

Masters Regional Academy

Athletic Handbook

*I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in
Christ Jesus. Philippians 3:14*

INTRODUCTION

We believe that athletics functions as an important and integral part of Masters Regional Academy's total Christian education program, as it provides an opportunity to demonstrate Christian values, character, and commitment.

MRA believes that sports allows for an avenue where the physical body can be developed, the mind, the will, emotions can be fashioned, and the spirit of a person can mature. MRA athletics must seek to rise above the traditional worldly view of sports which often focuses on individualism, stars, and unhealthy competitive attitudes. Our philosophy embraces the role of team unity, team spirit, and the recognition of supporting roles of team members as well as outstanding performances of individuals.

The following guidelines govern the athletic program at Masters Regional Academy:

1. Participation in interscholastic athletics at MRA is a privilege, not a right.
2. Success or failure of the athletic program will not be determined by win-loss records. Our program will be evaluated in light of our spiritual and educational goals consistent with the overall philosophy of Masters Regional Academy. No athletic contest is more important than the development of one's character.
3. The athletic program at Masters Regional Academy must reflect the school and Christian community values.
4. We will provide our athletes with the best teaching, coaching, and facilities that we can.
5. We expect all involved with athletics, including coaches and volunteers to always act in a manner that upholds the reputation of Masters Regional Academy and the values and teachings of Jesus Christ.
6. Our athletic program must be run in a manner which will provide all athletes an opportunity to grow physically, spiritually, emotionally, to establish positive values, and to have fun.

REQUIREMENTS FOR PARTICIPATION

Eligibility

In order to participate in interscholastic athletics at Masters Regional Academy, students must:

1. Be in good standing as a student at Masters Regional Academy.
2. Not have failed more than one course at the end of the previous marking period.
3. Have an overall quarterly average of at least 75. Students who are on academic probation due to issues above will become eligible to participate upon submission of a signed extra-curricular form indicating the student is in good standing in every class. Students must wait a minimum of two week from the end of the previous quarter. This probation removal sheet must be signed by each teacher and submitted to the Principal. Once approved by the Principal, the student may participate in the next scheduled game/practice (at the coach's discretion).
4. Be present in school for a minimum 50% of the school day (11:30AM cutoff)

Students are NOT eligible if:

1. They are excused from physical education for medical reasons (including a nurse's note).
2. Their 19th birthday occurs prior to September 1 of that academic school year.
3. They have changed schools without a change of legal residence, unless a transfer rule affidavit is approved from the Rhode Island Interscholastic League. Students may have to sit 50% of the first scheduled varsity contests of that season. (Only applies to RIIL sports and to students that have participated in a varsity contest at a previous school.)

Parental Permission and Acknowledgement of Athletic Policies

At the time students try out for an athletic team, they will receive this handbook. Each parent or guardian will read all of the enclosed material and certify that they understand the athletic eligibility rules and policies of the school. Each athlete's parent or guardian will complete a Parental Permission and Acknowledgement of Athletic Policies Form for each sport giving permission to participate in that interscholastic sport. The form will be kept on file with the Athletic Director or school office.

Physical Examination

In order to try out for a team, a student must have a health physical on file prior to participation. The physical covers all sports provided the examination occurred within one year of the starting date of the respective athletic season(s). This form will be kept on file in the nurse's office.

Risk of Participation

Athletes and parents must realize the risk of serious injury, which may be a result of athletic participation. In order to participate in interscholastic sports as part of the RIIL (Girls' Soccer Grades 9-12), students and parents/legal guardians are required to sign two copies of the Rhode Island Interscholastic League's Assumption of Risk Form. This form must be notarized and submitted to the coach prior to participation. One copy will be kept on file in the Director of Athletics and Student Activities' office. The second copy will be filed at the Rhode Island Interscholastic League office. This process is required only once during the four years of high school for each new athlete, including transfer students. All other sports acknowledge the risk of injury and release Masters Regional Academy by signing Masters Regional Academy's permission slip.

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR STUDENT ATHLETES

A firm and fair policy of enforcement is necessary to uphold the regulations and standards of the athletic department and in keeping with Christian standards. The community, school administrators, and coaching staff feel strongly that high standards of conduct and citizenship are essential in maintaining a sound athletic program. Athletes are expected to abide by this code of conduct, which will earn them the honor and respect that participation and competition in the interscholastic athletic program affords. Conduct which results in dishonor to the athlete, the team or the school will not be tolerated. All rules apply to all athletes including players, managers, trainers, and all other students representing a team from Masters Regional Academy.

Sportsmanship

Good sportsmanship, ethical behavior, integrity, respect for others, and honoring the Lord are the guiding principles that permeate all interscholastic activities in our school.

In perception and practice, sportsmanship is defined as those qualities, which are characterized by generosity and genuine concern for others. All individuals, regardless of their role, are expected to model sportsmanship because of their influence on the behavior of others and because of our commitment to Christlike behavior.

