatment of your child, mentally and physically
- Ways to help your child improve
- Concerns about your child's behavior

Issues not appropriate to discuss with coaches

- Playing time

- Team strategy
- Play calling
- Other student athletes

Appropriate procedure for discussing concerns with coaches.

- Call to set up an appointment with the coach (call the athletic director to set up the meeting if you are unable to reach the coach)
- Do not confront a coach before or after a contest or practice (these can be emotional times for all parties involved and do not promote resolution)
- If the meeting with the coach did not provide a satisfactory resolution, call to set up an appointment to meet with the athletic director
- If the meeting with the athletic director did not provide a satisfactory resolution, call to set up an appointment with the building principal.
- If the meeting with the building principal did not provide a satisfactory resolution, call to set up an appointment to meet with the superintendent