



Rockford Rockets

Activities Handbook

Welcome to the Rockets family of activities! We are proud to provide our students with many opportunities to expand their lifelong learning beyond the classroom through Athletics, Clubs and the Fine Arts. It is our sincere hope that each student will develop the skills necessary to become a successful, ethical, moral and holistically healthy adult.

Statistical studies exist that clearly conclude that students who are involved in activities are more successful in school than those who are not. These studies have been tracked by the Minnesota State High School League (MSHSL) for many years and the trends haven't changed.

The purpose of the Rocket Activities Handbook is to help you navigate and answer potential questions that may arise around the activity you have decided to participate in. Additionally, you will find much information about the many opportunities in our co-curricular programs.

Best of luck with your season and make it one to remember and one our school can be proud of!

GO Rockets!!!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Daniel Pratt". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looped initial "D".

Dan Pratt
Activities Director
Rockford Area Schools

2017-18 Fee Schedule

Board Approved (6/20/2016)

Fee Summary

Rockford Middle/High School Instrument Rental.....	\$60.00
(Does not include percussion)	
RMS-CES Sports	\$110.00
RHS Sports	\$150.00
RMS-CES Co- Curricular	\$65.00
RHS Co-Curricular	\$95.00
Family Maximum:	\$750.00
Trap Shooting: (excluded family max)	\$175.00

Event Season Passes

(Purchased through the Activities Office)

Sr Citizen Annual Pass-age 65 and out of district	\$30.00
Sr Citizen Annual Pass-age 65 and in district.....	Complimentary
Student Annual Pass (Student ID will be punched)	\$30.00
Adult Annual Pass.....	\$75.00
Family Annual Pass	\$220.00

VISION

Students at Rockford Area Schools experience an enjoyable environment of a wide array of extra-curricular activities promoting pride, character and sportsmanship that enhances the development of personal and team excellence.

Mission Statement

Rockford Area School Activities, under the direction of competent, caring professionals, provides successful, quality experiences in an enjoyable environment for students by offering a wide range of programs to attract many students, promoting positive school and community pride, developing strong, positive character, developing sportsmanship, and setting expectations for individual and team excellence.

Beliefs

We believe that...

- Arts and activities contribute to the lifelong development of the whole student; intellectual, physical, social, and emotional.
- Arts and activities are an integral component of a comprehensive education.
- Arts and activities enhance other curricular and co-curricular activities.
- Arts and activities enable students to develop their creative potential.
- We have a commitment to look beyond a student's performance in an activity as the end goal.
- We have a commitment to teach students skills to assist their overall development as young adults.
- **Participation in school athletic programs is a privilege and not a right.**
- Sportsmanship needs to have a constant presence in all school-based athletic/activity programs.
- Ethical behavior, dignity and respect are expected and non-negotiable.
- Academic priorities must come before participation in extracurricular activities.
- Positive role models and an active involvement in a student's life by parents and others are critical to student success.
- The success of the team is more important than individual honors.
- Compliance with school, community and Minnesota State High School League (MSHSL) rules is essential for all activity participants.

Introduction to the Program

Rockford Area Schools (RAS) provides extracurricular activity opportunities for its students. Athletics and Fine Arts for students in grades 7-12 follow the guidelines set forth by the Minnesota State High School League (MSHSL). All other extracurricular activities are governed through the Activities Department and approved by the Board of Education for District 883.

Statement of Beliefs on Multiple Activity Participants

Participation in multiple extra-curricular activities can contribute to a more complete and well-rounded education of the whole student. Students who choose to participate in multiple activities should expect to make some additional sacrifices that students in only one activity may not have to make. Students should not use participation in one activity as an excuse to perform inadequately in another activity.

Coaches, Activities Director and advisors should avoid penalizing students who participate conscientiously in multiple activities. Coaches, Activities Director, advisors, and parents should help students make responsible time management and planning decisions, especially with regard to curricular work. From the onset, a student should inform the applicable coaches, directors, advisors of the student's participation in multiple activities and any known or potential conflicts or issues which may arise by virtue of participating in the multiple activities. Coaches, Activities Director, and advisors should communicate with each other and agree upon a plan proactively to reduce the conflicts, issues and inevitable stress and strain, both physically and otherwise, on students who choose to participate in multiple activities. One of the coaches, directors, or advisors should inform the student of the agreed upon plan to reduce the conflicts, issues, stress and strain from participating in the multiple activities.

