

ATHLETICS & ACTIVITIES HANDBOOK



2023-2024

HickmanMills.org

HICKMAN MILLS

C-1 SCHOOL DISTRICT

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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to Ruskin High School's interscholastic athletics and activities program. We are excited you have chosen to participate in the programs offered by your high school and hope they are not only educational, but rewarding and challenging as well.

We do not encourage you to specialize in one program or activity, but to take advantage of as many athletic and activity programs as your time, energy, and talent permit. You are commended for your initiative to grow emotionally, mentally, socially and physically through activities and athletics.

GOAL

Interscholastic athletics and activities are integral parts of the total secondary educational program. These experiences will assist students to obtain the knowledge, skills, and emotional control necessary for character development.

PHILOSOPHY

Ruskin High School believes that interscholastic athletics and activities are important supplements to the secondary curricular program and are vital to a student's total high school educational experience. These experiences contribute to the development of learning skills and emotional patterns that enable a student to make a maximum use of their high school education. Participation in athletics and activities will assist a student to develop socially, physically, mentally and emotionally.

Student participation in our interscholastic programs is a privilege and carries with it responsibilities to the school, the program, the student body and to the community.



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RESPONSIBILITIES

As a student participant, you are in high school to obtain the best secondary education you can achieve and your decision to take advantage of the other half of education plays a significant part in your total educational development. However, with this decision come certain responsibilities:

- Strive to achieve good citizenship and social traits that include cooperation, honesty, dependability, respect and emotional control.
- Maintain eligibility requirements that are established by the Missouri State High School Activities Association (MSHSAA) and Hickman Mills School District.
- Learn the spirit of hard work and sacrifice.
- Learn to attain physical and mental fitness through good health habits.
- Desire to excel to the limit of your potential.
- Showing respect for both authority and property.
- Willing to accept the leadership role that is instilled through the activities and athletic programs.

As a representative of your Ruskin High School, keep in mind that you are in the public eye and that your personal behavior and conduct must always be above reproach. You have an obligation to create a favorable image and gain the respect of

your teammates, your student body and your community.

PROTECTING YOUR ELIGIBILITY

The Missouri State High School Activities Association (MSHSAA), of which, the Hickman Mills School District is a member, is a voluntary, non-profit, educational association of junior and senior high schools established for the purpose of working cooperatively in adopting standards for supervising and regulating interscholastic activities and contests.

One of the primary functions of MSHSAA is to establish eligibility standards that must be met by all students to attain the privilege of representing their school in interscholastic activities.

Eligibility is a privilege granted by the high school to a student and allows the student to participate in interscholastic activities. Eligibility is not a student's right by law.

Precedent-setting legal cases have determined that eligibility is a privilege to be granted only if the student meets all standards adopted by the school, which enables the school to grant the student such a privilege.

Listed below is information to acquaint you with the major rules and regulations you must follow in order to protect your eligibility. Please contact your high school activities director for further clarification.

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ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS

To be eligible to participate in sports and activities at Ruskin, student-athletes must meet academic standards each semester. Individual eligibility will be determined at the close of each semester as eligibility is based on progress for the previously completed semester.

You must be making satisfactory progress toward graduation as determined by the Hickman Mills School District and must have earned, the preceding semester of attendance, a minimum of 3.0 units of credit or have earned credit in 80% of the maximum allowable classes in which you can be enrolled in the semester, whichever is greater.

For your current semester, you must be enrolled in and regularly attending courses that offer 3.0 units of credit or 80% of the maximum allowable credits, whichever is greater.

Credits earned or completed after the close of the semester will not fulfill the requirement. Summer high school courses for FALL academic eligibility may count, provided the course (no electives) is necessary for promotion or graduation and credit is placed on the school transcript.

No more than one unit of credit earned during summer school shall be counted toward eligibility. Correspondence courses may not be used to re-establish academic eligibility.

Students promoted for the first time into ninth

grade are considered academically eligible for the first semester after promotion.

Do not drop courses without first consulting with the activities director or counselor to determine whether doing so will affect your eligibility.

Students who desire to participate in intercollegiate sports, should check with their college or university to determine what additional academic requirements are needed for admission. The NCAA, NAIA, and NJCAA all have specific requirements.

