



**ATHLETIC HANDBOOK**

**FOR**

**STUDENT ATHLETES, PARENTS, AND COACHES**

**2018-19**

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“So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do,  
do it all for the glory of God.”  
1 Corinthians 10:31

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## LETTER FROM THE ATHLETIC DIRECTOR

A student/athlete's involvement in athletics is a privilege, a responsibility and an important part of their education experience while attending Rockbridge Academy. While winning is valued, at Rockbridge Academy the overriding emphasis is on building the Christian character of our student/athletes, and instilling a lifelong love of sports and physical activity. The famous UCLA basketball coach John Wooden said "Sports do not build character, they reveal it." When what is revealed is not God honoring, coaches have the opportunity to mold an athlete's character to be more Christ like. Sportsmanship, teamwork, fair play, and the value of hard work are valuable life lessons that are learned through competitive athletic participation.

**"For physical training is of some value, but godliness has value for all things, holding promise for the present life and the life to come." I Timothy 4:8**

We invite Rockbridge Academy students, parents and faculty to attend athletic events. They provide times of fellowship for the Rockbridge community and a chance to cheer for our teams, and to encourage our athletes, and their opponents as well. Attendance at games afford an opportunity for Rockbridge athletes, students, faculty and fans to act as ambassadors for Christ as we support our teams and show respect and appreciation towards our opponents, officials and coaches.

**"We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making His appeal through us." II Corinthians 5:20**

83% of Rockbridge Academy students participated in the athletic program this past year. While athletics and athletic competition are important, academics take precedence over athletic participation. The Athletic Director works closely with the administration and faculty to ensure that student/athletes maintain their academic standing in order to remain eligible to participate in athletics. Parents and coaches will be notified if a student/athlete is in danger of losing their athletic eligibility

Rockbridge Academy offers athletic opportunities for girls and boys in both Middle School and Upper School in soccer and cross country in the fall, basketball and swimming in the winter and girls lacrosse and baseball for varsity boys in the spring.

In Christ,

Joe Palumbo  
Athletic Director  
Rockbridge Academy  
School: 410-923-1171



## **ROCKBRIDGE ACADEMY PHILOSOPHY OF ATHLETICS**

### **Relationship to Academics**

Interscholastic athletics will not take priority over the academic program at Rockbridge Academy.

### **Missed Academic Time for Athletics**

The Rockbridge Academy school policy for pre-arranged absences applies to athletics. Athletes and students attending athletic events are to discuss early dismissals and absences in advance with teachers and are to complete those assignments on time, as described in the Rockbridge Academy Student Handbook under “Short Term Absences.”

### **Athletic Objectives and Guidelines for Participation**

The following are the objectives and guidelines for athletics in the upper school: Rockbridge Academy participates in two levels in the sixth through twelfth grades, middle school and varsity.

#### **Middle School**

The objectives of the middle school program are improvement through participation and the development of basic skills. Coaches will teach basic rules and strategies of the game. The objectives of middle school athletics are to develop sportsmanship, Christian character, individual skills, team skills, conditioning, and a love of the game through participation by all team members. This does not imply equal playing time for all. Playing time will vary according to the level of competition and readiness for competition, and playing at all games remains contingent on attitude and participation in practice. There is no guarantee that every athlete will play in every game. Middle school teams are intended to prepare student athletes for varsity play. It is expected of middle school players that they be on time, work hard, and have a good attitude.

#### **Junior Varsity**

On occasion, a junior varsity (JV) team will be formed for a particular sport. The JV team is to be a transition between the middle school and varsity levels. It is to allow for continued development of skills and a greater understanding of the game, as well as a continuation of the player’s development of Christian character and sportsmanship. Playing time will vary according to the level of competition and the player’s readiness for competition. Playing in games remains contingent on attitude and participation in practice. There is no guarantee that every athlete will play in every game. JV teams are intended to prepare student athletes for varsity play. It is expected of JV players that they be on time, work hard, and maintain a positive attitude. The determination of which players will play on the JV team will be made by the varsity and JV coaches, in consultation with the athletic director.

#### **Varsity**

The objective of the varsity level is to exhibit impeccable sportsmanship and excellence. Varsity athletics are highly competitive and advanced, focused on winning games, but doing so in a way that builds character, leadership, and camaraderie. At this level the athlete will be scrutinized more thoroughly on his character, ability, attitudes, and skills. The most qualified athletes will be selected for the varsity team. Playing time will be entirely at the discretion of the coach. There is no guarantee that every athlete will play in every game. Coaches will communicate with players about their roles, coaches’ expectations, and general playing time expectations.

## **ATHLETE PARTICIPATION POLICIES**

### **Varsity and JV Teams**

All students in grades 9-12 are eligible to participate on JV and Varsity teams. Eighth grade students may participate at the JV or varsity level under specific circumstances and with the approval of the athletic director.

### **Middle School Teams**

All students in grades 6-8 are eligible to participate on the Middle School teams.