Students should advise their parents about the agreed upon plan to manage the multiple activities and continue to inform their parents of any conflicts or issues which may arise in the implementation of the plan.

As a general rule, contests and performances should take priority over practices and rehearsals. Reasonable exceptions may be made through communication between coaches, directors and advisors, depending on a student's role and importance to other students involved in an activity.

STUDENT ATHLETICS

Participation in Athletics---Sportsmanship

Rockford Area Schools has established a comprehensive program of student activities. Student participation in a variety of activities should be encouraged. Each participant on an athletic team must accept the responsibility of representing Rockford Area Schools in the best possible way personally, academically, and in a good sportsmanlike manner. Each student is given an opportunity, if eligible, to participate on any team or squad. Continued participation depends upon academic success and the coach's or advisor's perception of the individual's cooperative attitude toward the rules and regulations governing participation. Frequent displays of an uncooperative attitude, including unexcused absences from classes, practices, meets and contests, or displays of unsportsmanlike conduct may result in removal from the team. All rules and regulations of the Minnesota State High School League concerning academic eligibility, prohibitive use of drugs and tobacco are followed and enforced.

Guidelines for Sportsmanship

Coaches

- Follow the rules of the sport during the progress of the contest.
- Accept the decisions of contest officials.
- Avoid offensive gestures or language.
- Display modesty in victory and graciousness in defeat.
- Avoid criticism of game officials.
- Teach sportsmanship and reward/acknowledge players that display good sportsmanship.
- Provide instruction, training and motivation without putdowns and/or the use of abusive language.
- Educate and sensitize themselves to cultural differences, gender equity and disability issues.

Student Athletes

- Show respect at all times for coaches, opponents and game officials.
- Accept the decisions of contest officials.
- Avoid offensive gestures or language.
- Display modesty in victory and graciousness in defeat.
- Follow the rules of the game.
- Show respect for property and equipment.

Spectators

- Avoid criticism of game officials and sideline coaching which may sidetrack the athletes from their performance.
- Stay off the playing area.
- Show respect for property and equipment.

Guidelines for Student Athletics

We encourage our parents, participants and advisors/coaches to recognize that student activities require a spirit of cooperation and mutual understanding as well as an appreciation for the experience offered. For these programs the following guidelines have been developed:

Guidelines for Students

1. Be aware of the time demands and commitments of the activity and accept the responsibility for being prompt and in regular attendance at practices and games.
2. Academics and family take priority over extracurricular activities.
3. Demonstrate a sincere interest and consistent effort to improve skills commensurate with ability.
4. Demonstrate an attitude of cooperation and concern for the total group or team.

5. Take proper care of and have respect for equipment and school property used in the activity.
6. Become familiar with MSHSL and Rockford Area Schools rules and regulations governing behavior of extracurricular participants and be willing to support and obey such rules, including total abstinence from the use of illegal substances.
7. Be aware that absence from practices or games, whether school is in session or not, may result in less playing time.
8. Be aware that playing time is a reward. Coaches strive for maximum participation. The coach solely determines playing time. Many factors are used to determine playing time, e.g., hard work, dedication, talent, opponents' strengths, teamwork, and sportsmanship. The Activities Director may regulate squad size. It is important to recognize one's ability and work to improve.

Guidelines for Parents

1. Support your student as a member of a team.
2. Model positive behavior that you would like your student to exhibit.
3. Sportsmanship is contagious, please model it.
4. Address athletes, coaches, administrators, officials and other fans appropriately.
5. Playing time is a reward based on a number of factors. Playing time is not guaranteed.
6. Employ the 24-hour rule, do not talk to a coach about a potentially hot team issue before or after a game.

Guidelines for Coaches

1. Understand that success is not measured in wins or losses, rather by the growth of life skills in the student.
2. Academics and family take priority over extracurricular activities.
3. Model positive behavior that you would like your team or group to exhibit.
4. Utilize constructive criticism; always give an attainable, tangible outcome to a desired behavior.

