



RCHS Athletic Department Parent & Student-Athlete Handbook/ Code of Conduct

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One form dated after **June 1st** is suitable for all seasons for one calendar year.

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Top 10 Things Parents and Athletes Must Know

1. Participation in athletics is a privilege, *not* a right – all athletes must follow the **Code of Conduct** on and off campus.
2. Academic eligibility requires a **minimum GPA of 2.00 (non-weighted)**. Students with a GPA no lower than 1.66 may apply for a waiver (only twice during high school).
3. Attendance matters: You must attend at least **50%** of your classes on game day to play, unless excused and approved in advance.
4. Substance abuse is strictly prohibited – any use or possession of drugs, alcohol, or vaping products results in immediate discipline.
5. Hazing, bullying, or harassment of any kind (including online) will result in removal from the team and may lead to a police referral.
6. Playing time and team strategy decisions are made by the coach and are not negotiable.
7. Parents must follow the **24-hour rule** before discussing concerns with a coach and use the proper chain of command.
8. All student-athlete communications must go through SportsYou or email; no texting, DMs, or informal chats with coaches or staff.
9. Athletes are expected to show respect and sportsmanship at all times toward teammates, opponents, officials, coaches, and staff.
10. Every athlete and parent must sign the Code of Conduct and complete online registration (via SportsNet) before participating on any team.

Rancho Cotate High School Athletic Code of Conduct

Purpose and Philosophy

At Rancho Cotate High School (RCHS), we believe that sports, academics, and good citizenship are essential to a student's success. Our athletic program isn't just about playing games; it helps students grow physically, emotionally, and socially. It builds school spirit, teaches responsibility, and supports strong character. Playing on a school team is a privilege, not a right. To earn and keep this privilege, student-athletes must work hard in school, behave responsibly, and show integrity both on and off campus, including online.

Student-athletes represent not just themselves, but also our school, our district, and our community. That's why we hold them to high standards of sportsmanship, respect, and accountability.

This Athletic Code of Conduct outlines the expectations for all student-athletes, describes the process for monitoring behavior, and explains the consequences for violating rules.

It follows the California Education Code and District Policy BP 6145.2, and is based on core values like:

- Trustworthiness
- Respect
- Responsibility
- Fairness
- Caring
- Good Citizenship

All student-athletes and their parents and/or guardians must read, understand, and agree to follow this Code before participating in RCHS athletics.

Eligibility Requirements

To be eligible for participation in RCHS interscholastic athletics, a student must meet **all** of the following requirements:

- **Academic Standards:** A **2.00 GPA (non-weighted)** is required; those with a **GPA below 2.00** may apply for a waiver if they have a **GPA of at least 1.60** and must achieve a **GPA of 2.00** by the end of the grading period.
 - Incoming Ninth-Graders:
 - Must be promoted from the previous school and achieve a 2.00 GPA in the last grading period.
 - Waivers and Probation:
 - Students who do not meet GPA requirements must apply for an Academic Waiver and will be placed on probation.
 - Students can receive a maximum of **2 waivers during their time at Rancho Cotate High School, which require** signatures from a parent and authorized school personnel.
- **Enrollment and CIF Compliance:** Be an enrolled student of RCHS (or an affiliated CRPUSD program) and meet all applicable **CIF eligibility criteria** (including age, residency, transfer, and amateur status requirements) ([Athletic Competition.rtf](#)). Students must also **remain enrolled in the**

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minimum required courses to be considered full-time students.

- **Medical Clearance:** Submit proof of a current **medical clearance** (sports physical examination) before participating in any try-out, practice, or competition ([Athletic Competition.rtf](#)). All required athletic participation forms (e.g., emergency contact, health insurance verification, concussion information, consent forms) must be completed via your **SportsNet** account **before** the first practice or tryouts, whichever comes first.
- **Code Agreement:** Review and **sign the Athletic Code of Conduct Agreement** (by both the student-athlete and a parent/guardian), acknowledging acceptance of the rules and consequences herein. This signed agreement must be on file **each school year** before the student is allowed to compete.
- **Attendance:** Comply with attendance standards as detailed in the **Attendance Requirements** section of this Code. (In general, a student-athlete must attend at least half of their scheduled classes on a game day to be eligible to play that day.)

Conduct Expectations

All RCHS student-athletes are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that reflects positively on their team, school, and community. These expectations apply at all times – during school, at athletic events, off-campus, and on social media. By participating in athletics, the student-athlete agrees to the following code of conduct:

Demonstrate Positive Citizenship and Sportsmanship:

- Exhibit honesty, integrity, and respect.
- Represent RCHS honorably in class, during athletics, and in the community.
- Avoid any misconduct such as fighting, theft, vandalism, or bullying.
- Show respect to coaches, teammates, opponents, officials, and spectators.

Act Responsibly on Social Media and Digital Platforms:

- Do not post or share content that is profane, derogatory, sexually explicit, or harassing.
- Prohibited behaviors include:
 - Sexting: Sharing sexually explicit images/messages, especially involving minors.
 - Cyberbullying/Harassment: Threatening or humiliating others online.
 - Unauthorized Recording: Sharing photos/videos of others without consent.
- Violations will result in disciplinary action and may lead to a referral to law enforcement.

Abstain from Substance Abuse:

- Zero tolerance for alcohol, tobacco, cannabis, vaping, drugs, and performance enhancers.
- Also prohibited: drug paraphernalia and being present during substance use.
- Violations lead to removal from athletics and potential school discipline under Ed Code § 48900.

Comply with School and Team Rules:

- Attend all practices, meetings, and games unless excused.
- Follow coach and team expectations, including safety and uniform standards.
- Failure to comply may result in reduced playing time or disciplinary action.

Respect Coaches, Officials, and Teammates:

- Accept coaching and referee decisions without unsportsmanlike conduct.
- Avoid taunting, arguing, or disruptive behavior.
- Demonstrate sportsmanship and self-control at all times.