### **5th Grade Student Participation in Middle School Sports**

Fifth grade students are permitted to play for the middle school teams when special permission is given by the Athletic Director. This is normally allowed only to fill out a team's roster.

### **Tryouts**

When a sport has a team participating at multiple levels, i.e. varsity and Junior Varsity, try-outs and the team selection process will be conducted during the first week of practice (at the coach's discretion). Generally, prospects will be expected to attend practices and/or try-outs from the very first day. Any student allowed to try-out late must have emergency reasons for doing so, and **must have the Athletic Director's approval for a late or abbreviated try-out**. All students must participate in at least three (3) practices before participation is allowed in any games.

1. All athletes will be given a fair and equitable tryout evaluation.
2. Not everyone who tries out for a varsity team will make it through the final selection process. All team determinations will be cleared through the Athletic Director. **Coaches, in consultation with the athletic director, are responsible for selecting final team rosters and for determining playing time.**

### **Team Captain Choice**

A Team Captain should be a person who possesses the following qualities:

1. Displays leadership, not just on the court or field, but also in the classroom.
2. Demonstrates the fruit of the Spirit: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.
3. Is respectful to all coaches and players.
4. Encourages their teammates.
5. Attends all practices and games.
6. Is committed and faithful to the team.
7. Exhibits good sportsmanship whether winning or losing.
8. Has a positive attitude, is not easily discouraged, never quits, and gives 100% all of the time.
9. Demonstrates team spirit.

Final selection must be approved by the Athletic Director. A maximum of two captains may be selected per team, unless approved by the athletic director. Coaches may also select weekly rotating game captains who will join the regular team captains.

### **Practice Length**

Practices must start and end promptly. Parents are encouraged to arrive for pick-up five minutes early. The Athletic Office will communicate all practice times and changes with athletes and parents. **Normally**, practices will not be held when school is dismissed early or closed due to inclement weather. Attendance at practice sessions is mandatory, unless approved by the coach. Lateness will not be tolerated.

### **Athletic Fees**

There is a fee (per sport) of \$250 per athlete. The homeschool student participation fee (per sport) is \$350 per athlete. For Rockbridge families, the athletic fee will be assessed on the family's FACTS account when rosters are finalized. For Home School athletes, the athletic fee must be paid by cash, check or credit card (3% service fee added) once rosters are finalized. Uniforms will be distributed prior to the first game and will be collected when the season is completed. Any damaged or lost uniform is the athlete's responsibility and repair and/or replacement costs will be assessed on the athlete's family FACTS account.

### **Homeschool Student Participation**

Homeschooling families will be allowed to participate in Rockbridge Academy Athletics as necessary to field a team. Once a homeschool student has participated on a team, they are permitted to try out for the same team in subsequent years. League policy does not allow homeschooled students to participate on Varsity Boys or Girls Soccer, Varsity Boys or Girls Basketball or Varsity Baseball.

### **Injury Related Unconsciousness in Athletics**

Any Rockbridge Academy athlete who suffers a potential concussion or becomes unconscious for any length of time during a game or practice, must alert the coach immediately, seek medical attention, and is ineligible to continue practice to re-enter the game for the remainder of that practice or event.

The Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has issued the following list of signs and symptoms as indicators that a concussion has occurred:

- | <u>Signs Observed by Coaching Staff</u>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | <u>Symptoms Reported by Athlete</u>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Appears dazed or stunned</li><li>● Is confused about assignment</li><li>● Forgets plays</li><li>● Is unsure of game, score, or opponent</li><li>● Moves clumsily</li><li>● Answers questions slowly</li><li>● Loses consciousness</li><li>● Shows behavior or personality changes</li><li>● Can't recall events prior to or after hit</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Headache</li><li>● Nausea</li><li>● Balance problems or dizziness</li><li>● Double or fuzzy vision</li><li>● Sensitivity to light or noise</li><li>● Feeling sluggish</li><li>● Feeling foggy or groggy</li><li>● Concentration or memory problems</li><li>● Confusion</li></ul> |

Coaches are instructed to take the following steps if they suspect that a player has a concussion:

1. Remove athlete from play.
2. Athlete may **NOT** return to active participation on the day of the injury.
3. Ensure athlete is evaluated by an appropriate health care professional. Coaches are **NOT** to try to judge the seriousness of the injury themselves.
4. Inform athlete's parents or guardians and the Athletic Director about the known or possible concussion.
5. Allow athlete to return to play only with permission from an appropriate health care professional.

Students who may require an inhaler or EpiPen during practices or games are to notify their coach, and are responsible for keeping one in the team's first aid kit.

### **Participation and School Attendance**

A student must be present at school by 11:50 in order to participate in interscholastic athletics that day (either in practice or in games) unless the student is attending a scheduled appointment (doctor, dentist, driver's test, etc). Students participating in a college visit must notify their coach and the athletic director prior to the visit. They are eligible to participate in practice or play in a game on that day, if they obtain the athletic director's approval.