ACADEMIC STANDARDS PROCEDURE

Each head coach or sponsor (assistant if applicable) will follow the academic performance of their charges every three weeks using the Hickman Mills School District's Infinite Campus Program.

If a coach or sponsor identifies a student that is not performing satisfactorily academically, the coach or sponsor will meet with the student to discuss issues that may explain why their performance is deficient.

If it is determined that follow-up with the student is needed, the coach or sponsor will refer the student for further academic intervention.



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TRANSFERRING SCHOOL DISTRICTS

If you transfer school districts and your parents do not move to the new school district, you will be ineligible for 365 days unless an exception to the transfer or promotion rule is met (see your activities director for specific MSHSAA information).

“If you move with your parents to a new school district, you will need to work with that new school to file a Transfer Request with MSHSAA, before being eligible to participate in sports there.”

PARTICIPATION LIMITS

You are eligible a maximum of four consecutive seasons in any sport or activity. Participation in any portion a game or contest during a season counts as a season of participation.

Eligibility to participate in high school athletics and activities begins when you first enter the ninth grade and lasts for the first eight semesters that you are enrolled in high school. Your eighth semester must immediately follow your seventh semester.

ENTRANCE AND AGE REQUIREMENT

You must enter school within the first 11 days of the semester to be eligible for participation. If you reach the age of 19 prior to July 1, you are ineligible for interscholastic competition the following school year.

NON-SCHOOL COMPETITION

You may not participate in any organized non-school athletic team competition and your school team in the same sport during the same season.

You may participate on a school and a non-school team in different sports during the same season; however, you may not practice or compete in non-school organized athletic competition on the same day that you practice or compete with your school team without approval of the school administration.



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Amendment to By-Law 235 – During the school sport season of swimming and diving, a student may, after fulfilling all requirements, practices and competitions of the school swimming and diving team, practice or compete as a member of a non-school team or as an individual participant in an organized non-school swimming and diving practice or competition under the conditions listed below:

1. Priority shall be given to all school team practices and competitions. Should a non-



school practice or competition be in direct conflict with the schools scheduled practice or competition, the school practice or competition shall take priority. Prior approval by the school administrator may grant an exception to a student to participate in the non-school swimming and diving program if in direct conflict with the other program.

2. No school time shall be missed to compete, practice or travel to the site of such non-school swimming and diving competition unless the absence is approved in advance by the school administrator.
3. A school shall not replace its swimming or diving program with any non-school or swimming or diving program.

Before joining any non-school team or enter any non-school competition involving athletics, check with the activities director to ensure these standards are being met.

AWARDS STANDARDS

You may not receive cash, merchandise or gift certificates in return for participating in any athletic or academic contests. You may accept awards that are symbolic in nature, such as medals, trophies, ribbons, plaques, etc. for participating in a school athletic or academic contest. These awards may be received only from your school, from a school host-

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ing an event or from MSHSAA.

You may accept awards for participating in non-school sponsored athletic and academic competition only if the awards are symbolic in nature, such as medals, trophies, ribbons, plaques, etc.

AUDITIONS

You may participate in an “audition” or “try-out” for a college team only after you have completed your last season of eligibility in the sport for which you wish to try-out.

You cannot represent your school (appearing in school uniform, school-named clothing, at school facilities, or with mascot/school colors) to endorse or promote a product or service, commercial venture, political venture, etc. without prior, written consent by a school administrator.

You may not participate in any All-Star contest prior to your eligibility in the sport concerned has been exhausted. Specific concerns regarding All-Star contests should be directed to your activity’s director.

SPORTS CAMPS/CLINICS

You may attend a summer sports camp or clinic if your school’s coaching staff instructs or coaches for a period no longer than two weeks in duration.

You may attend a non-school sponsored summer sports camp or clinic for as long as you wish where

you do not receive instruction or coaching from a member of your school’s coaching staff.

You may attend a specialized camp or clinic outside the sport season during the school year where you do not receive instruction or coaching from a member of your school’s coaching staff.

You are allowed to provide lessons or instruction in yours port without jeopardizing amateur standing.



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Before attending any specialized athletic camp, clinic or group sport instruction, you should consult your activities director.

CREDITABLE SCHOOL CITIZENSHIP

You are ineligible for interscholastic athletics and activities if you violate the policies of the Hickman Mills Schools Board of Education or if you do not exhibit good citizenship at all times.