No Hazing, Bullying, or Harassment:

- Zero tolerance for hazing, bullying, and harassment, physical, verbal, or digital.
- Hazing includes any act that injures, disgraces, or degrades another student.
- Violations result in team dismissal and potential legal action under Penal Code § 245.6.

Overall Conduct and 24/7 Representation:

- Student-athletes represent RCHS at all times, on and off campus.
- Off-campus behavior that violates laws or disrupts school may lead to discipline.
- Accountability applies during evenings, weekends, and breaks.

Important Notice:

- Any violation, regardless of when or where it occurs, is subject to disciplinary review.
- Penalties may include suspension or removal from the team, separate from school discipline.
- Conduct that qualifies for school suspension/expulsion will also trigger athletic consequences.

Attendance Requirements for Game-Day Participation

Regular school attendance is essential to academic success and is a prerequisite for athletic participation. Student-athletes must attend at least 50% of their scheduled classes on the day of a competition to be eligible to compete. This ensures academics remain the top priority.

Game-Day Attendance Rule:

- Must attend at least 50% of scheduled classes on the day of a game or meet.
- If the event is on a non-school day (e.g., Saturday), the attendance rule applies to the last school day before the event.

Exceptions to the Attendance Rule (must be documented and approved):

- Medical or Dental Appointments – with a doctor's or dentist's note.
- Family Emergencies or Funerals – must be cleared by school administration.
- School-Related Activities – such as academic competitions or college visits, approved in advance.
- Other Extenuating Circumstances – must be pre-approved (e.g., DMV, court appearance).

Enforcement and Consequences:

- If a student-athlete does not meet the attendance requirement and lacks an approved exception, they are ineligible to compete that day.
- The Athletic Director verifies attendance with the attendance office on game days.
- Failure to meet the requirement may be marked as an unexcused team absence.

Repeat Violations:

- Multiple attendance violations will be treated as disciplinary issues.
- Consequences may escalate from warnings and parent conferences to suspension from future contests.

Offense-to-Consequence Matrix

How Discipline Works: Fair and Consistent Consequences

At RCHS, we use a **progressive discipline system**. This means that the consequences become more severe if a student continues to break the rules or if the violation is particularly serious.

Each case is reviewed individually. The **Athletic Director and school administrators** will consider what happened, how serious it was, and the student's past behavior. They have the **authority to decide on consequences** within the range allowed by this Code, and they must act fairly, honestly, and in line with school rules and California law.

The **Offense-to-Consequence Matrix** explains the **minimum and maximum penalties** for different types of violations. These athletic penalties may be in addition to school-wide discipline (like suspensions) and will also follow **CIF rules**.

Offense	Minimum Consequence	Maximum Consequence
First Offense – Minor (see definition below)	Suspension from a percentage of participation in the next scheduled contest ; verbal warning and parent notification.	Suspension from the team for up to one week of contests and placement on a behavior contract for the season.
First Offense – Major (serious misconduct)	Immediate removal from at least 25% of the season's contests.	Immediate removal from the team for at least 50% of the season's contests.
Second Offense - Major	Removal from the current team for the remainder of the season; ineligibility for any other sports for a set period (e.g., the remainder of that sports season).	Suspension from all RCHS athletics for up to one full calendar year from the date of the second infraction (loss of all athletic privileges across all sports for one year).
Third Offense or Egregious Violations (repeated or particularly egregious misconduct)	Removal from all athletic participation for one calendar year (minimum).	Permanent removal from the RCHS athletic program for the remainder of the student's high school career (in the most severe cases).

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Discipline Guide for Student-Athletes & Parents

What Is a Minor Offense?

- A minor offense means the student-athlete committed an infraction that is not dangerous, illegal, or extreme. These actions are still taken seriously, but they typically involve issues of responsibility, attitude, or adherence to basic team expectations.

Examples of Minor Offenses:

- - Showing up late to practice or class without a good reason
- - Skipping a team meeting without telling the coach
- - Talking back to a coach or official without using bad language
- - Unsportsmanlike behavior (like taunting another player once or behavior deemed inappropriate)
- - Getting a detention for low-level behavior in class (like talking too much or disrupting class)

Key Points:

- - Minor offenses usually don't break the law or major school rules
- - But they still go against what it means to be a responsible, respectful student-athlete
- - Repeated minor offenses can lead to bigger consequences

What Is a Major Offense?

A major offense is a serious violation that puts others at risk, violates behavioral contracts, breaks important school rules, or involves illegal or harmful behavior. These actions can lead to strong consequences, even for a first offense.

Examples of Major Offenses:

- - Fighting, hitting, or threatening someone
- - Stealing, vandalism (damaging property)
- - Bullying, hazing, or harassment (in person or online)
- - Using or having drugs, alcohol, vapes, or weapons
- - Repeated skipping of games or practices without approval
- - Gross unsportsmanlike conduct (like cursing at a referee or pushing an opponent)

Key Points:

- - These actions can result in immediate removal from a team or loss of athletic privileges
- - Some major offenses may also lead to school suspension or police involvement
- - The school takes these violations seriously to protect everyone's safety and integrity

What Is Progressive Discipline?

Progressive discipline means that consequences get more serious each time a student breaks the rules.

How it works:

- - **First offense:** You may be suspended for a time period of a game, a full game or two, and/or you'll get a warning
- - **Second offense:** You could be removed from the team for the season or all sports for a while
- - **Third offense or severe behavior:** You could lose the chance to play sports for a full year, or permanently in extreme cases

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Why it's used:

- - To give students a chance to learn and improve
- - To show that repeating mistakes leads to bigger consequences

In implementing the above matrix, the Athletic Director, the school administration, and the Head Coach of the sport will conduct a review of the incident. They will consider factors such as the severity of the offense, the student's honesty and cooperation, prior conduct, and any impact on team safety or integrity. **Within the stated range of consequences, final decisions will be made at the discretion of the administration and the Athletic Department.**

In every case, the **minimum listed consequence will be enforced, and the maximum** will be reserved for the most severe or repeat situations. The actual penalty may fall anywhere between the minimum and maximum, as appropriate.