### **Grading**

The following criteria will be used in assigning grades for participation in interscholastic sports:

- 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders participating in interscholastic middle school sports receive a grade on their report card for each season.
- 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grade students participating in one interscholastic varsity sport receive a grade on their report card and 0.5 PE credit per year toward graduation for each season of participation in a varsity level sport.
- 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> graders participating in one interscholastic varsity sport receive 0.5 PE credit per year on their high school transcript if needed to fulfill graduation requirements
- Athletes who play one season of a varsity sport per year are not allowed to enroll in PE during the same school calendar year.

A sample Coach's Assessment Sheet can be found on page 20. Coaches will evaluate each student based on the following criteria as stated in the Rockbridge Academy Athletic Contract:

1. **Preparation:** 40% - Fully equipped, ready on time, stays entire time for all practices and games. Unexcused absences from practices or games will result in a lower participation grade and decreased playing time in the following game.
2. **Character:** 40% - Rockbridge Academy sports are an extension of the classroom. Our practice and our play is a reflection ultimately of Christ, which is why we do all to the glory of God.
  - a. Attitude
  - b. Teamwork
  - c. 100% effort
  - d. Teachability
3. **Athletic Skills:** 20% - Hustle, knowledge, and practice.

At the end of each season, coaches will assign a grade in each category: Preparation, Character, and Athletic Skills.

## CONFERENCE MEMBERSHIP AND TEAM OFFERINGS

### Conference Membership

Rockbridge Academy is a member of Maryland Independent Athletic Conference (MIAC), Maryland Independent School Athletic League (MISAL), Capital Area Lacrosse League (CALL), and Middle School Chesapeake Scheduling Co-op.

#### *MIAC (VB Soccer, VG/VB Cross Country, VB/VG Basketball and VB Baseball)*

- |                                    |                                 |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1. Open Bible Christian School     | 2. Covenant Life School         |
| 3. Greater Grace Christian Academy | 4. Maryland School for the Deaf |
| 5. Mt. Airy Christian Academy      | 6. Perry Hall Christian School  |

#### *MISAL (VG Soccer)*

- |                             |                                        |
|-----------------------------|----------------------------------------|
| 1. Calverton School         | 2. Riverdale Baptist School            |
| 3. Grace Christian          | 4. Southern Maryland Christian Academy |
| 5. King's Christian Academy | 6. Takoma Academy                      |

#### *CALL (VG Lacrosse)*

1. FCA
2. Calverton School
3. GLAAC

#### *Middle School Chesapeake Scheduling Co-op (Middle School Boys and Girls Soccer, Cross Country and Basketball)*

- |                   |                               |
|-------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. AACS           | 2. Calverton                  |
| 3. Indian Creek   | 4. Key School                 |
| 5. Holy Trinity   | 6. School of the Incarnation  |
| 7. Severn         | 8. St. Andrew's               |
| 9. St. Anne's     | 10. St. John's                |
| 11. St. Martin's  | 12. St. Martin's in the Field |
| 13. St. Paul's    | 14. St. Mary's                |
| 15. Summit School |                               |

To facilitate scheduling of activities and to encourage competition, Rockbridge Academy will strive to maintain membership in each league so long as it is deemed beneficial by the school's administration.



## Athletic Teams and Start Dates

Team	Start Date
<b>Fall</b>	
Varsity Boys' Soccer	13-Aug
Varsity Girls' Soccer	
Varsity Boys' Cross Country	13-Aug
Varsity Girls' Cross Country	
MS Boys' Soccer	27-Aug
MS Girls' Soccer	
MS Cross Country	
<b>Winter</b>	
Varsity Boys' Basketball	5-Nov
Varsity Girls' Basketball	
MS Boys' Basketball	
MS Girls' Basketball	
<b>Spring</b>	
Varsity Boys' Tennis and Baseball	4-Mar
Varsity Girls' Lacrosse	
MS Girls' Lacrosse	

## COACHES

### Coaches' Authority

The coach's authority to lead their teams as they deem appropriate is in keeping with the philosophies and policies of Rockbridge Academy. The head coach is charged with conducting tryouts, determining the team roster, defining player expectations, implementing team rules, deciding student athletes' playing time, and taking disciplinary actions whenever necessary. Student athletes are expected to completely and respectfully abide by the leadership and authority of the head coach and his assistant(s).

### Background Checks and 1st Aid/CPR Certification

All coaches must register with the county and have a criminal background check done through the county at: [www.aacounty.org/services-and-programs/volunteer-background-check](http://www.aacounty.org/services-and-programs/volunteer-background-check) and must be certified in the administration of 1st Aid and CPR.

### Team Plan for Before Games or Practice

Coaches must strive to arrive 15 minutes early for practices and 30 minutes prior to games and remain at the practice or game site until all players have been picked up by an authorized adult. Coaches shall not travel alone in a car with one student of the opposite sex.

For game or practice days, coaches will make sure the team understands where they are to wait after school for practice or for a game. They will not leave the team unsupervised. If the coach is not available, he will ask an assistant coach or a parent to supervise the team.

Student athletes must sign out in the front office before leaving for a game when they are dismissed early.