Athletic / Activities Policies

Student Participation and Eligibility Requirements

In order to participate in athletic activities the student must:

1. Have on file in the Activities office a physical examination form signed by a physician within the last three years.
2. Yearly read and sign the MSHSL Athletic Eligibility Brochure. The signature page is kept on file in the Activities Director's Office.
3. Fees must be paid or a payment plan work out with the Activities Director.
STUDENTS MAY NOT PRACTICE OR PLAY UNLESS THESE THREE ITEMS ARE TURNED IN!!!
4. Transfer students and international students should meet with the Activities Director to determine eligibility status.

Student Attendance Policies

In order to participate in athletic practice or contest during a school day or during the evening of the school day, the student must be in attendance half of the school day. Exceptions to this policy will be:

1. Previous school permission to miss school through an administratively approved absence.
2. Other exceptions to this policy shall be considered only upon the advice and consent of the Superintendent, Principal and/or Activities Director.

NOTE: For full or half-day truancy or chronic lateness, there will be no participation in the next contest.

Athletic Attendance Policy

1. Rockford Area Schools and its employees will not be responsible for any student not attending athletic practice at the appropriate time and place.
2. Practices start promptly at a time determined by the coach. All players are expected to be at practice and ready to go.
3. Attendance at practice and games is mandatory. All players who commit to a team are expected to be at practice daily.
 - a. In order to be excused from a practice or a game, it must be a legitimate absence, e.g., academic obligation, illness from school, family obligation, doctor's appointment made before the season began.
 - b. Whenever possible it is the responsibility of the student to contact the coach if he/she will miss any part of practice before the absence.

Use of Equipment

1. All uniforms, equipment, and supplies are the property of Rockford Area Schools and are to be checked out and in with the coach according to a schedule established by the coaching staff.
2. All uniforms/equipment are to be returned to Rockford Area Schools at the completion of the season. Uniforms or equipment not turned in within 10 days of the completion of a season or 5 days upon withdrawal or dismissal from a team will be billed to the student's family.
3. Game and practice uniforms are to be worn for those purposes only and should not be worn for physical education uniform or for casual.
4. No one will be allowed to commence practice in a sport until he/she is cleared by the Activities Department.

Athletic Participation Fee Information

1. There will be fees for all athletic participation. Please note that all Fees are approved by the School Board
2. The fee is to be paid before the start of practice. Fees are paid by logging into your Infinite Campus Parent Portal. If you do not have a parent portal one can be obtained in any of the three school offices. Contact the activities office directly for more information.

3. Student will not be turned away because of family's financial hardship, contact the Activities Director directly to work out a plan, do not contact your child's coach.
4. Payment of fees is **not** to be given to a coach or any other school personnel.
5. Refund Policies:
 - a. A full refund will be given if a student quits the team within 2 weeks of the start date.
 - b. No refunds are given for students who quit the team after 2 weeks of the start date.
 - c. There will be refunds given to those students who terminate participation in an activity due to injury, illness, or those not making the team. The amount of the refund will be according to the following time schedule.
 - i. Up to the first public performance—full refund.
 - ii. First performance through midpoint—half refund.
 - iii. Midpoint through season's end—no refund.
 - d. No refunds will be given without verification in writing by the Activities Director.
 - e. Any refunds of participation fees must be requested through the Activities Director by the participant within 2 weeks of the student's last practice or contest.
 - f. Students that are dismissed from participation due to disciplinary issues will not receive refunds.

Athletic Scholastic Eligibility Requirements

Article I, Section 10, of the Minnesota State High School League bylaws states that in order to maintain scholastic eligibility a student is to be making satisfactory progress as defined by Rockford Area Schools and staff. In activities with cooperative agreements, the scholastics eligibility is defined by the student's home school.

1. Eligible Status Students must be making satisfactory progress towards meeting the school's requirements for graduation.
 - a. All students participating in Minnesota State High School League (MSHSL) activities are governed by MSHSL rules and regulations.
 - b. Students who receive a failing grade at the end of any term that proceeds their participation will be required to sit out two weeks or two contest whichever is longer. Student will be required to submit a weekly monitoring sheet signed by each of his/her teachers. Coaching staff and AD will determine students eligibility on a weekly basis based on monitoring sheets.
 - c. As long as sufficient effort and progress, as determined by Rockford Area Schools, is being realized, the student may participate in extracurricular activities.
 - d. By definition extracurricular activities includes all school sponsored events and athletics, fee based or otherwise.

Additionally, weekly status reports will be given to the Activities Director. Those students in poor academic standing or with excessive behavioral issues will be held out of practice and competition the following week. There is no appeal.

