

# Varsity Student Athlete Handbook

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*with input from coaching staff*

*and reviewed by Mrs. DeFields: Principal*

*(changes from previous school year hi-lighted in yellow)*

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## **Varsity Student Athlete Handbook**

The Arts Academy at Benjamin Rush is a School District of Philadelphia Public High School competing simultaneously in the Philadelphia Public League and District XII of the Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association (PIAA). Rush Arts, as the school is commonly referred, currently have Seven Varsity Sports and one Junior Varsity sport. This handbook is meant to further understand the policies related to Interscholastic Athletics for student athletes and their families.

All coaches must adhere to this handbook as well as current PIAA, School District of Philadelphia and sports specific National Federation of High School Sports (NFHS) rules, regulations and policies. Issues should be discussed between the player and/or parent/guardian and the coach. Any Parents/Guardians who contact Principal will be referred to this manual and Athletic Director for follow up. Athletic Director in most cases, will encourage communication between parents/guardians, player and coach.

This handbook, in pdf form, is made available via the school's main website. A link to the file will be sent to parents/guardians and student athletes via email. When changes are made to this document mid-season and approved by the Principal, updates will be sent to current student athletes. A paper copy is available in the Athletic Director's office and will be copied upon request.

### **Vision:**

Athletics are to be promoted as a tool to enhance a student's wellness through sports (physical health, intellectual health, social health, emotional health and spiritual health as in morals/values.) The role of a coach is that of a teacher first; instructing in all aspects of development and competition including but not limited to technical skill, tactical skill, fitness, and character as it relates to sports. By the coach teaching and developing the sport skills of the player as an individual and the team as a whole, it is the hope of our department that students who are selected for teams gain a life-long appreciation for the sport and can apply key fundamentals concerning effort, achievement, sportsmanship, character, determination, and at times failure, to all aspects of life thus, overcoming adversity and clinging to successes earned.

### **General information:**

**Team Colors:** Purple, Black, White

**Team Mascot:** Knights

#### **Home locations:**

**Volleyball, Basketball** = School gym =11081 Knights Road, 19154

**Soccer/Baseball/Softball** = Academy Sports Association =

“front” entrance: Academy and Torrey, 19154

“back” entrance: 3337 Byberry Road 19154

Drive way entrance just East of Rite Aid

## **Communication and websites/apps:**

The majority of communication with parents/guardians will be done using School District staff email OR the Official Sports Communication app as determined by the School District of Philadelphia's Office of Athletics. In addition, each team has a "max preps" webpage listing schedule, results, and roster. Some teams create their own website or google classroom page. Regular emails and/or postings are encouraged. Parents/Guardians should make a note to regularly check websites and/or emails for updated information.

The School District of Philadelphia requires that any email sent to students from coaches must be sent to School District of Philadelphia Student email ([studentid#@philasd.org](mailto:studentid#@philasd.org)). This is also the email students must use for their username in the sports communication app. Parents/Guardians may use any email they choose. For students who used the app in the 2017-2018 school year during the pilot program, they have up to one week after the start of their next season to change their personal email to their school district assigned email. For students NEW to the district, they may use a personal email up until the first day of school. Once their id is assigned, they must change their email in the sports communication app.

The School's main website, <https://rush.philasd.org>, also contains an athletic section that will directly link to each team's individual page, provide the school's full athletic calendar, forms, and this handbook. The main website also contains team history, education for student-athletes and parents including cardiac arrest, concussions, social media, NCAA compliance and additional helpful information.

## **PERMISSION:**

### **PIAA CIPPE:**

In order to be permitted to try out for a Varsity Sport, the official CIPPE form from the PIAA must be filled out. **NO OTHER FORM** may substitute for the CIPPE despite what some medical offices will say. The CIPPE, basically is a 6 page packet providing both parental permission, student agreement, and a medical physical.

Paperwork for each school year must be dated after May 31<sup>st</sup> of the prior school year in order to be compliant. Doctors should use a STAMP and include their medical ID # or the paperwork can be rejected. Doctors may choose to use information from a physical prior to 5/31 to complete the forms however, the date on the form should be the date it was signed.