Student Athletes Must:

- Appreciate and understand that their behavior is observed and emulated by many who are younger.
- Live up to the high standard of sportsmanship established by the league(s) and Masters Regional Academy.
- Accept and understand the seriousness of their responsibility and the privilege of representing their school and community.
- Live up to the standards of sportsmanship established by the school administration and the coaching staff.
- Learn the rules of the game thoroughly and discuss them with parents, fans, and peers.
- Treat opponents the way they would like to be treated, as a guest or friend.
- Refrain from taunting, trash-talking, or making any kind of derogatory remarks.
- Wish opponents good luck before the game and congratulate them in a sincere manner that they would like to receive following a victory or defeat.
- Respect the integrity and judgment of game officials at all times.
- Win with humility and lose with grace.

Appearance

Student athletes assume the responsibility of representing their school, family, and the Lord; consequently, they are expected to dress appropriately and professionally for practices, contests, and travel. Students may wear athletic uniforms to school on the day of a contest. All clothing items must be MRA items to be considered in school uniform for the day. Sneakers may be worn on game days as well. Clogs, sandals, open toe or open back shoes are still not permitted as indicated in the school handbook.

Attendance

Athletes are expected to be in school for a minimum of 50% of the school day.

This means students must be in school no later than 11:30 AM regardless of the reason. Athletes absent from school on Friday or a day preceding a holiday and/or a weekend contest are ineligible to participate unless the absence is excused in advance by the Principal or his designee.

Conflicts in Extracurricular Activities

Athletes who attempt to participate in several extracurricular activities will, undoubtedly, be in a position of a conflict of obligations. Athletes must notify the advisors/coaches involved

immediately when a conflict does arise. When a conflict arises, the advisors/coaches will attempt to work out a solution so those students do not feel caught in the middle. If a solution cannot be found, the principal or his designee will make the decision based on the following:

- The relative importance of each event;
- The importance of each event to the student;
- The relative contribution the student can make;
- How long each event has been scheduled; and
- A conversation with the athlete and/or parents.

Once the decision has been made and the student has followed that decision, he/she will not be penalized in any way by either advisor/coach. If it becomes obvious that students cannot fulfill the obligation of a school activity, they should withdraw from that activity.

Athletes need to be able to balance their academic, athletic, and home obligations. When making a commitment to an athletic team it is expected that the athlete will do everything possible to fulfill his or her obligation to the team. Academic and spiritual commitments are obviously a high priority, but it is still expected that an athlete will do everything possible to balance these commitments with the commitment made to an athletic team. If there is a serious situation that does not allow an athlete to be at practice or at a game, it is expected that the athlete or athlete's parents will communicate with the coach and/or the school with as much notice as possible. Missing a game or practice without communicating with the school and/or coach is not acceptable.

Individual Coach's Rules

Coaches may establish (with advanced approval of the Athletic Director and principal) additional rules and regulations for their respective teams. These rules should be given in writing by the coach to all team members and explained fully at the start of the season. Penalties for violation of team rules will also be in writing and will be administered by the coach. Additional team rules must be consistent with all other school rules and regulations. Copies will be kept on file with the Athletic Director and/or school office. Coaches may take reasonable disciplinary action pertaining to any problem that may arise that has not already been reviewed in this handbook.

Leaving a Squad

Athletes who leave a squad will have 48 hours to ask the coach for reinstatement. The coach will act independently on each case. These students are expected to discuss their decision with the Athletic Director and coach. This is an important step so that they realize their responsibility to the team and themselves.

Masters Regional Academy considers leaving an athletic team a serious decision that impacts not only the individual athlete, but the rest of the team, coaches and the school. If a student leaves a team one week prior to the first contest, a student may drop from the squad without penalty. After this time, the student may not participate in any other athletic activity for that season unless the Athletic Director and Principal grant permission.

Locker Room/Facilities Regulations

1. Rough-housing of any kind is not allowed in the locker rooms or other areas of the facility.
2. Athletes should ensure that all clothing, valuables, and sport bags are either in a personal locker or stored in the athletic storage area within the gymnasium. No athletic gear or athletic bags may be stored on top of lockers, on the hallway floor, or in bathrooms. All trash (water bottles, etc.) must be properly disposed of.
3. All shoes that have spikes or cleats must be put on and taken off outside of the school building. Only clean sneakers may be worn on the gymnasium floor- no dress shoes, boots, cleats, etc.
4. During all practices held in the gymnasium all student belongings should be taken inside the gymnasium and neatly placed on the bleachers. No belongings should be left in the area outside of the gym.

Practices and Contests

Athletes are expected to attend all contests and practices during the season, vacations included, unless excused by the coach and/or Athletic Director prior to the absence. Athletes with unexcused absences from contests or practices must practice one day (5 days maximum) for each contest or practice missed prior to resuming competition. The athlete must miss at least the next scheduled contest of the season.

Coaches at Masters Regional Academy volunteer their time to work with our athletes so the school believes parents and students should respect that time by being on time for practices and games. Additionally, students must be picked up on time upon completion of the practice/game. Coaches are required to remain with athletes until picked up by a parent/guardian, so a prompt pickup is expected. Athletes who are not picked up on time may be required to sit out contests or be asked to stop participating in the sport.

