

THREE RIVERS - COMMUNITY SCHOOLS - ATHLETIC HANDBOOK -



2025 – 2026 -

Three Rivers Community Schools does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex (including sexual orientation and gender identity), disability, age, religion, height, weight, marital or family status, military status, ancestry, genetic information, or any other legally protected category, (collectively, "Protected Classes") in its programs and activities, including employment opportunities.



THREE RIVERS COMMUNITY SCHOOLS - HANDBOOK FOR STUDENT ATHLETES -

Table of Contents

THREE RIVERS COMMUNITY SCHOOLS VISION	2 -
THREE RIVERS COMMUNITY SCHOOLS MISSION STATEMENT	2 -
THREE RIVERS ATHLETICS DEPARTMENT MISSION STATEMENT	2 -
LETTER TO STUDENT-ATHLETES	2 -
PHILOSOPHY OF ATHLETICS	3 -
RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE ATHLETE	3 -
BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS OF THE STUDENT-ATHLETES	4 -
USE OF PERFORMANCE ENHANCING DRUGS	4 -
IN THE EVENT OF AN INJURY	4 -
At School	4 -
On the Road	4 -
If You See Your Doctor	5 -
THE ATHLETIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE	5 -
WOLVERINE CONFERENCE	5 -
SPORTS INFORMATION NIGHTS	6 -
SQUAD SELECTION	6 -
Philosophy	6 -
ATHLETICS AND SCHOOL ATTENDANCE	6 -
ATHLETIC CODE OF CONDUCT	6 -
PENALTIES FOR VIOLATIONS OF RULES (Grades 6-12)	7 -
First Violation (Substance abuse violations/involvement with the law – excluding traffic - violations)	7 -
Second Violation	7 -
Third Violation	7 -
MHSAA MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS FOR PARTICIPATION	8 -
CONCUSSION PROTOCOL	8 -
THREE RIVERS ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT DUAL SPORT PARTICIPATION	9 -
Rationale	9 -
Students Participating in Two Activities During the Same Season	9 -
Rules of Dual-Sports Participation	9 -
THREE RIVERS ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT REQUEST FOR DUAL SPORT - PARTICIPATION	10 -
AWARDS	11 -
THREE RIVERS COMMUNITY SCHOOLS DEPARTMENT OF ATHLETICS - ATHLETIC RESPONSIBILITY ACKNOWLEDGMENT	12 -

THREE RIVERS COMMUNITY SCHOOLS VISION

The culture of Three Rivers Community Schools is defined by our values, which set the standard for our behavior, our relationships, our communication and our daily decision-making.

THREE RIVERS COMMUNITY SCHOOLS MISSION STATEMENT

The Mission of Three Rivers Community Schools is to educate, motivate and inspire all students to reach their full potential, to become successful adults and to pursue their dreams.

THREE RIVERS ATHLETICS DEPARTMENT MISSION STATEMENT

The Three Rivers Community Schools Athletics Department will provide quality educational and athletic opportunities for its staff, students, parents, and the community.

LETTER TO STUDENT-ATHLETES

Dear Student-Athlete,

Each new school year brings new challenges and new opportunities. The privilege you have earned to be part of an athletic team at Three Rivers High/Middle School is an extension of your work in the classroom. We hope you will benefit as much from your athletic experiences as you do from your academic endeavors.

One challenge before us each year is the promotion of good sportsmanship. As a student athlete, acceptable levels of behavior are best learned now, as the lessons learned will last a lifetime.

As an athlete, you are constantly in the public eye. You are a leader. Many people look to your accomplishments and behavior whenever you are competing and in the classroom as a source for community pride. Many students in our school see you as a role model whose behavior is to be emulated.

These are the reasons good sportsmanship is important. The example you provide demonstrates the standard of behavior expected from everyone associated with our program. It only takes a single moment of thoughtlessness to create a negative impression. To maintain good sportsmanship throughout a season takes as much hard work as you put into developing your athletic skills. The latter pays much bigger dividends in the long run.

Please take the time to review the attached guidelines, which state our expectations for our student-athletes as leaders of our school. I hope these guidelines will become part of your preparation for the upcoming season.

Finally, I hope that the upcoming season is a rewarding one for you.