### **Officials and Visiting Teams**

Coaches should greet the officials and the visiting team before the game. Basketball coaches will escort the officials to the designated changing room for storing their belongings.

### **Public Relations**

All Rockbridge Academy varsity coaches will be responsible for emailing game results and game details to *The Capital* at [sports@capitalgazette.com](mailto:sports@capitalgazette.com) and [athletics@rockbridge.org](mailto:athletics@rockbridge.org) immediately following games. Individual statistics are to be communicated to *The Capital* and the Athletic Director weekly.

All Rockbridge Academy junior varsity and middle school coaches will be responsible for emailing game results to [athletics@rockbridge.org](mailto:athletics@rockbridge.org) immediately following games

### **Communication with the Athletic Director**

Coaches must alert the Athletic Director of all significant injuries and concerns with parents, visiting teams, officials, or facilities immediately following a game. Coaches must report to the Athletic Director all occasions where they or a team member receive an official rebuke for sportsmanship violations (technicals, yellow cards, ejections, etc.).

Coaches have the freedom to cancel a practice, but all changes to the schedule must be submitted to the Athletic Director by the close of business Thursday before the week in question.

### **Budgets**

Coaches must make requests of budgetary requests directly to the Athletic Director, who then determines the appropriateness of the request based on the overall needs of the athletic program.

Coaches are not to spend their own money on any purchase on the assumption they will be reimbursed. If the purchase was not pre-approved, the coach may not be reimbursed.

### **Rockbridge Academy Philosophy of Coaching**

The common goal of the athletic program at Rockbridge Academy is to move our student athletes toward the likeness of Christ.

A coach should be a daily example of the fruit of the Spirit. Rockbridge Academy coaches should be able to say with Paul, "Follow my example as I follow the example of Christ." (1 Corinthians 11:1)

1. All words and tones of speech will be wholesome, encouraging, edifying, and uplifting. Coaches should correct and rebuke. Criticism must encourage correct performance and lift the athlete toward future success. "Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen." (Ephesians 4:29)
2. Value of a student athlete exists not just in game playing time but also in enthusiasm, effort and work ethic, commitment to the team, and everyday selfless sacrifice. A student athlete who rarely sees the field or court during games but is active in every practice is just as valuable to the team as a starter.
3. Be prepared every day with a plan for what is to be accomplished.
4. Forgive quickly. Keep short accounts.
5. Keep your cool. Take setbacks in stride.
6. Be considerate of parents.
7. Pray for each athlete by name weekly.
8. Teach humility by demonstrating humility. Teach sacrifice. Teach placing one's team above oneself. There is no "I" in "team."
9. Remember that you and your team represent the body of Christ and Rockbridge Academy.

It is absolutely in keeping with God's Word to compete to win. "Whatever you do, do it with all of your might, as if done for the Lord...it is Jesus Christ you are serving in everything." (Colossians 3:23-24)

### **Volunteer Assistant Coaches**

When volunteers offer to assist, the head coach is required to obtain approval from the Athletic Director. With said approval, the head coach becomes responsible for the proper training of the assistant, including making certain the assistant reads this handbook and agrees to adhere to its policies. Volunteer coaches or assistant coaches who are also parents of team members are expected to maintain a professional detachment from the parent/child relationship while on duty. In other words, they act as a parent only after leaving the game, practice field, or court for the confines of home.

### **Philosophy of Substitution**

Middle school and varsity coaches will be starting each game with their strongest team while striving to develop the skills of all players. When the game is "over" and a lopsided win or loss is imminent, our coaches will strive to empty their benches earlier in the game rather than later. If a middle school athlete does not play in any given game, coaches will make a concerted effort to include him/her in the next game.

## **DISCIPLINE**

### **Discipline Policies**

All policies for student behavior adopted by the Rockbridge Academy Board apply to interscholastic athletics. The following policies include academic probation and discipline. The same consequences for disobeying the discipline standard of the school will apply toward misbehavior during interscholastic athletics.

When discipline is necessary, the coach may administer any of the following options (while not limited to these options):

1. Suspension from a practice or game.
2. Suspension from multiple practices or games, with the approval of the Athletic Director.
3. Suspension from the team, with approval of the Athletic Director.

Parents will be notified of all major disciplinary actions. The coach is responsible to immediately notify the Athletic Director of any disciplinary actions taken.

Any participation fees charged will not be refunded in the event a player is suspended from the team.

There are five basic behaviors that must be reported to the Athletic Director.

1. Disrespect shown to coaches, referees, and parents.
2. Dishonesty in any situation while at school, practices, or games, including lying, cheating, and stealing.
3. Rebellion, i.e. outright disobedience in response to instructions.
4. Fighting, i.e. striking in anger with the intention to harm another student or athlete.
5. Obscene language, including taking the name of the Lord in vain.

### **Ejections**

Any ejection from a game by an official could result in a suspension from the next game. This applies to coaches, students, and parents. Rockbridge Academy parents should not approach an official or coach to discuss any issues before, during, or after a game or match. Appeals will be processed through the Athletic Director. Any ejection decision by an official will be adhered to by the coaches, parents, and athletes.