School Rules

Athletes will abide by all rules and regulations outlined in the “Honor Code” and Parent/Student Handbook which is distributed to all students prior to the opening day of school.

Suspension/Detention

Athletes cannot participate in athletics while serving a suspension or detention. An athlete who is issued a detention must attend the session(s) assigned regardless of game or practice conflicts. Detention or other discipline consequences should not be scheduled around athletic events. The conduct of all students is of the utmost importance at Masters Regional Academy.

Travel

Athletes must travel to and from athletic contests in transportation provided by Masters Regional Academy unless previous arrangements are made by the athlete’s with the school. The Athletic Director and coach must approve exceptions. In addition:

Athletes will remain with their team under the supervision of the coach when attending away contests.

Athletes may return from an away contest only with their parents. In that event, the parent must request permission and notify the coach prior to the contest. The athlete will be released only to their parents upon the personal recognizance of the parent by the coach.

Athletes are not permitted to drive their own vehicles to away contests unless necessitated by MRA travel restrictions and specifically approved by parents and MRA. At no time will another student travel in an athlete's personal vehicle without parental permission and school approval.

All students in an MRA vehicle must wear seat-belts at all times.

Equipment and Uniforms

Athletes are responsible for the proper care and security of all equipment issued/loaned them. School-furnished equipment is to be worn only for contests and practice or when authorized by the coach. All equipment must be returned immediately after the season. Athletes who do not return their equipment in good condition or who lose their equipment will be assessed the replacement cost of the equipment and will not be issued a report card until the responsibility has been taken care of.

Selection of the Team

Selection of athletic teams is the sole responsibility of the coaches of those teams, but maybe completed in consultation with the Athletic Director. Their actions, however, must be consistent with the philosophy and policies of the athletic program and of Masters Regional Academy as a whole.

Captains

Captains will be appointed by coaches with team input. Candidates must submit a letter of interest and meet with the teams head coach. Prior to the selection of captains, athletes will be informed by the coach of the criteria for selection and obligations of the position. The position of team captain is one of honor, leadership, and responsibility. As a result, students serving in that capacity are expected to conduct themselves in an exemplary manner both in and outside of school. Any captain that fails to meet these standards inside of school or out may be asked to step down as captain.

Parent and Coach Communication

We know that both parenting and coaching are extremely difficult vocations. By establishing an understanding of each position, we are better able to accept the actions of the other and provide greater benefits to children. As parents, when your children become involved in our program, you have a right to understand what expectations are placed on your child. This begins with clear communication from the coach of your child's program.

Communication parents should expect from coaches:

- philosophy of the coach;
- expectations the coach has for your child as well as all the players on the squad;
- locations and times of all practices and contests;
- team requirements, i.e., practices, special equipment, out-of-season conditioning;
- procedure followed should your child be injured during participation; and
- discipline that may result in the denial of your child's participation.

Communication coaches should expect from parents:

- concerns expressed directly to the coach;
- notification of any schedule conflicts well in advance; and
- specific concerns with regard to a coach's philosophy and/or expectations.

As your children become involved in the programs at Masters Regional Academy they will experience some of the most rewarding moments of their lives. It is important to understand that there also may be times when things do not go the way you or your child wishes. If these times do occur, discussion with the coach is encouraged.

Appropriate concerns to discuss with coaches:

- ✓ the treatment of your child, mentally and physically;
- ✓ ways to help your child improve; and
- ✓ concerns about your child's behavior.

Coaches are professionals. They make judgment decisions based on what they believe to be best for all students involved. As you have seen from the list above, certain topics can be and should be discussed with your child's coach. Other topics must be left to the discretion of the coach.

Issues not appropriate to discuss with coaches:

- ✓ Playing time
- ✓ Team strategy
- ✓ Play calling
- ✓ Other student-athletes

There are situations that may require a conference between the coach and the parent. These are to be encouraged. It is important that both parties involved have a clear understanding of the other's position. When these conferences are necessary, the following procedure should be followed to help promote a resolution to the issue or concern.

If you have a concern to discuss with a coach, you should:

E-mail the Athletic Director to set up an appointment with a coach. Please do not attempt to confront a coach before or after a contest or practice. These times can be emotional periods for both the parent and the coach. Meetings of this nature do not generally promote a healthy resolution.

If the meeting with the coach did not provide a satisfactory resolution, you should e-mail the Athletic Director, Vasco Foster, vasco.foster@ihg.com to set up an appointment with the Athletic Director to discuss the situation further.

NCAA Participation

All student athletes at Masters Regional Academy intending to participate or attempting to participate in athletics at the collegiate level in Division 1 or Division 2 should indicate that intent to the Athletic Director no later than January 1st of the intended graduation year. These students must apply to the NCAA Initial-Eligibility Clearinghouse to make sure all eligibility requirements for participation in the NCAA are met. More information can be obtained at: <https://web1.ncaa.org/eligibilitycenter/common/>

Questions

If there are questions or concerns about the details of this Handbook or the Athletic Program at Masters Regional Academy, please contact the Athletic Director.