Matt Stofer
Athletic Director

PHILOSOPHY OF ATHLETICS

Participation in Three Rivers Community Schools athletics is a privilege, not a right. Student-athletes are students first. When participating in District athletics, student-athletes are District representatives and are held to the highest standards. Accordingly, this Athletic Code of Conduct applies 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Student-athletes and parents should be familiar with this Athletic Code of Conduct. By participating on any school-sponsored athletic team both student-athletes and parents agree to abide by these terms.

Interscholastic athletics in the Three Rivers Community Schools are considered to be an integral part of the physical education program and, in turn, of the educational program of the school. Athletics offer students desirable learning experiences.

Our athletic program shall be so directed that:

1. - The welfare of all students should be the guiding principle of the athletic program.
2. - Participation in interscholastic athletic competition is a privilege that must be earned and held.
3. - Athletics is an integral part of the student-athletes educational program as a means of providing a desirable learning experience and serves as a performance demonstration by our athletes.
4. - The development and maintenance of good fitness through proper health habits and strict adherence to training rules is expected of all athletes.
5. - All athletes are expected to exhibit behavior that will gain and hold the respect of adults, fellow students, and younger children.
6. - Any student who has participated in an athletic contest at any time during Grades 6-12 shall be considered an athlete.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE ATHLETE

The student who serves on an athletic team at Three Rivers High School and competes interscholastically represents himself/herself, the family, the team, the school, and the community. Always conduct **yourself** with the utmost integrity, respect and responsibility. For these reasons, conduct on and off the playing fields should reflect the highest values and standards the school exemplifies.

Because participation in athletics is a privilege, all athletes are expected to be good citizens in school as well as the community. **Therefore, you should never allow yourself to be put in a position that would jeopardize this privilege.**

Equipment/uniforms are provided by the school for student use during the season. Any athlete who does not return assigned equipment/uniforms at the end of the season will be responsible to reimburse the Three Rivers Community Schools Athletic Department for the full cost of replacement.

The expectation of Three Rivers student-athlete participation in a sport, is he/she completes that sport. As most athletes have to go through the cutting process, it is unfair to those who have been cut not to have the opportunity to participate.

Students and parents are asked to sign an Athletic Responsibility Acknowledgment (page 16), stating that they have read and understand the Student Code of Conduct, the Athletic rules, the team rules, as well as the

parent/coach relationship and the MHSAA requirements before they will be allowed to participate in sports. The signed form will be kept on file in the Athletic Director's Office.

BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS OF THE STUDENT-ATHLETES

- Accept and understand the seriousness of your responsibility and the privilege of representing the school and the community. Your main responsibility is that you are a student first and athlete second.
- Understand the rules of your sport thoroughly and discuss them with parents, fans, fellow students, and younger students. Such a discussion will create a better understanding and appreciation of the sport.
- Depending on the sport, there are differences in training procedures, therefore it is understood that when a sport utilizes the current dress protocol (coach's discretion) due to the length of an activity, humidity concerns and all safety protocols will be taken into consideration.
- Treat opponents the way you would like to be treated; as a guest or a friend.
- Wish opponents good luck before the game and congratulate them in a sincere manner following either victory or defeat.
- Respect the integrity and judgment of game officials. Never argue or make non-verbal gestures that may indicate disagreement. This type of immature activity may incite undesirable behavior in the stands and/or by teammates, and may cause repercussions to the team.

USE OF PERFORMANCE ENHANCING DRUGS

A list of banned performance-enhancing substances is available through the Department of Community Health and is based on the list of banned drugs contained in National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Bylaw 31.2.3.1.

IN THE EVENT OF AN INJURY

At School

Injuries that occur at Three Rivers should be reported to the coach and or the Athletic Trainer. The Athletic Trainer will evaluate and make a referral if needed. In most cases injuries are minor and the athlete will be instructed on home care and anticipated follow-up care. If time permits or the injury is more extensive, parents/guardians will be contacted with instructions for follow-up care or other concerns may be addressed.