## **ELIGIBILITY AND ATTENDANCE**

### **Academic Eligibility**

Student athletes will maintain at least a C average in all classes. Should a student fall below a 75 average in any

class, he will be notified via an academic warning halfway through the trimester. If after two weeks the student athlete does not have a 70 or higher average, he will be suspended from games and practices until a 70 average is restored. A student athlete who exhibits a persistent on/off status on the *Failing Grade Report* may be subject to a long term suspension, as determined by the athletic director after consultation with the principal and teachers.

### **Practice Attendance Policy**

Consistent practice or attendance at scheduled practices will be required for participation in Rockbridge Academy interscholastic athletics per the Rockbridge Academy Athletic Contract. In general, students will be considered excused from practice only for illness and family emergencies, such as a death in the family. All school assignments must be finished outside of practice, and students may not miss practice to finish homework. Students should make a vigorous effort to notify coaches of their need to be absent for any of these circumstances, and ***planned appointments need to be scheduled for times not conflicting with practices or games.*** All planned college visits should be listed on the Athletic Contract at the beginning of the season. ***Unexcused absences from practices or games will result in a lower participation grade and decreased playing time in the following game.***

### **Game Attendance Policy**

Except for illness or a genuine family emergency, unexcused absence from a game may result in a suspension from a team.

## **AWARDS**

### **Award Eligibility**

High school athletes will receive a letter for participation in his or her first varsity sport, along with the pin for that sport. All future varsity participation results in a pin only.

A letter and pin will be awarded to a student manager who fulfills his responsibilities for an entire season of service for games and practices.

All middle school participants will receive a certificate of participation. These certificates may list special attributes that the coach wishes to acknowledge.

Coaches may award up to three awards, Most Valuable Player (MVP), Most Improved Player (MIP), and Unsung Hero at a special awards program at the conclusion of the season. Varsity letters will be awarded at the program. Awards will be given for each sport as follows:

### **High School**

#### Varsity Letters

<i>First year</i>	<i>Letter and pin</i>
<i>Second year</i>	<i>Pin</i>
<i>Third year</i>	<i>Pin</i>
<i>Fourth year</i>	<i>Pin</i>

MVP – Player who contributes most to the team’s success

MIP – Most Improved Player

Unsung Hero – Behind the scenes leader

Male and Female Athlete of the Year

“Rudy” Christian Character Award

### **Middle School**

MVP – Player who contributes most to the team’s success

MIP – Most Improved Player

Unsung Hero – Behind the scenes leader

Male and Female Athlete of the Year

Team captains will be recognized in each sport.

### **Athlete of the Year Criteria**

The Male and Female Athlete of the Year awards will be presented at a school-wide awards ceremony on the last day of school. The following criteria will be considered in determining the Athletes of the Year:

- Participate in 2-3 sports
- Captains of their athletic teams (typically)
- Servant leaders on the field and in the classroom
- Demonstrate a coachable spirit
- Passionate for their sport
- Exhibit a “team” attitude rather than promoting self
- Possess team spirit
- Consistent timely arrival to athletic events and school
- Coaches would want their entire team to emulate them
- Academic performance

### **ATHLETIC DRESS CODE**

The Athletic Department will issue game uniforms to all members of interscholastic teams. Students are required to return game uniforms within one week of the conclusion of the season. Players’ parents will be billed for the repair of damaged uniform items or, if necessary, the replacement cost of the uniform item.

Wearing a Rockbridge Academy uniform is a privilege. Uniforms should be worn exclusively by the student athlete on game days only. **Uniforms must be properly washed after each use and *never* put in the dryer.**

#### **Physical Education Dress Code**

- Upper School students must wear Rockbridge Academy gym uniform purchased from Dennis Uniforms.
- Solid white or black over the ankle-length socks.
- Athletic shoes must be the color of or a combination of any Rockbridge colors (black, white, gray, and red)
- No chucks or skate shoes.

#### **Practice Dress Code**

- Athletes may wear any Rockbridge Academy athletics wear or solid red, black, gray, or white shirts with sleeves, and grey or dark colored shorts or sweats.
- Athletic shoes and cleats are not to draw attention to the player - ex. neon green or flamboyant patterns.
- All socks must be over the ankle-length and white or black.
- When changing for practice, students may never wear cleats in the school buildings.

#### **Game Day Classroom Athletic Dress Code**

- Athletic uniform jerseys are worn tucked in all day on game days with the regular school uniform pants or skirt. Only home jerseys are worn on home game days and away jerseys when the team will travel.
- Players will change into game uniform shorts/pants and predominately white, black, or red athletic shoes (no chucks or skate shoes) with over the ankle-length athletic socks at lunch for *all* games. *If students do not have their athletic shoes and athletic socks, they may not change until after school is dismissed.* Waistbands of shorts may not be rolled. *Girls’ lacrosse players will change into their kilts **after** school for **all** game days.*
- Students may not wear cleats in the school buildings for any reason.
- Athletes may wear Rockbridge Academy fleeces or team warm-up shirts, if available, over their uniform jersey. Warm-up tops may be worn all day. Team jackets CANNOT be worn during the school day.
- Black long sleeved Rockbridge Academy athletic T-shirts may be worn over jerseys untucked after the player has changed into his/her uniform.
- Visible base layer clothing must be solid black or white.