If you violate school policies, the procedures and penalties of those policies may take precedence over or be in addition to those described in the following section. The coach or sponsor, activities director and school administrator will determine the length of non-participation for those students found not to be in compliance with school district policies. To clearly outline and define the disciplinary action, the following guidelines are provided for students:

Students whose character or conduct is such as to reflect discredit upon themselves or their school is not considered a “credible citizen”. This includes violations of public law or school policy.

VIOLATION PENALTY

Students that admit to be or have been charged with a municipal ordinance violation, misdemeanor or felony, or in which administrators have first-

hand knowledge, will be suspended from participation and will remain ineligible until their judgment is satisfied according to public law or school policy (MSHSAA By-Law).

This includes violations that take place during the season or non-season and includes evenings, weekends and summer. School officials may deny participation in all extracurricular activities if a student is convicted or found “not innocent” of a municipal ordinance, misdemeanor or felony.

REINSTATEMENT

Reinstatement to the athletic or activity team may be granted after a review by the school administration and the coach or sponsor.

PROCEDURES AND APPEALS

The coach or sponsor, in conjunction with the activity’s director and school administrator, may suspend a student from activities after having given them the right to be heard. The suspension decision may be appealed to the principal. The principal’s decision will be final. The student and their parent or guardian may appeal actions taken pursuant to this policy.

The school administration will send a written decision to the parent or guardian within two days of the appeal hearing.

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SPORTSMANSHIP

As a participant representing Ruskin High School, you are required to exhibit good sportsman-ship at all times. The moment you put on your school's uniform, you become a representative of your student body, your school and your community. You will receive the ingredients for good sportsman-ship through the teaching, coaching and examples of the coaching staff. Ensure you exhibit what you learn.

A very important lesson we learn through inter-scholastic activities and athletics is that by hard work and dedication, we can improve. In America, we recognize we can take the ability given us and through hard work and dedication become anything we want to become. No one can tell you what you must be. If you are willing to recognize the ability you possess and work hard, you can achieve success in activities and athletics.

Attitude is one of the principal requisites in becoming a champion in any sport and is best defined by how you act, feel and think in showing your disposition.

The desires to excel and to win are positive points of attitude that contribute to a winning philosophy. Winning philosophies are important, but likewise

realize the importance of how the game is played as well as viewed. Simple acts or gestures of respect such as displaying good conduct, cooperating with officials, shaking hands with opponents before and after contests, showing self-control at all times, accepting decisions and abiding by them, accepting both victory and defeat with pride and compassion and never being boastful or bitter will aid you and your team to exemplify the standards of sportsman-ship expected of athletes and participants at Ruskin High School.

Interscholastic activities and athletics are much like everyday life. America thrives on the competition that has made this country as great as it is today. It is the backbone of our great nation. Whether your career plans include labor, management, sales, etc. you must realize there will be competition. There are and will be disappointments in all of life's activities. It's how you react to these disappointments that will measure what values you have learned through activity participation and athletic play on the athletic courts, fields, and mats during your high school days.

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NAIA CHAMPIONS OF CHARACTER

The National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA) has partnered with Ruskin High School for a series of Champions of Character presentations.

The Association, through the Champions of Character program works with all coaches, student-athletes and parents of student-athletes to change the culture of sport and create an environment that intentionally teaches the five core values:

- Integrity
- Respect
- Responsibility
- Servant
- Leadership
- Sportsmanship

HAZING POLICY

Ruskin High School prohibits any form of hazing, including but not limited to initiation rituals and harassment. Hazing is unacceptable conduct and will result in

disciplinary action. This disciplinary action may include, but is not limited to a student's suspension or expulsion from school or the termination of an employee's employment with the school district.

No student, coach, teacher, sponsor, volunteer or school district employee shall plan, direct, encourage, assist, engage, or participate in any hazing activity. Coaches, administrators, teachers, sponsors, volunteers and school district employees shall not permit, condone, or tolerate any form of hazing.

Students who have been subjected to hazing are instructed to promptly report such incidents to a school official.

CHEMICAL ABUSE POLICY

Ruskin High School recognizes the use of mood-altering chemicals as a significant health problem for many adolescents, resulting in negative effects on



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behavior, learning and the total development of each individual.