2. Special Education Students
 - a. For special education students the Individualized Education Plan (IEP) will determine eligibility of the student.
3. Transfer Students
 - a. Prior to participation a transcript and transfer eligibility form must be on file in the Activity Office. It is the student athlete's responsibility to complete and turn in the forms. Please see the Activities Director if you are a transfer student.
4. International Students
 - a. Prior to participation a transcript and transfer eligibility form must be on file in the Activity Office. It is the student athlete's responsibility to complete and turn in the forms. Please see the Activities Director if you are an international student.

Participation Eligibility Requirements

Rockford Area Schools will follow all MSHSL bylaws in regard to athletic eligibility. Student eligibility is defined in the MSHSL handbook in bylaws 100.00 and 200.00. These policies include, but are not

limited to age, attendance, credit requirements, enrollment, grade level eligibility, graduates, physical examinations, scholastic eligibility, seasons of participation, semesters enrolled, transfer and residence, amateur status, assault, camps and clinics, awards, chemical eligibility, good standing,

National/Olympic programs, non-school competition and training, and harassment/violence/hazing.

Athletes and parents should pay particular attention to the following policies:

1. Student athletes who violate school policy or otherwise engage in conduct detrimental to the team, school, or community shall be disciplined in an appropriate manner including possible suspension from the team.
2. Student athletes who violate the MSHSL and/or Rockford Area Schools guidelines regarding any bylaws or policies and penalties shall be disciplined in accordance with those guidelines regarding loss of participation.
3. Rockford Area Schools follows the guidelines set by the Minnesota State High School League. The student will meet with the Activities Director and the Principal before continued participation is allowed.

Contact the Activities Director if you have any questions regarding eligibility requirements.

Chemical Violations and Penalties

Rockford Area Schools will follow all MSHSL bylaws in regard to chemical violations and penalties. These policies are defined in the MSHSL handbook in bylaw 200.00. Athletes and parents should be particularly aware of the following minimum violation penalty guidelines:

Mood Altering Chemicals

A. Bylaw

Twelve (12) months of the year, a student shall not at any time, regardless of the quantity: (1) use or consume, have in possession a beverage containing alcohol; (2) use or consume, have in possession tobacco; or, (3) use or consume, have in possession, buy, sell, or give away any other controlled substance or drug paraphernalia.

- i. The bylaw applies continuously from the first signing of the Student Eligibility Brochure.
- ii. It is not a violation for a student to be in possession of a controlled substance specifically prescribed for the student's own use by his/her doctor.

B. Penalty:

- i. **First Violation:** After confirmation of the first violation, the student shall lose eligibility for the next two (2) consecutive interscholastic contests or two (2) weeks of a season in which the student is a participant, whichever is greater. No exception is permitted for a student who becomes a participant in a treatment program.
- ii. **Second Violation:** After confirmation of the second violation, the student shall lose eligibility for the next six (6) consecutive interscholastic contests in which the student is a participant or three (3) weeks, whichever is greater. No exception is permitted for a student who becomes a participant in a treatment program.
- iii. **Third and Subsequent Violations:** After confirmation of the third or subsequent violations, the student shall lose eligibility for the next twelve (12) consecutive interscholastic contests in which the student is a participant or four (4) weeks, whichever is greater. If after the third or subsequent violations, the student has been assessed to be chemically dependent and the student on his/her own volition becomes a participant in a chemical dependency program or treatment program, then the student may be certified for reinstatement in MSHSL activities after a minimum period of six (6) weeks. Such certification must be issued by the director or a counselor of a chemical dependency treatment center.

- iv. Consecutive Penalties: Penalties shall be consecutive beginning with the student's first participation in a League activity and continuing through the student's high school career.
- v. Denial Disqualification: A student shall be disqualified from all inter-scholastic athletics for nine (9) additional weeks beyond the student's original period of ineligibility when the student denies violation of the rule, is allowed to participate and then is subsequently found guilty of the violation.

Contact the Activities Director if you have any questions regarding chemical violations and penalties.

Captains

Any harassment, *hazing, (as defined in the General Rules of the MSHSL) or chemical violation (MSHSL Bylaw 205) after a student is named captain of a team or named to a position of official leadership within an extra-curricular activity, will result in the loss of leadership position for the season, or for the first season for which the student has been selected as a leader. A student with two violations will not be eligible for any extra-curricular leadership position for the duration of the high school career. An athlete shall be suspended from a position of official leadership upon confirmation that he/she has been formally charged with a criminal offense. Criminal offense includes misdemeanor and felony offenses as defined under Minnesota State Law. The suspension shall be in effect until there is confirmation of the resolution of the charge against the captain.