Example: Joey wants a physical filled out for basketball October 17<sup>th</sup> 2017 but he's not due for another physical until December. The family's insurance will not pay for another physical and they do not want to pay for a new one. The doctor may fill out form on October 17<sup>th</sup> SIGN THAT DATE on page 6 along with a STAMP, then place a note "with information from physical dated December 20<sup>th</sup> 2016". Physicals with notes like this WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED without a stamp.

### **EH 80:**

The EH 80 is a School District mandated 1 page paper required to be filled out whenever a student takes a trip. School Athletic Trips are trips. Paper must be completed prior to first game. If the form is not submitted to coach AND athletic director by first game, the student may not travel to any game or contest. By School District Policy, this includes HOME GAMES. Teams that travel outside of the city for games need and additional EH-80 form filled out.

### **Additional forms:**

Additional forms requested by coach, school or school district, will be made available as soon as possible

## **ELIGIBILITY:**

All students participating in Interscholastic Athletics must meet the Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association eligibility requirements. The requirements listed below are the PIAA eligibility requirements.

**A.** PIAA CIPPE must be submitted prior to any practice including tryouts. All additional required forms must be submitted before first contest.

**B.** Student Athletes must have passed at least four full-credit subjects or the equivalent during the previous grading period, except that eligibility for the first grading period is based on your final grades for the preceding school year (does not apply to any first year 9<sup>th</sup> graders).

If a student athlete fails to meet this requirement, they will lose eligibility for 15 school days of the next grading period, beginning on the first day report cards are issued. Students must be certified as Passing before Eligibility is restored.

**C.** Student athletes must be passing at least four full-credit subjects or the equivalent as of each Friday during the grading period. If a student athlete fails to meet this requirement, they will lose their eligibility from the following Sunday through the Saturday immediately following the next Friday as of which you meet this requirement.

**D.** In the event that a student athlete is meeting the PIAA eligibility requirement however, has other full credit failing grades, that student will be placed on academic probation. The student athlete should be notified and it is their responsibility to make up missed work. (ex. A student has 6 full credit courses with 2 F's and 4 passing grades. They are eligible to play but are on academic probation).

**RUSH ARTS ADDITION to item D:** Students who are failing a class or classes for more than one week but who are eligible under the terms listed in items B and C above, must conference with their teachers on make-up work to bring their grade to passing.

Student athletes are responsible for making up all missed work and turning in home based assignments due on days they will not be in class due to athletic contests on the day they are due based on the teacher's agreed upon accommodation.

**E.** Students who fail a class on a report card but otherwise meet the eligibility criteria, must adhere to their credit recovery program as mandated by school policy. The student athlete must be excused from practices for tutoring. Conversely, with the Principal's permission, student-athletes must be excused from attendance from tutoring for official games/contests.

It is the Principal's discretion if a student who failed a course for a report card may continue to participate in any athletic program at the school

**F.** In most cases, students may only participate for 4 years beginning at the start of 9<sup>th</sup> grade

**G.** A student athlete may not have reached their 20<sup>th</sup> birthday before the end of 12<sup>th</sup> grade

**H.** If student-athletes are absent from school for 20 or more unexcused absences from school during a semester, the student athlete will lose their eligibility until they have been in attendance for a total of 45 school days following the 20<sup>th</sup> day of absence.

**I.** A Student-Athlete who transfers into Rush Arts after the start of 9<sup>th</sup> grade must sit out for 20 school days before playing in a contest. In addition, the Athletic Director must submit a transfer waiver to the school in which a student came.

## DAILY ATTENDANCE

In addition to the above Attendance policy, student-athletes MUST be in-attendance to participate in a game. This includes in attendance off-site. Lateness to school will be excused for appointment with an appropriate professional such as a medical doctor or counselor that could not be scheduled at another time. For other excused lateness, the students must be in by 10:00am. Extended excused lateness will be considered on a case by case basis by Principal or Principal Designee.