### **Game Day on the Field Athletic Dress Code**

- Athlete must wear entire issued uniform in order to play.
- All students participating in contact sports (soccer and lacrosse) must wear a mouth guard.
- All Rockbridge Academy jerseys must be tucked in.
- Black, white, or team socks must be worn.
- Athletic shoes and cleats must not draw attention to the player - ex. neon green or flamboyant patterns.
- T-shirts under jerseys must be white, red, black, or grey.
- Visible base layer clothing (including compression shorts) must be solid black or white with the exception of girls' lacrosse. Girls' lacrosse players must wear black compression shorts to match kilts. No "undershirts" may be worn with game uniforms.
- Athletes should bring both home and away jerseys to all games.

*Failure to wear the complete issued uniform, approved shorts, socks, or colors will result in a student/athlete losing the privilege of wearing their uniform on game days, and repeat offenders may be benched.*

## **GENERAL INFORMATION**

### **Registration**

All student/athletes must register online on the school's website at [www.rockbridge.org/student-life/athletic-forms.cfm](http://www.rockbridge.org/student-life/athletic-forms.cfm) before participation in practices/tryouts will be allowed.

### **Physicals**

An annual physical is mandatory before playing sports, and must be turned in prior to participating in tryouts. Physical Examination and Health History forms can be accessed from the athletics registration page.

### **Concussion Tests**

All students participating in the Rockbridge athletic program are required to have a concussion baseline test done. 6th - 9th grade students must have a test done every year, and 10th - 12th grade students must have a test done every other year. Baseline Concussion Testing can be done online @ <http://www.xlntbrain.com/> or at a private facility. When performed at a private facility, proof of completion of baseline testing must be provided to the athletic department office.

### **Athletic Fees**

An athletic fee of \$250 will be assessed for each Rockbridge student/athlete who participates in the Rockbridge Academy athletic program. The athletic fee for Home School athletes is \$350. **No fee is due until rosters have been finalized.** The athletic fee for Rockbridge students will be posted to the student/athlete's family FACTS account once final rosters have been finalized. Home school students must pay by cash, check or credit card (3% service fee added) once rosters have been finalized.

### **Uniforms**

Each student/athlete will be issued the appropriate uniform for their team. The student/athlete is responsible for the proper cleaning and care of the uniform. Any damage to or loss of the uniform is the student/athlete's responsibility. Any costs incurred by the school to repair or replace the uniform will be assessed and posted to the student/athlete's family FACTS account.

### **Athletic Department Communication**

All athletics scheduling information will be posted on the Rockbridge Academy website on the following webpages:

- Varsity girls: [www.rockbridge.org/student-life/varsity-girls.cfm](http://www.rockbridge.org/student-life/varsity-girls.cfm)
- Varsity boys: [www.rockbridge.org/student-life/varsity-boys.cfm](http://www.rockbridge.org/student-life/varsity-boys.cfm)
- Middle school girls: [www.rockbridge.org/student-life/middle-school-girls.cfm](http://www.rockbridge.org/student-life/middle-school-girls.cfm)
- Middle school boys: [www.rockbridge.org/student-life/middle-school-boys.cfm](http://www.rockbridge.org/student-life/middle-school-boys.cfm)

All athletic schedules are available on the Rockbridge Academy website. All coaches and parents will need to access the website for scheduling information. Homeschooled athletes will need to email the Assistant to the Athletic Director, Catherine Daly, at [cdaly@rockbridge.org](mailto:cdaly@rockbridge.org) to receive email notification of schedule changes.

### **Inclement Weather and Game Day/Practice Updates**

Last minute changes to the game schedule are posted on the Rockbridge Academy website at [www.rockbridge.org](http://www.rockbridge.org), will be sent by text alert and will be posted on the whiteboard in front of the main office as soon as the decision is made. Changes to the practice schedule will normally be decided and posted by 1:00pm. Coaches and Team Parents will receive an email and/or text regarding cancellations due to inclement weather. **Please check the website any time rain or snow is forecasted.**

### **Missed Academic Time for Athletics**

The Rockbridge Academy school policy for pre-arranged absence applies to athletics. Athletes are to discuss early dismissals and absences in advance with teachers and are to complete assignments on time, as described in the Rockbridge Academy Student Handbook under the Short Term Absences section. As per that policy, school work completed late due to participating in athletic events or attending athletic events as a spectator will be counted ten percent (10%) off for each late day.