PURPOSE

The purpose of the Hickman Mills School District's chemical abuse policy is to:

- Recognize and elevate the physical and emotional potential of students in a positive manner and encourage the growth of these students in an atmosphere of responsible citizenship.
- Emphasize the school's concern for maintaining and improving the health and safety of students while participating in activities.
- Promote every student's awareness of the long-term physical and emotional effects of

chemical use on their health.

- Promote equity and a sense of order and discipline among students.
- Confirm and support existing state laws which restrict the use of chemicals.
- Establish and promote high standards of conduct for those students who are leaders and standard-bearers among their peers.
- Assist students who desire to resist peer pressure, which directs them toward the use of chemicals.
- Provide prevention guidelines for chemical abuse in the athletic and activity programs for students and sponsors of the Hickman-Mills School District.
- Demonstrate creditable citizenship at all times. Non-creditable citizenship could result in disciplinary action or removal from participation.



NAIA CHAMPIONS OF CHARACTER

The use of tobacco and mood-altering chemicals such as alcohol, drugs, marijuana, etc. or misuse of prescription or over the counter medications by adolescents affects extra-curricular participation and the development of related skills.

Ruskin High School also recognizes that, at a time

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when students need to learn how to deal with adult problems, drugs can give them a false means of sidestepping those problems. It is also recognized that taking these chemicals further saps the student of spontaneity and adolescent vitality.

The close contact advisors and coaches have with students provides them with a unique opportunity to observe, confront and assist these students.

OBJECTIVE

To establish a prevention program by adopting penalty guidelines for violations of chemical use by students who participate in school activities.

To ensure that the fairest treatment is received for the action, the following must occur:

- Certainty - Enforcement of consequences will follow the violation.
- Severity – Fair penalty for the act.
- Celerity – Promptness of the process.

CONSEQUENCES OF CHEMICAL ABUSE

During the school year or during the season of practice, play or rehearsal, regardless of the quantity, a student shall not have in possession, use, consume, buy, sell or give away tobacco or a beverage containing alcohol.

Also, students shall not have in possession, use,



consume, buy, sell or give away marijuana or any substance defined by law as an illegal drug.

It is not a violation for a student to be in possession of a legally defined drug specifically prescribed for the student's own use by their own doctor; however, it is a violation to use any drug for a purpose other than its prescribed use.

The following are only minimum guidelines and are applicable to all non-curricular related activities such as interscholastic athletics, cheerleading, dance, speech and debate, music, winter guard and academic performance groups, etc.

FIRST VIOLATION

The student shall lose eligibility for a minimum of 30%* of the highest level of competition in which the student is a participant. This includes JV, sophomore and freshmen competition. During the time of loss of eligibility, the student must meet all other team obligations.

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Also, the student must undergo counseling as specified by the school administration before they can participate in games. The maximum penalty for a first violation is loss of eligibility for 365 days.

SECOND VIOLATION

The student shall lose eligibility for 365 days, beginning with the date of the violation.

In order to serve a penalty during a sport season other than during the season in which the infraction occurred, the student must have participated in that sport the previous year.

*The 30% penalty assessed against the total average matches or contests played during tournament shall be counted the same as individual matches/

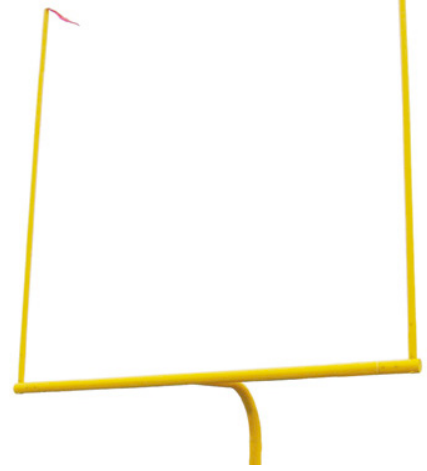
contests. For example: If the tennis team plays an average of 26 matches or contests (including tournaments), then $.30 \times 26$ would be 7.8 matches or contests. The actual penalty may be greater in an individual sport where tournament advancement requires preceding wins.

BASIC GUIDELINES FOR PARTICIPATION

You are free to choose the activities in which you wish to participate. It is the Hickman Mills School District's policy that when students face a conflict between two school-sponsored activities, the sponsors of the activities shall meet to determine a



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resolution with the best interest of the student in mind. Certain school activities (to be determined by the building administration) will have priority. Students are not to be penalized by the activity not attended.