For students with un-excused lateness, student-athletes must be in school by the start of 2<sup>nd</sup> period. If a student-athlete has more than 5 un-excused lateness, the Principal Designee assigned to review lateness will inform the athletic director who will in turn inform the coach and conference with the student-athlete. A plan will be implemented to improve lateness and parental contact made.

If a student-athlete has 5 additional un-excused lateness following the conference, they will forfeit early dismissals for home games until they are in school for 10 consecutive days on time. In the event a student-athlete succeeds in completing the 10 day consequence period, each new un-excused lateness will prohibit early dismissal for the following home game. Chronic un-excused lateness that are greater than 10 may result in disciplinary action including suspension from team by Principal. Students who arrive late to school beyond the District's threshold for full day attendance, regardless if "excused" or not, will not be permitted to play. Students who attend school, are signed out for an appointment then are returned to school are considered "in-attendance" for athletic contests. In certain circumstances, students may be "returned to school off-site" by going directly to the playing venue.

**SPORTS and time frame:**

**VARSITY and JV sports hosted by RUSH ARTS**

<b>Fall Sports:</b>	Girls Volleyball Girls Soccer Boys (JV) Soccer
Sign ups =	May of the prior school year through first day of tryouts
Tryouts =	First week of Practice as dictated by PIAA Usually 2 <sup>nd</sup> or 3 <sup>rd</sup> week in August PIAA physical 1 <sup>st</sup> day of tryouts
<b>Winter Sports:</b>	Boys Basketball Girls Basketball Boys and Girls Bowling (not co-ed competition but considered one team)
Sign ups =	Begin in October and go through last Thursday in November prior to official tryout date
Tryouts =	First week of Practice as dictated by PIAA Usually 3 <sup>rd</sup> week in November
<b>Spring Sports:</b>	Boys Baseball Girls Softball
Sign ups =	Begin in January and go through last Thursday in February
Tryouts =	First week of practice as dictated by PIAA Usually 1 <sup>st</sup> week in March

**EXTRAMURAL/REGIONAL sports our Students may participate in**

**Rowing:** Hosted by Philadelphia City Rowing: Tryouts are in Early Winter and training/competition extends through spring

**Swimming:** Winter sport. Students may swim "Independent" at any Public League meet so long as they coordinate through Athletic Director. Most meets are at Fels High School.

Transportation to regional training centers is responsibility of the student athlete and his/her parents. The school will not permit early dismissal for practice. Early Dismissal for games must be no earlier than 1:15pm

**NOTE ON COOPERATIVE PARTNERSHIPS ON NEXT PAGE**

**Cooperative Partnership:**

PIAA rules permit a cooperative partnership with an additional host school for any sport not offered at the home school AS LONG as one of the two schools has an enrollment LESS THAN 300 students in a particular sex in grades 9-11.

**GIRLS SPORTS: As of 2018-2019 School year, the number of female students enrolled at Rush Arts does not allow for any cooperative partnerships.**

**BOYS SPORTS:** Boys at Rush Arts may participate in athletic programs at George Washington High School in sports Rush Arts DOES NOT offer.

Transportation to Washington is the responsibility of the student-athlete and his/her parents. The school will not permit early dismissal for practice. Early Dismissal for games must be no earlier than 1:15pm. Parents/Guardians do not need to sign their children out however, a copy of their game schedule MUST be given to the Athletic Director **PRIOR TO THEIR** first game

**Rush Arts is not a charter school and thus, No student may play any sport at any other school**

**SCHEDULE:**

The game schedule is mandated by the Office of Athletics based on PIAA requirements. Most of the time, students will be expected to play in 2 games per week. This is subject to change based on weather related re-scheduling

The general start time for games is 3:00-3:15pm. Playoff games may be scheduled in the evening. Some contests may be scheduled for evenings or weekends OR in the case of fall sports, in the morning during summer.

It is expected that Varsity athletes participate 5 days per week during the season. 1 Day may be assigned to students for tutoring/homework help, studying and catch up. Students may be excused from some practices due to school related official duties OR when speaking to a coach ahead of time.