For many athletic events students, must be dismissed from school before normal dismissal times. Early dismissal from classes for athletic reasons DOES NOT release the student/athlete from class work responsibilities. Each athlete must make arrangements for getting assignments, taking missed quizzes or tests, or handing in homework. Athletes will have **fifteen** minutes from dismissal time until departure time.

### **Managers**

Managers for varsity teams will receive 0.5 PE credit and a varsity letter and pin for each season they serve. Students who compete on a team during a different season are a good resource for team managers, scorekeepers, statisticians, or ball boys. The Athletic Director is responsible for acquiring needed managers, scorebook keepers, clock operators, ball boys, and linesmen. Managers may wear Rockbridge Academy athletic shirts to class on game days.

### **Team Parents**

In past years, Rockbridge Academy athletic teams have benefitted from the initiative taken by parents to fulfill the role of “team mom/dad.” A team parent is responsible for organizing all carpools, bringing 5 gallons of water to each game (soccer and lacrosse only), coordinating the distribution/collection of uniforms, and organizing an end of the season coaches’ gift to be presented at the season finale. Soccer, Lacrosse, Cross Country, Swimming and Baseball Team Parents will qualify to have one student athletic fee discounted by 50% for each season they serve. Due to the length and complexity of the basketball season, Basketball Team Parents will qualify to have one student athletic fee waived. Please contact the Athletic Director if you are interested in supporting Rockbridge Academy Athletics in this way.

Other opportunities for parents to serve the team include painting fields, helping run the scoreboard, or keeping statistics for home games.

### **Spirit Days**

Rockbridge Academy will have one Spirit Day during each of the fall, winter, and spring seasons. Students will be encouraged to wear Rockbridge Academy athletic shirts to school and attend the game that afternoon.

The purpose of Spirit Days is to build community and encourage students and staff to support Rockbridge Academy interscholastic sports.

### **Policy on Games and Practices during Extended Breaks**

Coaches may have mandatory practices with the Athletic Director’s approval over Thanksgiving, Christmas, and Spring breaks. Parents will be informed well in advance of the occasions when our high school and middle school teams must practice or compete over Thanksgiving, Christmas, and Spring breaks. For the long-term success of our

athletic program, all athletes are expected to take part in practices occurring over breaks.

### **Supervision at Athletic Events**

Siblings of athletes are to be supervised by a parent at all times at athletic events. Siblings may not enter unauthorized areas in home or away gymnasiums and must be supervised at all times.

## **CODE OF CONDUCT**

### **Parents and Fans**

Our fans are a vital part of the success of Rockbridge Academy athletics, and we encourage vigorous positive participation by our fans. Rockbridge Academy fans are also ambassadors of Christ and of our school and should cheer our teams in an appropriate manner. Our cheering should build up and encourage all who hear. (Ephesians 4:29) Our emphasis on sportsmanship and character amongst our student athletes and student body begins with the example set by Rockbridge Academy parents.

Derogatory cheers, comments, booing, taunting, arguing, or disputing, directed at any participant, player, coach, official, or fellow fan, will not be tolerated and will be considered grounds for removal from Rockbridge Academy sporting events.

Spectators should NEVER approach an official or coach before, during, or after a sporting event with a grievance. All concerns or grievances should be brought to the Athletic Director.

During a game, the team bench is for coaches, players, and officials only. Parents, siblings, and students not on the team may not approach the bench area during a game or during halftime.

Fans may not walk on basketball courts during pregame or halftime.

### **Athlete Etiquette Expectations**

#### ***During Pre-Game Warm-ups***

Athletes are to be appropriately dressed and outfitted: shirts tucked in (note: for basketball, coaches will determine what color T-shirt may be worn under jerseys) with jewelry and metal hair pins removed.

Pre-game warm-up drills are to be done with a serious attitude in order to prepare each athlete's mind and body for competition.

There should be no socializing with fans or family during warm-up time, halftime, or any time until the game is over and post-game activities are complete.

#### ***During the Game***

Players are not to talk to friends or family in the stands. Athletes are to keep their minds and attention on the game, to stand and greet teammates who are exiting the game with applause and encouragement, to stand and cheer good effort and good plays by their teammates, and be enthusiastic while on the bench. During timeouts, all players must gather around the coach and give their full attention to the coach.

Players are never to argue with or complain to or about game officials, and are never to demonstrate body language that could be interpreted as disrespectful by an official. Players may never speak unkind or derogatory comments toward opposing players. Christ-like demeanor and conversation is always the standard. Rockbridge Academy players will quietly accept referee decisions by politely handing the ball to the referee and moving on with a respectful countenance and attitude. Players should make their concerns known to their coaches.

If an injury occurs to a teammate or opponent, Rockbridge Academy athletes will be expected to respectfully take a knee on the field or court.



### ***After the Game***

As quickly as possible, players should line up single file to greet the opposing team with a handshake, congratulations, or other encouraging words, gracious in a win or loss, never complaining. Where appropriate and when time is available, a coach may gather his team together for a short post game prayer.