If you have gone out for a sport but quit of your own accord, you will not be eligible to begin practicing or pre-season conditioning for another sport before the end of the competition in the sport that was dropped unless the head coach (of the sport that was dropped) signs a release form and the head coach of the new sport involved accepts the athlete. Every athlete should understand this policy.

ATTENDANCE

It is important that you be in attendance at school. Attendance is required to be able to participate in



any activity scheduled for that day. Exceptions are granted with administrative approval only. Hickman Mills School Board Policy states:

“Students who represent the district in an athletic contest who are physically unable to attend school for a minimum of two class periods of the school day that the interscholastic activity is held will not participate in that activity that evening.”

If it is necessary to be absent from practice, you are expected to obtain permission from the head coach prior to the scheduled practice. In the event that you are truant or suspended, you are not eligible for participation until you have fulfilled all of the disciplinary requirements established by the administration.

In the event that you are assigned an afternoon detention as the result of a classroom problem, you are not allowed to use the excuse of “I have practice, so I can’t stay.” The classroom obligation always comes first.

CARE OF EQUIPMENT

In order to give students a sense of responsibility and an appreciation of equipment, you will be held accountable for the abuse or loss of equipment. Students checking out equipment must pay for all items that are lost or stolen.

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The following guidelines, if adhered to, will reduce the chances of lost or stolen equipment:

- Do not exchange or loan any of the equipment checked out to you to another teammate. If exchange is warranted, clear it on your checkout card by having the coach make the adjustments.
- Except when you are in visual contact, keep your locker closed and locked at all times. This includes when you are in the shower. School and personal equipment and belongings should be locked up at all times.
- Any loss of equipment should be reported immediately to the head coach rather than waiting until the end of the season.
- Any protective equipment that does not fit properly or that has any defective parts should be reported to a coach immediately. Do not wear such equipment until the necessary adjustments have been made. This is for your protection.
- It is against MSHSAA regulations to sell or rent any equipment to any individual. Therefore, any equipment you may see out of the school environment does not belong to the individual(s). Please report any such violation to a coach or the activities adminis-

trator. By doing so, you are not only helping the athletic department, but also the individual who must pay for the stolen item.

CONDITIONING AND THE PREVENTION OF INJURIES

Proper sports conditioning will improve the power, speed and endurance of the athlete on the field or in the gymnasium. It will also help strengthen muscles and joints, increase flexibility and maximize agility through the channeling of aerobic as well as anaerobic power. In addition to the benefit of increased performance, statistics indicate that sports conditioning will assist in preventing injury.

Year-round conditioning can increase athletic performance considerably. Training, unfortunately, is easily reversible and that is why year-round conditioning is so important. Opportunities are provided for athletes in Ruskin High School to be involved in year-round conditioning. It is strongly recommended that all athletes not involved in a sport participate in the conditioning program during the off season.

All athletes want to perform to the best of their abilities, yet a sprained ankle, a bad knee or a pulled muscle can prevent one from doing the best they can. Though there is no guarantee these injuries will not occur, their frequency and seriousness can be reduced through simple measures such as

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the year-round conditioning mentioned above, training techniques and an awareness of the injury patterns in your chosen sport. Make certain to consult with the athletic trainers immediately if an injury does occur.

PHYSICIAN EXAMS AND INSURANCE REQUIREMENTS

Athletic By-Law 309 (a) in the MSHSAA Handbook states:

“The school shall require of each student participating in athletics or an activity performance group shall obtain a physician’s certificate stating that he or she is physically able to participate in athletic contests or performance groups.”

The medical certificate is valid for the purpose of this rule if issued February 1st or after if the previous school year. This certificate must be on file before you will be allowed to practice with any Ruskin High School athletic teams.

Athletic By-Law 309(b) in the above handbook states:

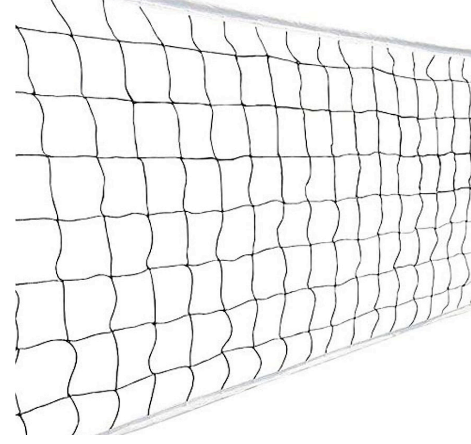
“A student shall not be permitted to practice or compete for a school until it has verification that they have basic athletic insurance coverage.”