Important Conduct Rules and Consequences

1. School Suspensions

If a student-athlete is suspended from school, whether it's in-school or at home, they **cannot take part in any team activities** (practices, games, or events) until the suspension ends.

Examples:

- If you're suspended on a Friday, **you can't play in a Saturday game.**
- Suspension on any day makes you **automatically ineligible** during that period, even on weekends.

Suspensions count as **major violations** of this Athletic Code and will trigger a review under the departments discipline rules.

2. Multiple Violations Add Up

Even if each offense is small, they can build up over time.

- **Several minor rule violations** can be treated as a major violation.
- A pattern of bad behavior shows disrespect for the rules and may result in **stronger consequences**, including:
 - Losing eligibility for the rest of the school year
 - Possibly longer suspensions from sports

3. Hazing or Sexual Misconduct

These are **zero-tolerance behaviors**.

- **Hazing** = Immediate removal from the team and at least **9 weeks without sports**
- **Sexual harassment, assault, or criminal conduct** = Immediate suspension from all athletic activities while the school investigates. If proven, the student may be **permanently removed** from athletics and referred to law enforcement.

4. Athletics Is a Privilege, Not a Right

Being on a school sports team is an opportunity, not a guarantee. Athletes are expected to show leadership and good behavior at **all times**, not just during school hours.

This includes:

- Behavior **outside of school**
- **Online conduct** (e.g., social media)
- Actions during breaks or weekends

Due Process Procedures

All student-athletes are entitled to fair and consistent procedures when alleged to have violated the Athletic Code of Conduct. While participation in athletics is a privilege, the school will follow due process protocols to ensure fundamental fairness:

1. Investigation and Notice

- The Athletic Director or an administrator will investigate any reported violations.
- Investigation may include witness statements, staff input, and review of evidence (e.g., social media posts).
- The student-athlete will be informed of the allegations in a private meeting, along with the rule(s) potentially violated.

2. Opportunity to Respond

- Before any decision is made, the student-athlete can explain their side, provide evidence, and present mitigating circumstances.
- For serious matters, a meeting will include the student and their parent/guardian.
- The goal is to provide a meaningful opportunity to be heard before consequences are determined.

3. Administrative Review

- The Athletic Director, with input from school administration and possibly the coach, will assess all information.
- Factors considered include severity, honesty, cooperation, and prior history.
- Consequences will align with the Offense-to-Consequence Matrix, aiming for fairness and consistency.

4. Communication of Decision

- The student and parent/guardian will be informed of the outcome and any sanctions.
- The communication will specify the rule violated, the assigned consequence, and any reinstatement conditions.
- Whenever possible, written confirmation (e.g., a discipline notice or contract) will be provided.

5. Right to Basic Due Process

- Student-athletes will receive timely notice and a chance to respond before discipline is imposed.
- This approach aligns with legal principles for student discipline, as recognized by education law and the U.S. Supreme Court.
- The process ensures that disciplinary actions are just and educational in nature.

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6. Appeals

- Appeals must be submitted in writing to the school Principal or designee within five (5) school days of the decision.
- The appeal will review whether proper procedures were followed, not re-hear the facts of the case.
- Final authority rests with the Principal or an impartial review panel, under Education Code § 35160.5.

Additional Notes

- Athletic code violation records are internal and shared only as necessary or required by law.
- Discipline is intended to be educational and restorative, not just punitive.
- Student-athletes are encouraged to take responsibility and work toward rebuilding trust.

Restorative Practices in Athletics

Purpose of Restorative Practices

At Rancho Cotate High School, discipline should not only correct behavior but also restore relationships, repair harm, and support the personal growth of student-athletes. In alignment with our educational mission and CRPUSD Board Policy on student discipline and restorative approaches, the Athletic Department incorporates **Restorative Practices** alongside traditional disciplinary actions when appropriate.

Restorative Practices are designed to:

- Help student-athletes take responsibility for their actions.
- Provide an opportunity to repair harm caused to others (teammates, opponents, coaches, the school community);
- Foster meaningful reflection and personal accountability;
- Reinforce the values of sportsmanship, integrity, respect, and leadership.

Restorative measures are not intended to replace necessary consequences but to complement them when a situation allows for learning and reconciliation.

Application of Restorative Practices

When a student-athlete commits a **Minor Offense** or a **first-time Major Offense** that does not involve violence, illegal conduct, or threats to safety, the Athletic Director, coach, and administration will offer **Restorative Actions**. Restorative Actions are not a replacement for the consequences outlined in the Offense-to-Consequence Matrix and will be applied in conjunction with any applicable disciplinary measures.

Restorative practices may include, but are not limited to:

- **Reflective Essays:** Student-athletes write reflections analyzing their behavior, the harm it caused, and how they plan to change going forward.
- **Apology Process:** Under supervision, the student-athlete issues a sincere verbal or written apology to those affected (e.g., a team, an opponent, or school staff).
- **Community Service:** To demonstrate accountability, the student-athlete completes a set number of hours in service to the school, athletic program, or broader community.
- **Restorative Conference or Circle:** A structured meeting between the student-athlete, those harmed (when appropriate), coaches, and/or administration to discuss the incident, its impact, and how to repair relationships.
- **Behavior Contract:** Development of a personalized behavior plan outlining clear expectations and

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consequences for future conduct, signed by the student-athlete, parent/guardian, coach, and Athletic Director.