In general, players who miss practice will not start in the following contest UNLESS excused for official school business and approved by coach. If players are not normally starters, they will not be "first subs". Players who leave early from practice may have playing time limited as well. **Players who miss practice due to official mandatory dress rehearsal CONFIRMED by communication from their art major teacher OR, miss practice due to obligatory (not voluntary) tutoring, grade recovery, or credit recovery, will be EXCUSED from practice and may still start the following game.** Players who voluntarily miss practice for work, other clubs, appointments that could've been made at other times, will not be excused from practice.



**Early Dismissal:** These times are approximate and may change based on start time of game

Home games: Volleyball, Basketball = 2:15  
Soccer, Softball, Baseball = 1:40pm leave school by 2:00pm

Away games: All Teams:  
1:45pm bus dismissal = 1:20 dismissal from class  
1:30pm bus dismissal = 1:10 dismissal from class

**Coaches will send a dismissal message via the official sports communication app**  
The Full schedule is also emailed to coaches with a weekly email reminder.  
Teachers may decide they do not need to see the dismissal message after the first couple of games.

Teachers **MUST** allow students to be dismissed and allow for arrangements to take tests missed prior to leaving school or at a time that is mutually conducive. However, it is the responsibility of the student-athlete to communicate this need as well as make up all missed work. If a teacher does not allow the student-athlete to leave, the student should tell the coach and athletic director. The student **SHOULD NOT** engage with teacher in an argument or walk out of the room.

If a student-athlete gives information about a test they took ahead of their peers, it could be a violation of the Code of Conduct for Academic honesty. Following due process, the student will be suspended from the team for 1-3 games (depending on extent of violation)

**Transportation:** School buses are provided for all away games with the exception of games that are at local schools on half days or evenings (Northeast High school for example) **OR required contests on weekends**

On some occasions, due to location proximity to Rush, teams will opt out of return school buses for away games and will be dismissed from fields

As per School District Policy, Students **ARE** permitted to leave away game locations and travel directly home following completion of the contest

Soccer, Softball and Baseball home games are walked to by the student athletes  
They may choose to take Septa if they wish

Students who drive may use their own car to attend practice and away games  
Students **MAY NOT** drive other students from school to away contests.

## TRYOUTS:

As the school fields only one team per sport, all interested students must try out to play.

Coaches must keep the minimum number of participants per sport but do not need to keep more.

### **Signing up DOES NOT guarantee a spot on the team.**

It is a privilege to play a high school sport not a right. Criteria for selection is individualized for each team however, includes technical skill in the specific sport, ability to follow directions, commitment, conduct, eligibility, and availability.

To ensure maximum skill level of teams, experienced players who currently play on club teams/programs in the sport but who can also fully commit as much as other students trying out for a school team will be given preference over new, beginner potential student athletes.

Tryout information including assessment format (observation, rubric, specific skills or qualities being look at) should be communicated to students. Written notification via email is preferred however, verbal communication at "open" gym or during first day of tryouts is permitted.

It is reiterated that no student may tryout without the proper completed PIAA paperwork. There will be a standard due date for all paperwork the first day of practice in the summer or the Thursday prior to the first day of official practice for winter and spring sports.. Students who do not have their paperwork in on time may be excluded from tryouts. Coaches may agree to an extension but are not required to grant an extension.

## **Making a team:**

Once a student is selected for or "makes" a team, it is expected they continue to meet all eligibility requirements. In addition, a coach should give a written letter to the students concerning not only eligibility, but specific coach created expectations and requirements for their team. **This letter may be via handout or email. If via email, parents/guardians should be Cc'd in the communication.**

Students who fail to adhere to team guidelines, can be "benched" or suspended from the team for 1 game per coach decision. Subsequent violations could result in the student being removed from the team.

Expectations shall follow the School District of Philadelphia, PIAA, and NFHS general guidelines.