The MSHSAA Pre-Participation Physical Evaluation Form is available at this link:

<https://bit.ly/MSHSAAPhysical2023>



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TRANSPORTATION POLICY

AWAY CONTESTS

All school trips must be made with school-approved transportation (e.g., school buses, chartered buses, etc.) All students participating in away school-sponsored contests are expected to ride the school-approved transportation. You may secure permission to return from a contest with some exceptions:

- With your own parent, providing that your parent requests such permission from the coach or sponsor in advance.
- With your coach or sponsor in the case of unusual circumstances (e.g., injury or need to attend another school event).

You are not allowed to drive yourself to away contests when leaving from school.

OFF CAMPUS PRACTICE AND HOME CONTEST SITES

When practice sites and home contest sites are off campus, a one-way shuttle bus may be provided. If you are allowed to drive to school you may drive yourself to off-campus practice and home contest sites if a signed parent permission slip is on file with your coach or sponsor. If you transport another student, parent permission slips from all parents must be on file in the activities director's office.



COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY LETTER OF INTENT SIGNINGS

Hickman Mills School District recognizes that many student athletes will continue their athletic quest at the collegiate level. These institutions request that each athlete sign a letter of intent to attend their college or university. In order to ensure that each letter of intent signing is recognized properly and consistently, the following criteria will be used:

Ruskin high school will recognize letter of intent signings for student athletes who participate at in the same sport they are signing to participate in at the collegiate level.

Each year there will be three dates scheduled for college signings. These dates will correspond to the first Wednesday in November, February and May.

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CONCUSSIONS

A concussion is a brain injury that results in a temporary disruption of normal brain function. A concussion occurs when the brain is violently moved within the skull, typically from a blow to the head or body. An athlete does not need to lose consciousness to suffer a concussion. In fact, less than ten percent of concussed athletes suffer loss of consciousness.

Ruskin High School takes concussions very seriously and is committed to following the guidelines established by the National Federation of State High School Associations.

These guidelines are outline in a document available in print form from your coach and can be viewed at this website link:

<https://bit.ly/ConcussionGuide2023>

CONCLUSION

Interscholastic athletics and activities are an important supplement to the secondary curricular program, and as such become a vital part

of a student's total educational experience. These experiences contribute to the development of learning skills and emotional patterns that enable the student to make maximum use of their education. Student athletics and activities are an integral part of the total secondary educational program and provide experiences not otherwise made available enable students to acquire additional knowledge, skills and emotional patterns necessary as attributes of good citizenship. Ruskin High School strives to establish successful learning experiences for all and create responsible citizens capable of lifelong accomplishments.



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ATHLETIC/ACTIVITY ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Student Name: _____

I acknowledge that the High School Athletics and Activities Handbook for the 2022 – 2023 school year is readily available upon request through the school office and on the school district's website at www.HickmanMills.org.

I have read this handbook and am informed about the following:

- Goals and Philosophies of the Ruskin High School Athletic and Activities Program
- Responsibilities of Athletes and Activity Participants
- Creditable School Citizenship
- Sportsmanship and Hazing Policy
- Chemical Abuse Policy
- Guidelines for Participation (including eligibility requirements)
- Transportation Policy
- Physician Exams, Insurance and Participation Fees

I understand the consequences for breaking school policy and I will not do so while a Ruskin High School student participant. I agree to abide by the provision of the High School Athletics and Activities Handbook and understand that if I have any questions about the contents of the handbook, I should contact my activities director or principal.

Student Name: _____ Date: _____

Further, as the parent(s) / guardian of the above-named student participant, I (we) have also read the High School Athletics and Activities Handbook and discussed what is expected of my child by Ruskin High School and the consequences of these actions.

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

ELECTRONIC SIGNATURE FORM LINK

Athletes must complete the Athletic/Activity Acknowledgement form to indicate that you've read the handbook and agree to the policies and procedures included. Students and parents must sign the form electronically and submit. The link to this form is here: <https://forms.gle/7XUuEiWfAjcLgJBE7>