Guidelines for Restorative Action Eligibility

- Restorative practices are offered **at the discretion** of the Athletic Director and Administration.
 - Participation in restorative measures does **not** automatically eliminate additional consequences, but may **reduce severity** if the student-athlete demonstrates sincere accountability.
 - Failure to complete agreed-upon restorative actions by the assigned deadline may result in escalation to the maximum consequence outlined in the **Offense-to-Consequence Matrix**.
 - Certain severe violations (e.g., criminal acts, violence, hazing, substance abuse involving criminal law violations) may be **ineligible** for restorative options and may result in immediate removal from the athletic program.
-

Core Principles of Restorative Practices in Athletics

Student-athletes engaging in restorative actions are expected to embrace the following principles:

- **Ownership:** Acknowledge actions without excuses.
 - **Empathy:** Recognize how their behavior affected others.
 - **Repair:** Take genuine steps to repair relationships and rebuild trust.
 - **Growth:** Commit to behavioral change and future leadership as a representative of RCHS Athletics.
-

Conclusion

By integrating restorative practices into the Athletic Code of Conduct, Rancho Cotate High School upholds the belief that discipline should be educational, not merely punitive.

Our goal is to guide student-athletes toward self-discipline, responsibility, and leadership, essential traits both on the field and in life.

Restorative practices are part of maintaining a championship culture based on **Honor, Integrity, and Courage**.

Sports Online Clearance Packet

Instructions for Registering Your Athlete

Below are instructions for creating a parent/guardian user account and registering one or more athletes at RCHS.

Creating an Account

1. See your school's website for the correct link to SportsNet.
2. Click the Create an Account link near the bottom of the screen
3. Enter the required information and submit the form
4. Log in to the system with your email address and password
5. Follow the instructions inside the system

Before You Begin

- ☐ Make sure you have the following before attempting to register your child:
- ☐ Your child's student identification number
- ☐ The **exact spelling of your child's first and last name**, as it appears in official school records
- ☐ A scanned copy of your child's completed Pre-Participation Physical Exam on your computer (to be uploaded during registration)
- ☐ Your child's active health insurance coverage information, including the name of the provider and the policy ID

Registration Process

Be sure to carefully read the instructions on each screen and provide all required information. If you cannot finish in a single session, the information you have already submitted will be saved, and you can log back in later to finish.

Important: The school will not receive your submission until you complete the process, ending with your final electronic signature on the last available screen. Be sure to check your email for a confirmation message after you have finished.

Support:

- Please contact your child's school directly if you need specific information about your child's registration.
- For general assistance, please email our support team at support@sportsnetinc.com

STUDENT-ATHLETE PARTICIPATION

Student-athletes are **encouraged to participate** in multiple interscholastic athletic activities during the same season, recognizing the value of multi-sport involvement. If a student-athlete wishes to join another sport during the current season, they must seek approval from the principal, who will consider extenuating circumstances. To qualify for a school letter, athletes must meet the sports prerequisites and complete the sports season in good standing with the coaching staff and their team or squad.

Fees:

Students will not be charged any fees to participate in an athletic program.

Try-outs:

High school sports are competitive. Tryouts will be held for the team, and selection to participate does not guarantee playing time during competition. All decisions for team selection and playing time are solely the team coach's responsibility in consultation with the head coach for that sport. All students, including freshmen, can try out for any sport provided they meet academic and residential eligibility criteria and have a physical exam on file.

Participation Requirements to “Make the Team”

Guidelines for Player Selection and Team Participation will be used for tryouts and cuts to ensure a fair and transparent selection process for all student-athletes.

1. **Skill and Performance:** Team selection will be based on an individual's skills, performance, and ability to competently fulfill their respective roles, as determined by the coaching staff. This includes but is not limited to technical abilities, tactical understanding, physical fitness, and overall contribution to the team.
2. **Commitment and Attendance:** A strong commitment to attending all team-related mandatory activities and consistently contributing to the team's best efforts is essential. Regular attendance at practices, games, and team meetings is crucial for maintaining team cohesiveness and effective performance.
3. **Academic Eligibility:** Your academic success is important to us. All players must maintain the required **Grade Point Average of 2.0 (GPA)** and remain academically eligible for team activities. Academic commitment and achievement are essential for a well-rounded student-athlete experience.
4. **Behavior and Conduct:** All players must adhere to the RCHS Athletic Code of Conduct. Respect for coaches, teammates, officials, and all individuals involved in the athletic program is always expected, both on and off the field.
5. **Safety and Well-being:** The well-being and safety of all team members is paramount. Competing with due regard for one's own well-being and that of teammates is essential. Any behavior or actions that jeopardize the safety and well-being of oneself or others will not be tolerated.

Playing Time, Team Selections, and Game Strategy Guidelines

At Rancho Cotate High School, we are committed to fostering a positive athletic environment where student-athletes can grow, compete, and develop both on and off the field. To support this mission, we have established the following guidelines regarding playing time, team selection, and game strategy. These matters are considered professional decisions and are **not open to debate** with coaches.

Playing Time

Playing time is **not guaranteed** and will vary from athlete to athlete. Coaches are responsible for fielding the most competitive team possible and must make decisions in the team's best interest. Playing time is determined at the coach's discretion and may be influenced by, but not limited to:

- Skill level and position needs
- Effort and work ethic
- Attitude and coachability
- Teamwork and leadership
- Attendance and adherence to team rules

Part of a student-athlete's development involves learning to put team goals ahead of individual desires. Any concerns about playing time must first be addressed in a respectful conversation between the player and the coach.

Team Selections and Cuts

In some sports, tryouts may result in roster cuts due to participation limits or competitive needs. These decisions are made by the coaching staff based on clear evaluation criteria. While we recognize that not making a team can be disappointing, all players and families are expected to respect the coach's decision.

Any questions regarding the **cut process** must be directed to the **Athletic Director** and **not** to the coach.

Game Strategy

Decisions related to game strategy including play-calling, substitutions, and in-game adjustments are made solely by the coaching staff. These decisions are based on the dynamics of each game, the team's strengths and weaknesses, and strategic considerations against opponents. Parents and spectators are expected to respect the coach's authority and refrain from interfering or second-guessing coaching decisions during or after games.

Addressing Concerns

If parents have concerns about playing time, team cuts, or game strategy, they must direct them to the **Athletic Director**, not the coach. The process for addressing concerns is as follows:

1. **Initial Review:** The Athletic Director will evaluate whether the concern involves a legitimate safety issue or a possible violation of a student-athlete's rights.
2. **Non-Negotiable Matters:** If the concern does not involve safety or rights violations, the parent will be reminded that coaching decisions regarding playing time, roster selection, and game strategy are **final and non-negotiable**. These matters will not be revisited with the coaching staff.