## **Minimum Number of Participants:**

**Volleyball and Basketball = 12**

**Bowling = 5 Boys and 5 Girls (max = 7 boys and 7 girls)**

**Baseball, Softball and Soccer = 16**

Coaches may choose to keep more players if they wish but do not have to. Some sports have a maximum number of players that can be kept per School District guidelines

To the extent possible based on resources, a limited number of players who just "missed the cut" and additional beginner or lower level players who otherwise would be "cut" from the team during tryouts, will be permitted to play on a "practice squad" should they agree to terms. **Terms may include just practicing with the team OR attending games and serving as helpers/equipment managers. Practice squad players might not ever get into a game/match and are on the team to develop their personal skill and be part of all practices in whatever way the coaches see fit.**

## **Playing time:**

Being selected on a team roster does not guarantee playing time. The primary goal of any team at Rush Arts is to teach and develop the sport skills of the player as an individual and the team as a whole. However, it is a fine balance between inclusion in athletics for learning and trying to win games to advance into playoffs. It must be recognized that our teams are Varsity teams that are competing for playoff spots as well as both District and State Classification Championships. There is no minimum amount of playing time promised to the students.

Factors such as but not limited to progression in instruction, skill level compared to teammates, comparative fundamental technical skill, speed and conditioning compared to opposition, effort, attendance at practice, game situation, tactical plans etc. will all be used to determine playing time. **A combination of observation, coach/student conference and specific statistics/data will drive these decisions**

It is reiterated that students who miss practice may have their playing time, including the ability to start, effected.

Issues should be discussed between player and coach. Any Parents/Guardians who contact Principal will be referred to this manual and Athletic Director for follow up.

## **Statistics:**

**Each sport requires that results be submitted to a central score service. All sports other than Bowling at Rush Arts are required to submit the score of the game to Max Preps. Each sport has a minimum of what statistics are tracked. See coach for rules concerning that specific sport. The School District strongly requests, but does not require, that additional statistics are entered.**

## **Conflicts with other activities:**

It is understood that several students are involved in multiple activities. During the varsity season, commitment must be made to the team. As stated in the "playing time" section of this handbook, failure to attend practice may limit participation in games. For all intents and purposes, student-athletes should not be in a second, equally time consuming, school activity.

## **Sport Specific Specialization:**

Coaches are prohibited from mandating student-athletes specialize in a single sport. The official policy at Rush Arts is to promote participating in multiple sports and physical activities both in and out of school, in order to enhance personal levels of fitness

## **Can a student athlete play two sports in one season?**

Generally speaking, no. However, the following exceptions can occur.

### **Exception 1: Transfer player**

A player may transfer teams during a season if ALL of the following criteria is met:

- The team they are playing for is the same sex OR Title IX guidelines are followed.
- The player's first team will not fall below the minimum number of athletes
- The primary (original) team is eliminated from playoffs OR the transfer is promoted by the primary team coach.
- The deadline to add players to New team so that that player is eligible for post

season competition has not passed

### **Exception 2: Shared players**

If a student athlete would like to play on two teams during a season, ALL of the following criteria must be met:

- Both coaches must be in agreement
- The teams must be the same sex OR Title IX rules must be followed
- Student-athlete MUST select in writing, where both coaches sign, one team as their primary team and one team as their secondary team
- Attendance at primary team games when they conflict with secondary team are mandatory with exception of "transfer" player rules above
- Student-athlete must be in addition to the minimum number of student athletes for secondary team (if min number is 16, the team must have 16 without this shared player)
- Student-athlete must attend practices for primary team unless other arrangements are made in signed agreement. Failure to attend practice may result in less playing time

### **EQUIPMENT/UNIFORMS:**

The school will LEND the required uniform to all student athletes. It should be maintained and returned at the end of each season. Failure to comply will result in a charge of the price to replace the single uniform which is significantly higher than it's original cost. Often, the cost of a single replacement uniform is \$35.00-\$100.00.