*Hazing activities of any type are prohibited at all times. This policy applies to behavior that occurs on or off school property, during or after regular school hours, and applies to the weekends and during the summer months. Hazing, by its very nature, often occurs off school grounds, after school hours, on non-school days, and during summer months. Students are advised that hazing is prohibited whenever and wherever it occurs.

Athletic Offerings

The following Athletic programs are generally offered on a seasonal basis. Fees apply to each activity. Not all athletics are sponsored by the MSHSL. Students are encouraged to participate in more than one activity per year. However, students may not participate in more than four athletic teams in one school year.

1. Fall
 - a. Boys Soccer
 - b. Girls Soccer
 - c. Volleyball
 - d. Football
 - e. Cheerleading
 - f. Cross Country
2. Winter
 - a. Boys Basketball
 - b. Girls Basketball
 - c. Boys Hockey (co-op w/Delano)
 - d. Girls Hockey (co-op w/Delano)
 - e. Dance
 - f. Wrestling
 - g. Gymnastics
 - h. Cheerleading
3. Spring
 - a. Boys Track and Field
 - b. Girls Track and Field
 - c. Boys Lacrosse (co-op w/Delano)
 - d. Girls Lacrosse (co-op w/Delano)
 - e. Baseball
 - f. Softball
 - g. Girls Golf
 - h. Boys Golf
 - i. Trap Shooting

Guidelines for Athletics by Grade Level

Grades 7-8 (Middle School)

1. The goal of Middle School athletics is to provide participation opportunities for all students.
2. Coaches will ensure that all participants are afforded playing time, but not necessarily equal time, provided that the student has been a faithful participant in practice.
3. Middle School athletes may participate on varsity teams.
4. Middle School athletes may be dismissed for early contests on a limited basis.

Grades 9-12 (High School)

1. All students will be afforded the opportunity to participate in interscholastic athletics.
2. Playing time is a reward. The coach determines playing time in interscholastic contests. Coaches consider many factors, e.g., hard work, dedication, talent, opponents' strengths, teamwork and spirit, and sportsmanship.
3. Athletes may be excused from class for conference, section, and state championship events.
4. All interscholastic athletics will be conducted in accordance with MSHSL rules and regulations. A copy of the rules and regulations is on file in the Activities office. Rockford Area Schools requires additional rules and regulations related to school behavior, academic performance and chemical/alcohol use.
5. When squads return late during the week, the student is expected in school the next morning for first period class.
6. When a team participates in MSHSL championship play, all members of the team will be excused from school.

Appendix I

Athletic Commitment



Rockford Area Schools Athletic Commitment

Individual and team success in sports results from commitment. The extent to which young athletes are able to make such commitments reflects their maturity as well as their dedication to family, friends, school, and team. Your coach already has made a similar kind of commitment. For these reasons, we ask you to read and agree to the following:

As an athlete in my school, I promise:

- To be a worthy representative of my teammates and coaches, abiding by school and community expectations and reflecting my team's values of commitment and hard work.
- To reflect the knowledge that a commitment to victory is nothing without the commitment to hard work in practice.
- To attend every practice unless excused by my coach.
- To understand that my future as a responsible adult relates more to my academic than my athletic activities.
- To find the time to satisfy my family relationships and responsibilities
- To accept the responsibilities of team membership: cooperation, support of my teammates, share responsibilities, positive interaction, and mutual respect.

Cooperation among coaches, athletes, parents, and school personnel is essential if students are to realize the values of athletic participation. Like coaches and athletes, parents must make commitments to the athletic program to assure such cooperation. We ask that you read the following and, as needed, discuss your reactions with your child's coach or the school's Activities Director.

As the parent of an athlete in this school, I promise:

- To provide the coach with any information on physical limitations.
- To work closely with all school personnel to assure an appropriate academic as well as athletic experience for my child.
- To assure that my child will attend all scheduled practices and athletic contests.
- To acknowledge the ultimate authority of the coach to determine strategy and player selection.
- To promote mature behavior from students and parents during athletic contests.