CIF/NCS/NBL GENERAL ELIGIBILITY (CIF ByLaw 200):

To participate in high school interscholastic athletics, students must:

- Provide information regarding any aspect of the eligibility that is true, correct, accurate, complete and/or not false or fraudulent.
- A student whose 19th birthday is attained before June 15 shall not participate or practice on any team in the following school year.
- Not exceed 8 semesters of enrollment after entering 9th grade
- Meet transfer, academic, and disciplinary eligibility standards
- Have an annual physical examination
- Maintain amateur status.
- Attend a CIF member school.

The Athletic Director or Administrator in charge of athletics determines eligibility.

CIF/NCS/NBL TRANSFER ELIGIBILITY:

Any student who transfers between high schools is subject to the CIF transfer bylaws. A varsity-level first-time transfer athlete with no valid change of residence will be required to “sit out” half of each sport season previously played. Second-time transfers without a valid change of residence may be subject to limited (non-varsity) eligibility in sports they have played.

ALL transfer athletes must request an eligibility review by the new school's principal or designee to determine eligibility for competition. Before participating in a league sport, CIF forms 207 and 510 will be required. Allow at least 20 business days for processing these forms, especially at the beginning of the year. The athlete may miss part of the sport's season during the review and evaluation process.

For more information, see the Athletic Director and/or visit the transfer page at the North Coast Section website. [NCS_CIF Transfer Eligibility Information](#)

GENERAL INFORMATION

PRACTICE SCHEDULES ON NON-SCHOOL DAYS:

CRPUSD gives coaches authority to establish team policies, including holding practice and/or games during non-school days within their sport's season. When teams have established practice/game schedules that are communicated well at the beginning of the season, athletes are expected to comply. No practices or games may be held on Sundays, and no athlete may be penalized for observing a religious holiday.

ISSUING AND COLLECTION OF UNIFORMS AND EQUIPMENT:

Each student is responsible for the proper care and safekeeping of all uniforms and equipment issued. Lockers must be secured before and after practices or competitions. Please follow the care instructions for all garments. Uniforms and equipment should be returned to the coach at the end of the season. Student-athletes will be charged for replacing any lost or damaged school property. Transcripts will not be issued until all bills/uniforms owed to the school have been paid/returned in reasonable condition. Athletes who have not returned or replaced lost or damaged uniforms will NOT be eligible to participate/tryout in the following season's tryouts until items are returned or replaced.

LOCKER ROOMS:

Athletes are expected to use the locker rooms appropriately when changing. They are responsible for the security of their belongings by always locking them in the locker. Athletes should behave appropriately with language and demeanor. No pictures or videos may be taken inside a locker room. Violation will result in school/team discipline.

TRANSPORTATION FOR ATHLETICS:

The District may provide transportation for athletes to and from athletic events by contract with private transportation providers to the extent that funds are available. When funds are unavailable, the Superintendent or designee will neither authorize nor arrange for the transportation of the students by private automobile. Read and review the specific language here: [CRPUSD Board Policy](#)

TEAM VOLUNTEERS:

Coaches appreciate it when one or more volunteers assist with team chores, such as arranging transportation, organizing equipment, maintaining an email group, coordinating team dinners and banquets, and providing other support to the team and coach.

EVENT ADMISSION:

Home or away varsity contest admission may be charged if the school provides gate control and supervision. Students with ASB cards may enter games for free at home but may be charged a reduced admission fee at away schools.

STUDENT-ATHLETE HEALTH AND SAFETY

CERTIFIED ATHLETIC TRAINER (ATC):

CRPUSD has a certified athletic trainer at each high school who is a healthcare professional. Our trainers work closely with doctors to prevent injuries, provide emergency care, diagnose and treat injuries, and assist students in their recovery.

They also work with students who have medical conditions, referring them to healthcare providers and ensuring they can participate safely in sports. If a student has a concussion, they must obtain clearance from both the athletic trainer and a healthcare provider before returning to play. The Athletic Trainer also advises coaches on training, helps injured students, and is available for emergencies during games.

INJURIES AND INJURY REPORTS:

Please report any injuries sustained during school sports to the athletic trainer and the athletic director as soon as possible. The coach or another adult should complete a form for each injury and submit it to the principal's office within 2 days.

If someone has a concussion, they need two medical notes from a doctor before they can return to play. Our athletic trainer is available on campus during specific hours to help with injuries during practices and games.

The athletic trainer, coach, or authorized designee should contact the student's parents if an injury occurs.

If it's an emergency, they should call 911. If the injury isn't an emergency but the student can't keep playing, the parents should be called to pick them up. In those cases, it's best to have the student checked out by a doctor, especially if there's a risk of concussion.

MRSA:

MRSA (methicillin-resistant staphylococcus aureus) is a staph infection resistant to many common antibiotics and hard to treat. It can be transmitted through poor hygiene, sharing of personal items, improper wound care, and other transmission sources. A few cases have been reported in MCAL schools. It is essential to follow good hygiene precautions.

For more information, see the CIF Sports Medicine alert at CIF MRSA.

CONCUSSIONS:

All sports have the possibility of injury. The most potentially serious and difficult-to-diagnose injury is a concussion or multiple concussions. Parents and athletes should take them seriously and consult a physician for medical advice.

An athlete suspected of sustaining a concussion or head injury in an athletic activity shall be immediately removed from the activity for the remainder of the day. The student shall not be permitted to return until he/she is evaluated by a licensed healthcare provider trained in the management of concussions and receives the healthcare provider's written clearance to return to the activity.