In addition: **Soccer players** should purchase cleats (outdoor) and sneakers (indoor)  
Shin guards that are NOCSAE approved  
Long sleeve black shirt that may be worn in cold weather UNDER jersey  
(Female athletes: It is suggested to purchase sports bra and sliding shorts)

**Volleyball players** should purchase sneakers and knee pads  
(It is suggested to purchase sports bra)

**Basketball players** should purchase sneakers  
Any under-garments **MUST conform to NFHS RULES...SEE COACH**  
(Female athletes: It is suggested to purchase sports bra)

**Baseball players** should purchase cleats (outdoor) and sneakers (indoor) and their own glove. It is suggested for students to purchase batting gloves, a cup and sliding shorts. (the school provides helmets, bats and catchers equipment but students may also purchase their own. Helmets and catchers masks must be NOCSAE approved and Bats must meet the requirements of PIAA and NOT be on the NFHS banned bats list)

**Softball players** should purchase cleats (outdoor) and sneakers (indoor) and their own glove. It is suggested that players purchase a sports bra, sliding shorts and batting gloves. (the school provides helmets, bats and catchers equipment but students may also purchase their own. Helmets and catchers masks must be NOCSAE approved and must meet the requirements of PIAA. They do not need to be a specific color. Bats must NOT be on the NFHS banned bats list)

**Bowlers:** A shirt will be provided from the school. The Bowling Alley may provide balls and shoes. Students are encouraged to buy their own Ball and Shoes and practice weekly on their own at a local bowling facility in addition to

any formal practices/matches

### **Spectator Policies:**

#### **In the gym: Basketball/Volleyball games:**

You may or may not know that each school creates their own individual policy in regards to spectators.

For our home games, students, staff, and parents/guardians from the Arts Academy at Benjamin Rush are permitted free of charge demonstrating appropriate behavior. Siblings of players are permitted provided they are accompanied by a parent/guardian or otherwise approved supervising individual. Alumni are admitted free of charge with Principal's or Principal Designee's permission in advance. Otherwise, no friends may attend the game that are not current students in our school.

In the event that bleachers are installed, the free admission policy will change. An amendment will be sent to all advisors to explain to students, posted on our school's website AND this handbook will be revised

All spectators must stay on side of gym opposite player benches and refrain from standing behind basketball courts. Appropriate behavior and conduct are expected

We allow all parents/guardians from "Away" schools provided they have proper identification. Young Siblings are permitted to attend with their Parents/Guardians.

We reserve the right to ask any spectator to leave gym. Philadelphia Police will be called if any spectator does not leave the gym in a timely manner per School District of Philadelphia Guidelines.

The Arts Academy at Benjamin Rush does not have any decision making ability for away games. Rush Arts coaches will coordinate with the Athletic Director concerning away team policies. In some cases, a list is needed 24 hours in advance. In other cases, NO spectators are permitted at all including parents.

#### **At the fields: Soccer, Softball and Baseball**

The fields are public fields. All Spectators permitted. No smoking. Spectators must stay away from player benches. Student Athletes are not permitted to associate with their friends not on the team without permission. Appropriate behavior and conduct are expected. Improper conduct may result in a forfeit.

As with indoor away games, spectator policies vary for each away team. This may include an admission fee.

#### **At the Alley: Bowling**

All Spectators permitted. No Smoking and appropriate behavior and conduct are expected. Specific venue rules such as no outside food should be followed if applicable

## **Awards:**

Each team that wins any sort of championship will receive a banner hung in the gym containing a team logo and names of all players. Additional standard awards appear below

### Division Championship:

The School athletic department will purchase for each student a medal AND give them a Varsity letter free of charge.

### League Classification Finalist representative in District XII Championship: aka "Public League Classification "Champion" (note quotes)

The school athletic department will purchase for each student a trophy OR medal AND give them a Varsity letter free of charge.

### League Championship:

The school athletic department will purchase for each student a Trophy or agreed upon similar reward item AND give them a Varsity letter free of charge.

### District XII and State Level Classification Championship:

To be determined

## **Additional awards such as t-shirts, hooded sweatshirts, warm up suits or jackets, are the responsibility of team fundraising efforts**

In addition, coaches MAY decide to give season awards for individual accomplishments and senior gifts. The season awards standard item is a certificate. Seniors gifts, if applicable, are at the discretion of the individual coach. Season long awards and senior gifts are coach's discretion NOT the school athletic department or fundraising.