On the Road

If an athlete is injured away from Three Rivers at a school approved athletic event, the coach and certified athletic trainer should be notified immediately. Athletes may be taken to the athletic trainer of the host school for evaluation or referred to the trainer at Three Rivers for evaluation following their return to school. Because of travel times and distance of contests from Three Rivers, the student may need to report the injury to the athletic trainer the following day. **In cases of significant injury, parents will be contacted about the injury immediately and location of Emergency Medical Responders transfer (hospital).**

If told to “see the Athletic Trainer at Three Rivers,” the athlete should report to him/her the following day. This **has to be done prior to practice or competition the following day. The ATHLETE will NOT participate in a practice or competition until cleared by the athletic trainer.**

If You See Your Doctor

If you intend to see a physician, please try to contact the certified athletic trainer for medical advice before scheduling an appointment. If both the parents/guardians and certified athletic trainer agree to see someone within the Bronson Sports Medicine network, the certified athletic trainer will fill out a referral form for your child. If parents or guardians decide to see a physician or medical professional outside of the Bronson Sports Medicine network, please bring a written or typed physician’s note to the certified athletic trainer.

Please try to obtain written information from your physician at the time of an office visit. Obtaining parental permission to contact the doctor, placing the call, and waiting (and hoping) for a return call takes valuable time that could be used to treat your child.

Three Rivers Community Schools carry a secondary coverage on all student-athletes. This coverage is through the First Agency of Kalamazoo.

THE ATHLETIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The purpose of the Athletic Advisory Committee is to administer the athletic programs through a duly authorized director and coaches following guideline policies that are established by the coaching staff, administrators, and the Board of Education.

Membership may include:

- Varsity Coaching Staff
- One or both secondary principals
- The Athletic Trainer

Athletic Advisory Committee meetings may be called by the Athletic Director as deemed necessary. Special meetings may be called by request of a majority of the members.

WOLVERINE CONFERENCE

Three Rivers High School is a member of the Wolverine Conference. These schools include:

- Edwardsburg
- Niles
- Otsego
- Paw Paw
- Plainwell
- Sturgis
- Three Rivers
- Vicksburg

SPORTS INFORMATION NIGHTS

Individual team meetings will be held at the beginning of each season. Coaches, athletes, and their parents are requested to attend these meetings. The meetings will cover information and requirements specific to the sport, as well as athletic department policies and rules, including MHSAA eligibility regulations.

Communication Protocol

The District has full faith in its coaches to make decisions that are in the best interest of their teams. If parents have questions or concerns about their student-athletes' sports participation, use the following protocol:

1. - Wait 24 hours before contacting the coach.
2. - Schedule a time to speak with the coach, either via phone or in-person, at the coach's discretion.
3. - If the issue is unresolved, schedule a time to speak with the Athletic Director, either via phone or in-person, at the Athletic Director's discretion.

SQUAD SELECTION

Philosophy

In accordance with our philosophy of athletics and our desire to see as many students as possible participate in the athletic program while at Three Rivers High School, we encourage coaches to keep as many students as they can without losing the integrity of their sports especially at the sub-varsity levels. Obviously, time, space, facilities, equipment, personal preference, and other factors will place limitations on the most effective squad size for any particular sport. However, when developing policy in this regard, coaches have been asked to maximize the opportunities for our students without diluting the quality of the program.

ATHLETICS AND SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

To be eligible for participation in any athletic contest or practice, student-athletes must attend all scheduled class periods on the day of the event. If an absence occurs, a parent or guardian must contact the attendance office to provide an excuse no later than 2:00 PM on the same day. Please note that students who are present in the building but fail to attend class are considered to be skipping, and such absences are deemed inexcusable—parents/guardians may not excuse these incidents and the student is not allowed to practice or compete.

ATHLETIC CODE OF CONDUCT

A student-athlete must:

1. - Learn and understand the rules and regulations of your sport.
2. - Unless otherwise approved by your coach, if school is in session, attend school for the full day to be eligible to practice or play in an event on the same day.
3. - Comply with the law, Board Policy, the Student Code of Conduct, the Athletic Code of Conduct, and all team rules. Failure to comply with this provision may result in suspension or removal from a team.

4. - Not possess, use, or consume alcohol, tobacco, cannabis, nicotine (including a vape), or controlled substances (other than those prescribed by a physician for the student-athlete).
5. - Not engage in conduct that is unbecoming of student-athletes.
6. - Maintain academic eligibility as required by the Michigan High School Athletic Association.
7. - Notify your coach or District athletic trainer of any injury or medical condition that may affect your athletic participation.
8. - If a student-athlete violates any provision of the Athletic Code of Conduct, practice, game, team, or complete athletic suspension may result. Any disciplinary consequences will be at the sole discretion of the Athletic Director or designee.
9. - If a student-athlete is suspended or expelled from school, the student-athlete is prohibited from participating in any practice or game during the suspension or expulsion.