(Education Code 49475). [NFHS Concussion In Sports Course](#)

SUDDEN CARDIAC ARREST:

Sudden Cardiac Arrest (SCA) is not a heart attack. It's an abnormality in the heart's electrical system that abruptly stops the heartbeat. An undetected congenital or genetic heart condition causes it. Its first symptom may be death. To learn more about this severe medical condition to CIF: SCA or Sudden Cardiac Arrest (an online NFHS course).

[Sudden Cardiac Arrest NFHS Course](#)

BLOOD-BORNE PATHOGENS:

All players should be aware of blood-borne pathogen protocol when there is bleeding. Whenever a player incurs an injury or wound that produces bleeding or other body fluids, the practice or game shall be stopped per CIF guidelines, and the player shall be escorted away from the playing field for appropriate treatment. The player shall not return to the practice or game until the bleeding has stopped and the wound is properly covered. Gloves should always be worn when dealing with any body fluids.

PERFORMANCE ENHANCEMENT SUPPLEMENTS

The athletic staff discourages using any non-prescription drug, medication, or food supplement solely for performance-enhancing purposes.

For more information, please see [CIF Performance Enhancement](#)

STUDENT-ATHLETES' BILL OF RIGHTS

Athletes' Bill of Rights

NONDISCRIMINATION AND EQUIVALENT OPPORTUNITIES:

Rancho Cotate High School's athletic department shall be free from discrimination and prohibited practices by state and federal law. The Superintendent/designee shall provide equivalent athletic opportunities for males and females.

OUTSIDE COMPETITION AND OUT-OF-SEASON TEAMS:

According to CIF rule 600, no student-athlete may participate on a non-school team of the same sport during the same season. This includes leagues, tournaments, charity games, all-star games, 3-3 tournaments, college classes, etc.

Participation in a non-school event of the same sport **will render an athlete ineligible and force the forfeiture of any contest.** All student-athletes must check with the Athletic Director if there is any doubt as to whether a competition is permissible according to NCS and CIF by-laws.

RGHS, NBL, NCS, and CIF do not sponsor out-of-season teams.

Although participation is allowed, it is not officially or unofficially associated with the above-mentioned groups. The parent assumes full responsibility for medical expenses and any liability that may occur as a result of participation on an out-of-season team. Participation on out-of-season teams is no guarantee of selection for a school team.

Parent/Guardian Code of Conduct

Participation in interscholastic athletics at Rancho Cotate High School (RCHS) is a privilege that extends beyond the student-athlete. Parents and guardians play a critical role in shaping the experience, conduct, and culture of our athletic community. As such, all parents and guardians of student-athletes are required to acknowledge and adhere to the standards set forth below as a condition of their child's participation.

This Code of Conduct is enforceable under school district policy and state education regulations. By digitally or physically signing the RCHS Athletic Manual, parents and guardians agree to be bound by the provisions below. Violations may result in restrictions on event attendance, removal from events, or, in cases of serious or repeated misconduct, consequences for the student-athlete's eligibility to participate.

Expectations

As a parent or guardian of an RCHS student-athlete, I understand and agree to:

1. **Support the Educational Mission**

Recognize that athletics play a positive role in education. *I will prioritize my child's academic success and support a holistic development that emphasizes integrity, effort, and growth over winning.*

2. **Model Positive Behavior**

Demonstrate sportsmanship through my words and actions. *I will refrain from profanity, taunting, or negative outbursts toward coaches, officials, players, or spectators at all events.*

3. **Respect Officials and Coaches**

Acknowledge that game officials are trained professionals. *I will accept their decisions as final. I will not confront or criticize coaches publicly or during emotionally charged moments.*

4. **Maintain Proper Communication**

I will observe the "24-hour rule" before addressing concerns with a coach, and will follow the proper chain of command: student-athlete → coach → athletic director → administration.

5. **Support All Student-Athletes**

Encourage not only my child but also their teammates and opponents. *I will foster a respectful and inclusive environment that values effort, safety, and fair competition.*

6. **Avoid Interference**

to coach or instruct athletes or referees during games and practices. *I understand that team strategy, playing time, and line-ups are solely the responsibility of the coaching staff.*

7. **Abide by Safety and Conduct Policies**

I will comply with all RCHS and CRPUSD safety protocols, transportation rules, and event guidelines. I will report any conduct that jeopardizes the health, safety, or dignity of any participant.

Accountability and Sanctions

- *I understand that any violation of this Code of Conduct may result in my removal from athletic contests or other team functions.*
 - *If I am removed from a game by school or event officials, I will be required to complete the NFHS Sportsmanship Course and submit the completion certificate to the Athletic Director before returning to any athletic event.*
 - Repeat or severe violations may result in restrictions on attendance or affect my student-athlete's participation status.
-



Steps for Addressing Parent Concerns

Parents are expected to follow the outlined steps when expressing concerns about Rancho Cotate High School's athletic programs to ensure effective and respectful communication.

1. Adhere to the “24-Hour Rule”

- Avoid confronting coaches immediately after games or at practices. Wait at least 24 hours before discussing any concerns.

2. Initial Communication with the Coach - Athlete’s Responsibility:

- The athlete must first speak directly to the coach about their concerns.
- **Arrange a Meeting:**
 - Meeting Requirements: Meetings must include the parent, coach, and athlete. The coach will respond to parents as quickly as possible to schedule the meeting.
 - If the issue is unresolved, the parent should arrange an appointment with the coach.

3. Escalation to the Athletic Director

- Unresolved Issues: If the parent or the coach is unsatisfied with the outcome, they should communicate directly with the Athletic Director.
- Follow Chain of Command: Ensure that the chain of command is followed when escalating the issue. The Athletic Director will facilitate further discussions if necessary.

4. Professional Communication Standards

- Verbal and Written Communication: All forms of communication must be professional and respectful. Verbal abuse or inappropriate language will not be tolerated.
- Email Use: Use email with discretion, especially when emotions are involved. Direct, face-to-face communication is usually more appropriate in these situations.

5. Documentation and Follow-Up

- Document Concerns: Record all communications and meetings related to the concern.
- Follow-Up: Ensure that follow-up actions are taken as agreed during meetings. Continue to follow the chain of command until the issue is resolved.