### **Parent/Coach Communication**

Per the Rockbridge Academy board policy and the Rockbridge Academy Student Parent Handbook, it is expected that biblical guidelines be followed for the resolution of all disputes and grievances concerning any aspect of Rockbridge Academy athletics.

Specifically to athletics:

1. All concerns must be first presented by the parent or student to the coach. In all cases, a respectful demeanor is required at all times. Please be assured that our coaches want parental feedback and are expected to be grateful and gracious when a parent brings concerns to them in a humble and respectful manner, seeking as much to understand as to be understood.
2. If the problem is not resolved, the parent or student may bring the concerns to the Athletic Director. If the student brings the concern, permission from their parents is required.
3. If the problem is still not resolved, the parents may appeal to the Headmaster.
4. If there is still no resolution, a request in writing for a resolution must be presented to the Rockbridge Academy Board.

### **Sportsmanship**

Coaches, the Athletic Director, and players are representing the name of Christ during all public events. Therefore, compliance with the following guidelines will be expected from all participants.

1. Comments by coaches, the Athletic Director, participants, and spectators should be uplifting, positive, and encouraging. (Ephesians 4:29-32)
2. Verbal abuse and/or un-Christ-like language or tones of speech toward athletes, spectators, or referees is forbidden.
3. Actions of coaches, the Athletic Director, and athletes should set a positive, encouraging example of Christian conversation and behavior for all.
4. Conduct judged to be improper by the coach, administrator, or Athletic Director might result in immediate withdrawal from the activity, as well as further disciplinary action. Sportsmanship-related technical fouls, yellow cards, penalties, ejections, etc. will result in a game suspension for a first offense. Coaches and team members will also be subject to suspension or removal for inappropriate behavior even if an “official” rebuke is not given.

### **“Out of School” PE Credit**

Rockbridge Academy seeks to instill a desire on the part of its students to maintain a high level of physical fitness throughout their entire life. Towards that end, PE classes or athletic team involvement are mandatory for Rockbridge students through 10<sup>th</sup> grade. If your son/daughter is involved in an Out of School athletic or physical fitness program that meets the criteria listed below, and you would like to request an exemption from PE for this coming year, please complete the **2018-19 “Out of School” PE Credit Request Form** and submit it to the Athletic Department before the start of school. Your request will be considered and you will be notified within a week as to whether or not a PE credit will be granted for your son/daughter’s activity.

## 2018-19 “Out of School” PE Credit Request Form

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### Out of School Activity Criteria:

- The Out of School activity cannot be a sport that is offered by the Rockbridge Academy athletic program. Swimmers can practice and swim with an “outside” team but **must** participate in the Rockbridge swim team meets.
- Out of School program must run for a minimum of 8 weeks during the school year.
- Out of School program activities must take place for a minimum of 5 hours per week. This can include practices and games/performances/events.
- Coach/Teacher/Instructor must complete the Rockbridge Academy ***Coach’s Assessment Sheet*** at the end of the Out of School program season. Students are responsible for submitting the ***Coach’s Assessment Sheet***.
- Students must maintain participation throughout the length of the Out of School program. If a student fails to complete the Out of School program, he/she must notify the Athletic Department so a determination can be made if the student should re-enter the PE program or play a Rockbridge Academy interscholastic sport.
- Students will be enrolled in PE and must participate in PE classes until the ***Out of School PE Credit Form*** has been **reviewed and approved** by the Rockbridge Academy Athletic Department.

Student’s Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Student’s Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

Out of School Activity: \_\_\_\_\_

Brief description of Out Of School Activity: \_\_\_\_\_

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Dates/Hours of Out of School Activity: \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_

Out of School Activity Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Coach/Instructor of Out of School Activity: \_\_\_\_\_

Coach/Instructor’s Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Coach/Instructor’s Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Sample:**

**Coach's Assessment Sheet**

Coaches will evaluate each student based on the following criteria as stated in the Rockbridge Academy Athletic Contract:

1. **Preparation (P):** 40% - Fully equipped, ready on time, stays entire time for all practices and games.
2. **Character (C):** 40% - Rockbridge Academy sports are an extension of the classroom. Our practice and our play is a reflection ultimately of Christ, which is why we do all to the glory of God.
  - a. Attitude
  - b. Teamwork
  - c. 100% effort
  - d. Teachability
3. **Athletic Skills (S):** 20% - Hustle, knowledge, and practice.

Name	Week ending 10/8/2010			Week ending 10/15/2010			Criteria Avg			Final Grade
	P	C	S	P	C	S	P	C	S	
Student 1	100%	100%	80%	100%	100%	85%	100%	100%	83%	97%
Student 2	100%	<sup>2</sup> 70%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	85%	100%	94%
Student 3	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Student 4	<sup>1</sup> 80%	100%	100%	<sup>3</sup> 75%	100%	100%	78%	100%	100%	91%
Student 5	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

**Example Notes:**

1. Did not bring correct uniform to game 10/6/2010  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. Did not graciously receive instruction during practice 10/5/2010 and 10/6/2010  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. Late to practice 10/12, 10/13, and 10/15/2010  
\_\_\_\_\_