PENALTIES FOR VIOLATIONS OF RULES (Grades 6-12)

All training rule violations in grades 6-12 are accumulative for the six (6) semesters in middle school and for eight (8) semesters of eligibility in high school. **Violations will start over when entering their high school athletic career, unless a violation occurs during the 8th grade school year, and the student-athlete has not fulfilled their discipline on a current violation. That violation will carry over to their next sports season.

First Violation (Substance abuse violations/involvement with the law – excluding traffic violations)

Using the Maximum number of regular season contests allowed by the MHSAA in each sport as the base by which to apply the rule, the student-athlete will be ineligible to participate in 20% of that sport's regular and postseason contests. The exclusions shall be consecutive starting with the first scheduled event after the violation has occurred. Exclusions will carry over to the next season the student-athlete participates in, should the penalty not be completed during the initial season of ineligibility.

Second Violation

Using the maximum number of regular season contests allowed by the MHSAA in each sport as a base by which to apply the rule, the student-athlete will be ineligible to participate in 50% of that sport's regular and postseason contests. The exclusion shall be consecutive starting with the first scheduled event after the violation has occurred. Exclusion will carry over to the next season the student-athlete participates in, should the penalty not be completed during the initial season of ineligibility.

Third Violation

Substance abuse: The student-athlete will lose his/her eligibility for one year from the date of the violation and will be required to seek drug/alcohol counseling and may be randomly tested during his/her suspension. The exclusion shall be consecutive starting with the first scheduled event after the violation has occurred. Exclusion will carry over to the next season the student-athlete participates in, should the penalty not be completed during the initial season of ineligibility. Involvement with the law: Suspension from all athletic participation for the remainder of the athletes career at Three Rivers High School.

The administration reserves the right to deal with each offense on an individual basis, and before imposing consequences, the administration shall consider, without limitation, the actual misconduct, the extent of the student's individual involvement.

MHSAA MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS FOR PARTICIPATION

Student athletes must comply with MHSAA's minimum requirements for participation.

1. The student must have passed at 66% of a full credit load potential for a full-time student. 66% at Three Rivers High School would be passing 4 out of 6 classes from the previous semester. **At Three Rivers, a student can't receive more than one "E" during the season. Weekly (every Thursday) monitoring by the Athletic Department will be required to make sure eligibility requirements are met. Students will receive a "probation" week before becoming ineligible. Students on probation/ineligible covers the following Monday – Saturday after each check.**
2. - If a student decides to quit a team, s/he will not be able to participate in any athletic sponsored out of season activities, until the current season is over.
3. - The student must be enrolled in school on or before the 4th Friday after Labor Day of the present semester or 4th Friday of February of the second semester.
4. - The student must be under nineteen (19) years of age unless he/she is nineteen (19) on or after September 1.
5. - The student must have a physical examination confirming that he/she is physically able to participate in competitive sports. Physical examinations for the current year are accepted if they were given after **April 15** of the previous school year.
6. - The student must not participate in more than eight (8) semesters of sports and must be enrolled full time in high school at the time of his participation.
7. - The student must be an undergraduate student.
8. - The student must be a bona fide member of the school district in which he/she participates with the exception of a Co-Operative Agreement between schools.
9. - The student must not accept any compensation for playing sports at any time of the year. This will result in making the student ineligible for the minimum of one (1) year and could result in making him/her ineligible for his/her whole school career.

CONCUSSION PROTOCOL

The District will comply with the concussion protocol identified by MHSAA.

THREE RIVERS ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT DUAL SPORT PARTICIPATION

Rationale

Three Rivers High School seeks to provide quality-co-curricular athletic opportunities for its students. Some students have talents and abilities which they have a desire to contribute to more than one team in a particular season and both of these teams can benefit. Some activities may struggle with low numbers and this can boost participation in those sports.

Students Participating in Two Activities During the Same Season

1. - Students wishing to participate in 2 sports during the same season will need to obtain a request form from the Athletic Department and follow the guidelines involving dual sports participation.
2. - Students must receive permission from both coaches to participate in both sports during the same season. The Athletic Director has sole authority to grant or deny the student's request to participate in both sports during the same season.
3. - Students are not allowed to participate in "open gym" as well as other non-school competition in another sport, on the same day they are participating in a school sponsored sports activity, without the permission of the head coach of the sport in which they are currently participating.