Contact Information

If you need to arrange a meeting or escalate a concern, please contact:

- Athletic Director: Matt Transue - Email: matthew_transue@crpusd.org

NCS/NBL EJECTION POLICY:

Ejection of a player from a contest for unsportsmanlike or dangerous conduct.

- **Penalty:** The player shall be ineligible for the next contest (non-league, league, invitational tournament, post-season league, section or state playoff, etc.), due to illegal participation in the next contest by a player ejected in a previous contest.
- **Penalty:** The contest shall be forfeited, and the ineligible player shall be ineligible for the next contest.
- **Penalty:** The player shall be ineligible for the remainder of the season. When one or more players leave the bench to begin or participate in an altercation.
- **Penalty:** The player(s) shall be ejected from the contest in question and become ineligible for the next contest (non-league, league, invitational tournament, post-season {league, section or state} playoff, etc)

Coaches are responsible for determining the cause of their players' ejections and for enforcing the Ejection Policy.

Confusion over the cause for a player's ejection shall not be the basis for allowing a student who has been ejected under an applicable rule to avoid the sanctions required by the Ejection Policy (either prohibition from participation or forfeiture) should a student who violates the Ejection Policy play in a subsequent contest.

NCS: Any player ejected for fighting must complete the NFHS online Sportsmanship course. The athlete not allowed to participate in the next game is also not eligible to participate until they complete the course. It is free and provides a printable certificate upon completion of the course.

[NFHS Sportsmanship Course](#)

UNSPORTSMANLIKE ACTIONS:

In addition to the official's call, unsportsmanlike conduct will be dealt with by reprimand and counseling by the coach and/or appropriate other school officials. Actions of this nature may lead to benching, suspension, or withdrawal of athletic privileges and school disciplinary intervention if the rules/policies are violated.

INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR:

Certain behaviors are considered inappropriate and unacceptable. The school and athletic department reserve the right to refuse admission or remove persons, including adults, who exhibit such behaviors, including, but not limited to:

1. Repeated berating, humiliating, or taunting of our coaches, players, or spectators.
2. Repeated berating, humiliating, or taunting of our opponent's coaches, players, or spectators.
3. Repeated berating and harassment of game officials.
4. Racist, sexist, or profane remarks directed at any coach, player, official, or spectator.

OFFICIALS:

Officials should be respected during and after contests, even if athletes disagree with their calls. Any physical confrontation of an official by an athlete may be considered an assault. Under **CIF Bylaw 211**, athletes may lose athletic eligibility for their entire high school career.

Every player must register **annually** on SportsNet.Inc using the Athletics link on our school website before participating on any team.

The physical form requires a physician's signature certifying the athlete's health, so plan ahead.

One form dated after **June 1st** is suitable for all seasons for one calendar year.

Communication Rules for Sports at RCHS

Why This Matters

These rules help make sure communication between coaches and athletes is **safe, clear, and respectful**. Messages must be professional and school-related only. School staff will be able to check messages when needed.

1. How to Communicate

- Coaches and athletes must use only **approved apps**:
Email or SportsYou
 - No texting, Instagram DMs, Snapchat, or other private messages
-

2. What to Talk About

- Practice and game times
 - Injury or health updates
 - Questions about performance or team rules
 - Academic help or scheduling issues
 - **Use respectful, clear language.** No swearing, slang, or unprofessional talk.
 - **Send messages between 7:00 AM and 9:00 PM**, unless it's an emergency, such as a game cancellation.
-

3. School Oversight

- School staff can see all messages on ParentSquare, Google Classroom, District email, or SportsYou.
 - They'll check in regularly to make sure rules are followed.
-

4. Privacy

- Your private info will be kept safe and shared only when needed to address a problem.
 - Messages are stored securely, and only trusted staff can see them.
-

5. If Something Goes Wrong

- Report anything uncomfortable or inappropriate right away.
 - The school will investigate the matter and take action if necessary.
-

6. Follow the Rules Or Face Consequences

- You may lose messaging access
 - Your parent may be contacted
 - Further consequences may apply
-

Rancho Cotate High School
ATHLETIC TRANSPORTATION POLICY

If parents/guardians provide transportation to or allow another adult or their student-athlete to provide transportation to scheduled interscholastic athletic events, including practices, they must be aware that the following policies are in effect:

- Where a parent or guardian provides transportation to their son or daughter to or from a scheduled event, including practices, the parent or guardian shall assume all resulting liability, and the school shall assume no liability.
- Where a parent/guardian or another adult designated by a parent/guardian transports students other than their own to or from a scheduled event, including practices, the parent/guardian or designated adult shall assume all resulting liability, and the school shall assume no liability.
- Where a student transports himself/herself to or from a scheduled event, including practices, the parents/guardians of that student shall assume all resulting liability, and the school shall assume no liability.
- Where a student transports other students to or from a scheduled event, including practices, the parents/guardians of the transporting student shall assume all resulting liability and the school shall assume no liability

TRANSPORTATION LIABILITY WAIVER

I have read the Athletic Transportation Policy and agree that I shall assume all liability for negligently caused injuries resulting from the following situations:

- Where I transport my student-athlete to or from a scheduled event;
- Where I transport other students to or from a scheduled event, or I, as a parent/guardian, permit another adult to transport my student-athlete home from a scheduled event and have explained to the designated individual that they will assume all liability;
- Where my student-athlete transports himself/herself to or from a scheduled event or
- Where my student-athlete transports other students to or from a practice or scheduled event.
- I also agree that Rancho Cotate High School shall assume no liability for negligently caused injuries resulting from the above situations or any other situation where contracted transportation is not used to transport athletes.
- I agree to indemnify and hold harmless the district and its employees from any claims or liabilities arising from my decision to transport student-athletes other than my own.

