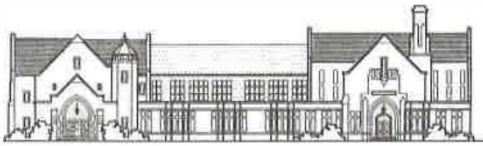




RYE CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT
ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT TRYOUT PROCEDURES





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Dear Parents/Guardians of RCSD Student-Athletes,

The athletic team selection process is without question the Rye City School District coaching staff's most challenging responsibility. In order to create procedures that will give every student an equal opportunity during the team selection process, the District created a committee comprised of experienced coaches at all three levels (Varsity, JV & Modified), physical education teachers, parents, and myself. The committee evaluated all facets of the tryout process to establish best practices for the District. This handbook codifies those practices.

We are confident that these guidelines will help not only our athletes, but also our coaching staff as they navigate through the process of identifying players during team selection, and help us to provide the best possible experience for our student-athletes.

Sincerely,

Michael Arias
Director of Athletics

RCSD ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT TRYOUT PROCEDURES

The committee evaluated and made specific recommendations regarding the following elements of the team selection process:

- 1) Number of days for tryouts
- 2) Extension of tryouts
- 3) Splitting groups
- 4) Number of coaches participating in the evaluation process
- 5) Sport-specific rubrics to evaluate student athletes
- 6) Tryout procedures
- 7) Informing student athletes of the team selection result

Number of Days for Tryouts

Modified: Minimum of 5 Days

JV & Varsity: Minimum of 4 days

Extending Tryouts

Tryouts will be extended as needed at the discretion of the coach(es). Tryouts are not to exceed 6 days for JV and Varsity and not to exceed 8 days for Modified.

Splitting Groups

The Athletic Department will split tryout groups **as needed** to make smaller groups. As each sport is unique, there will not be a specific cutoff number, rather the decision as to whether to create a second, third, etc., tryout group will be made by the Athletic Director in consultation with the coaching staff.

Number of Coaches Evaluating Students During Tryouts

There will be a minimum of two coaches evaluating students during the tryout period.

Best practice is to have at least two coaches and potentially an additional coach(es), when available, to help evaluate players. A third coach is not always available, but the Athletic Department will work to find a third evaluator for at least one of the tryout days.

Evaluation Rubric

All evaluating coaches will use a rubric to score student athletes and will compare the rubric with their fellow evaluator(s) at the end of the evaluation period when making a shared decision about team selection.

The rubric will include, but may not be limited to, the following elements for scoring:

- **Play during scrimmage (if able to scrimmage, sport-dependent)**

- **Attitude**
- **Attendance**
- **Sport-specific skills**
- **Physical fitness**

Tryout Procedures

The following procedures shall serve as a guideline for coaches to follow. However, coaches may also include other elements they feel are helpful in evaluating student athletes.

- **Skill-Related Drills:** Students will be brought through a series of sport related drills to assess their ability
- **Stations:** Stations may also be used, depending on the sport. Stations are especially helpful for sports with tryouts taking place inside (e.g., baseball and softball)
- **Conditioning:** Students level of fitness will be tested during tryouts
- **Scrimmaging:** Students will be given the opportunity to scrimmage with peers in sports where possible, giving coaches the ability to assess students in situations approximating a game

Notification of Team Selection

After the team selection process has taken place, students will be invited to a face-to-face meeting with the coaching staff on the RMS/RHS campus. All students will be brought in for a meeting regardless if they will be invited to join the team or not. The meeting location will be such that the student will be able to enter the meeting room/area from one location, and exit from another, to allow for student privacy. There will be a minimum

of two coaches present for the meeting.

For students who do not make the team, the coaching staff will go over the team selection rubric and give very specific feedback to the student to explain why they were not selected. In addition, those students who do not make the team will be given information on how they can improve in that sport over the course of the year in an effort to give that student athlete a better chance of making the team the subsequent year.

Unfortunately, team selection is unavoidable. Roster size is dependant on the number of athletes the Athletic Department judges appropriate given the level, the facilities available, and number of coaches available. The District is fortunate that we have two Modified teams for most of our sports. This greatly improves our ability to provide opportunities for participation at the Modified level.

Preparing your son/daughter for the possibility of not making a team

Not making a team can be devastating for a student athlete. It is critical that students and parents be prepared in the event that

this is the case.

Joel H. Fish, PhD, Director at the Center for Sport Psychology, and author of *101 Ways to be a Terrific Sport Parent* (Morgan James Publishing, 2013), offers this helpful advice on how parents can help support and encourage the young athlete:

- **Be self-aware parents.** Parents need to be aware of their own attitudes towards making the team, and towards winning and losing because inevitably these attitudes will be picked up by their children. Fish cautions, "I believe parents are extremely well intentioned, but parents often have an emotional response to their child not making the team." Parents who display anger or immediately want to challenge the coach's decision are adding an extra dimension to their child's burden. Charles Kuntzleman, author of over fifty books on fitness and health, says that "The most powerful thing is to not display, when they get home, displeasure with what the coach did. Parents have to learn to bite their tongue; it's demoralizing to the team, and a great disservice to the child."
- **Give your child a chance to feel.** Parents can help their child cope by giving him or her 'permission' to have a normal response. Fish says, "There's a tendency for parents to rush in there and say 'it's ok' – sometimes we need to say to our kids 'that must hurt,' or give them a hug, or not say anything." Parents who respond to their child not making the team by saying "Well, soccer is a stupid sport

anyways!" invalidate the hurt their child is feeling as well as dismissing something that may well be very important to him or her.

- **Help your child see the big picture.** There's much more to being successful in life than simply making a sports team, however important it may seem at the time, and parents can help their children realize this. Fish suggests that, before a tryout, parents make a list together with their child of multiple goals which reflect what the tryout is really about. One of those goals can be making the team, but include others as well, such as having fun, trying your best, being a good teammate, and learning something. Says Fish, "When not all the eggs are in the outcome basket, that can be really helpful for a child who doesn't make the team, because he's going in with multiple definitions of what it means to be successful."

Parents can also help their children realize that even though they didn't make it onto the team they were hoping for, they have other options. A community league may offer an opportunity to get involved, or maybe a different sport or activity altogether would provide a fun and exciting challenge. Some athletes who have been cut from one team have gone on to be very successful in a totally different area. Others who were at one time cut from their high school teams (like basketball great Michael Jordan) have gone on to become outstanding athletes.

Every young athlete or performer who is making an effort to succeed will eventually encounter some stiff obstacles and competition. Parents can help their kids to not only handle these setbacks graciously, but to actually grow from them.

Additional resources can be found on the Athletic Department webpage