Rules of Dual-Sports Participation

1. - A student who wishes to participate in 2 sports during the same season must designate a primary sport before the beginning of the first appointed date of practice set by the MHSAA for the season of participation.
2. - A primary sport is defined as the sport which takes precedence over another sport in the event there is a conflict of schedule or any other matter that could lead to a conflict. The student must adhere to the primary sport in the event of any and all conflicts of schedule. If one sport has a contest and the other has practice, the contest will take precedence.
3. - The student must practice in both sports but the amount of practice time must meet the agreed requirements of the head coaches of those sports involved.
4. - Approval may be denied because of academic concerns at any time during the sport season at the sole discretion of the Athletic Director. In that event, the student will participate in the PRIMARY sport only.

THREE RIVERS ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT REQUEST FOR DUAL SPORT PARTICIPATION

It is the intention of the athlete named below to participate in 2 sports during the same season. In order for this to occur, the following stipulations must be met in Accordance with the Three Rivers Athletic Policy on Dual Sports Participation.

1. - The process must be initiated by a scheduled conference between the 2 coaches involved.
2. - The athlete must declare which sport is primary and secondary for participation purposes.
3. - Approval may be denied at any time during the sport season for any reason, including academic concerns. The athlete then will participate in the primary sport ONLY.
4. - Practice and game/meet requirements must be established prior to the first contest. Contests take precedence over practice, and the primary sport contests take precedence over secondary sports contests. This should be detailed in writing below after a conference has occurred between the 2 coaches involved and the athlete.
5. - The Athletic Director retains sole discretion to grant or deny this request for dual sport participation.

Name of Athlete: _____

Primary Sport: _____

Secondary Sport: _____

Season: Fall Winter Spring (circle one)

Practice and Game/Meet Requirements (attachment):

Additional Stipulations:

Signatures:

Signature of Athlete -

Date

Signature of Parent/Guardian

Date

Signature of Primary Coach -

Date

Signature of Secondary Coach

Date

Signature of Athlete Director -

Date

AWARDS -

First Freshman Award:	Certificate/Numerals
All other Freshman Awards:	Certificate
First Junior Varsity Award:	Reserved Letter
All other Junior Varsity Awards:	Certificate
First Varsity Award:	Varsity Letter, Certificate, Insert
First Varsity Award other sport:	Certificate, Insert
Second Varsity Award <i>(same sport)</i> :	Certificate
Third Varsity Award <i>(same sport)</i> :	Plaque
Fourth Varsity Award <i>(same sport)</i> :	Plaque
Triple Threat Award:	Plaque

Presented to senior athletes who have taken part in the athletic program each season for four years (sub-varsity and varsity level). This award will be presented at Senior Honors Night.

THREE RIVERS COMMUNITY SCHOOLS DEPARTMENT OF ATHLETICS ATHLETIC RESPONSIBILITY ACKNOWLEDGMENT

(Code of Ethics/Sportsmanship form) -

As a Three Rivers Community Schools student participating voluntarily in interscholastic athletics, I understand and agree that throughout my athletic career at both Three Rivers Middle School and Three Rivers High School:

1. - I will abide by the law, Board Policy, the Student Handbook, the Athletic Handbook, all team rules, and all other rules/regulations applicable to the sport.
2. - I will conduct myself in an exemplary manner that will not bring discredit to me, my family, my team, the school, or my community.
3. - I will be responsible for all athletic equipment issued to me throughout the season.
4. - I will return all athletic equipment at the conclusion of the season, and will pay the current replacement cost for any of the equipment not returned by me at the end of the season.

Potential Dangers in Athletic Participation:

Parents and student-athletes should fully understand and appreciate the risk of serious personal injury associated with participation in the educational sports program provided by Three Rivers Community Schools. Athletic activities can be hazardous and taking part in such activities requires a calculated risk taken by the student-athlete. Reducing injuries to a minimum continues to be a goal of the District. This can be accomplished through proper training and weight lifting. Nevertheless, participation in school athletics involves flying objects and the swift movement of bodies. Collisions are frequently unavoidable. It is important that student-athletes and parents/guardians understand that there are risks incurred by participating in athletics.