Legal Alignment & Rights Clarifications

1. Athlete's Bill of Rights (California Education Code § 221.8)

All student-athletes are entitled to equal opportunities in athletics under state and federal law. At Rancho Cotate High School, the following rights shall be upheld in accordance with California Education Code § 221.8 and Title IX:

- The right to equitable participation opportunities, equipment, scheduling, and facilities regardless of gender.
- The right to be free from discrimination or harassment based on sex, gender identity, or sexual orientation.
- The right to report violations of these rights without fear of retaliation.
- The right to information on how to file a Title IX complaint.
- The right to fair treatment under disciplinary and eligibility processes.

2. Parent/Guardian Rights and Access to Information

Rancho Cotate High School recognizes the rights of parents and legal guardians to be informed participants in their student-athlete's experience. Parents/guardians have the right to:

- Request and receive timely communication regarding injuries, medical clearance status, and changes in eligibility.
- Access, upon request, to discipline outcomes that directly affect their student's participation (in compliance with FERPA).
- Participate in due process discussions when student-athletes are suspended or removed from teams for major offenses.
- Appeal athletic disciplinary decisions in writing to the school principal or designee within five (5) school days.
- Receive an annual notice of student rights under FERPA and Title IX.

3. Student Data Privacy and FERPA Compliance

All athletic department staff are reminded that student medical, disciplinary, and academic information is protected under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). Staff shall:

- Never share individual student information with other parents, athletes, or outside parties without written consent.
- Ensure that injury reports, clearance documents, and eligibility statuses are maintained in a secure and confidential manner.
- Use only school-approved platforms (such as SportsNet and ParentSquare) for storing and communicating sensitive information.

Agreement and Acknowledgment Form

To represent Rancho Cotate High School in interscholastic athletics, each student-athlete and their parent/guardian must read, sign, and return the following Athletic Code of Conduct Agreement. This agreement signifies that the student and parent/guardian understand the expectations and consequences outlined in the RCHS Athletic Code of Conduct and agree to abide by them. **Participation in athletics is conditioned upon this signed acknowledgment.**

- 1. Acceptance of the Code:** We, the undersigned student-athlete and parent/guardian, acknowledge that we have received and reviewed the **Rancho Cotate High School Athletic Code of Conduct** ("Code"). We understand its provisions and the standards of behavior and eligibility it requires. We agree that the student-athlete will abide by all rules, expectations, and procedures in the Code at all times, both on and off campus. We understand that this Code is a comprehensive guide and is incorporated by reference into this Agreement as if fully set forth herein.
- 2. Authority and Enforcement:** We recognize that participation in RCHS athletics is a **privilege** and not a right. The student-athlete agrees to be subject to the authority of the RCHS coaches, Athletic Director, and school administrators in all matters pertaining to the Athletic Code. We understand that the Athletic Department and school administration have the **discretion to enforce disciplinary actions** for any violations of the Code, which may include suspension or removal from athletic teams. We accept that such decisions will be made in accordance with the Code's **Offense-to-Consequence Matrix** and due process procedures. We further agree that disciplinary actions taken under this Code are **final**, and we will abide by the outcomes. (Any appeal, if permitted, will follow the process described in the Code, and we agree to the final resolution.)
- 3. Assumption of Risk and Liability Waiver:** We acknowledge that participating in athletics involves inherent risks of injury. The student-athlete and parent or guardian assume all risks associated with tryouts, practices, games, and travel, including the waiver of liability as outlined in the Transportation Policy mentioned in the Code. We agree that the school and district have provided appropriate safety equipment and supervision, and we commit to following all safety rules and instructions. In consideration of the opportunity to participate, we **waive and release** Cotati-Rohnert Park Unified School District, its officers, employees, coaches, and volunteers from any liability or claims of injury that may be sustained by the student-athlete in the course of athletic activities, **except** to the extent caused by gross negligence or willful misconduct. We also agree not to pursue legal action against the District or staff arising from the enforcement of the Athletic Code of Conduct, so long as such enforcement is conducted in good faith and in accordance with the established procedures.
- 4. Parent/Guardian Responsibilities:** The parent/guardian agrees to support the enforcement of the Athletic Code and to model good sportsmanship and respect toward all participants, coaches, and officials. We understand that the parent/guardian's conduct can impact the student-athlete's standing, and therefore, parents/guardians will also uphold school expectations at sporting events (e.g., no sideline

abuse of officials or coaches). We take responsibility for ensuring that the student-athlete understands the seriousness of this commitment. We acknowledge that certain behaviors (such as hazing, bullying, fighting, or substance abuse) may carry not only school consequences but also **legal consequences** under California law. We will promptly report any concerns or knowledge of serious code violations to the coach or school administrators to help maintain a safe and honorable athletic program.

5. **Acknowledgment of Understanding:** By signing via digital confirmation, we affirm that we understand and accept all the terms of this Agreement and the RCHS Athletic Code of Conduct. We understand that **failure to comply** with the Code can result in disciplinary action, including possible removal from athletic participation. We consent to the enforcement of these rules as a condition of the student's involvement in school athletics. We also understand that this signed Agreement will be kept on file with the Athletic Department and must be renewed annually or upon request if the Code of Conduct is updated.

Acknowledgment

By signing the RCHS Combined Athletic Manual (or completing digital acknowledgment via SportsNet), I affirm that:

- I have read, understand, and agree to this Parent/Guardian Code of Conduct.
- I understand that my digital signature constitutes a legally binding agreement.
- I accept responsibility for my actions and understand the consequences that may follow misconduct.

The digital acknowledgment via SportsNet Inc., and or signatures, we, the student-athlete and parent/guardian, agree to the above conditions and verify that we have read, understand, and commit to the Rancho Cotate High School Athletic Code of Conduct.

Effective Date: This Athletic Code of Conduct is effective starting in the 2025–2026 school year and remains in force until revised or superseded by a new policy. The school administration reserves the right to review and amend these rules as needed, with appropriate notice to student-athletes. All student-athletes are expected to stay informed of any updates to the Code. By participating in RCHS athletics, you are agreeing to uphold this Code and represent Rancho Cotate High School with pride and integrity.