## **Fundraising**

It is required that each team conducts an APPROVED fundraiser during the course of the season. These fundraisers cannot include candy or baked goods UNLESS approved in advance AND taking place AFTER SCHOOL.

Funds raised by the team will be used for team expenses including but not limited to league dues, awards, uniforms, and practice/training equipment.

Fundraising activities must be approved by Athletic Director first followed by the Principal.

Violations of the School District wellness policy such as candy sales or bake sales will not be supported during school hours. Candy and Baked goods may be part of a concession stand during contests or sold after school with Athletic Director permission following School District Wellness Policy Guidelines.

In addition, for any fundraisers such as but not limited to eat-in fundraisers at local restaurants that the athletic department is facilitating during a season, the coaches for each sport during that season MUST promote with their teams and their teams must attend the event barring schedule conflicts from officially approved school events or work related activities. Coaches from out of season teams SHOULD promote the events with their players as well. Funds from these events will be used to support the overall athletic program including but not limited to equipment and uniform purchases.

## **Varsity Letter Criteria**

**Preface:** The criteria for earning the Arts Academy at Benjamin Rush Varsity Letter has been established by the members of the Arts Academy at Benjamin Rush coaching staff employed during the 2010-2011 school year. Earning a Varsity letter is a big accomplishment in a high school student athlete's career. For students at our school, earning a varsity letter should require evidence of commitment to team and school community as well as expertise in the sport. The criteria will be reviewed as needed and recommended by the coaching staff. If a change is to be implemented, all members of the coaching staff should be in agreement, consensus should be reached if a change will be made.

**General Policies:** To Be eligible to receive a "Varsity letter" in a sport;

- 1) Varsity athletes must remain as members of the team in good standing throughout the full season (Injured athletes who meet criteria for the contests held up to the time of the injury may receive a letter).
- 2) Any student involved in the athletic program who does not receive a letter will receive a certificate of participation if the coach chooses to distribute one (certificate created by coach).
- 3) All **Senior athletes** shall receive a varsity letter as long as their participation requirements are met
- 4) In cases of extenuating circumstances, exceptions to the standards listed below are permitted with the approval of the coach, athletic director, and Principal
- 5) Students do not have to pay for the letter...the school athletic department will purchase letters. The students do have to purchase frames or pay to have letters sewn onto school clothing if they choose

### **Criteria for Earning a Varsity Letter:**

- 1) Meet participation criteria on page 2 as listed for each individual sport
- 2) Maintain academic eligibility throughout season of participation OR achieved eligibility during season without becoming academically in-eligible again
- 3) Adherence to school district, school and team's code of conduct

Special note: "Managers" may earn varsity letters if they meet the criteria above and are in good standing with coach and made a continual contribution to success of coach or team .

**SEE NEXT PAGE**

## **Varsity Letter Individual Sports Participation Criteria.**

All seniors will receive Varsity Letters.

(9<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> graders may only receive varsity letters if they meet the following criteria)

### **Attendance:**

Attendance and participation at most games with the exception of excused absences due to extenuating circumstances including absences from school with a doctor's note, required medical appointment, family emergency, funeral, or participation in an academic or art major event (not rehearsal)

Employment or volunteering at a community non-profit organization are not excused absences from games. Participation includes limited substitutions

AND

Regularly attended practices and team meetings unless otherwise excused.  
Excused absences are not limited to but may include any of the above items AS WELL AS  
Employment, volunteering at a community non-profit organization or school rehearsal

### **Performance:**

1) If a team qualifies for post-season competition, all players who meet criteria above may receive letters IF the coach so chooses to distribute

2) If a team does not qualify for post-season competition OR qualified for post season competition but the coach feels that the entire team should not be given varsity letters, the following criteria should be considered in addition to the eligibility and attendance (excluding seniors who all receive a letter):

- a) Top 5 for team or Top 20 for league in any offensive or defensive category
- b) "Stood out" at their position of play among teammates
- c) Full Time starter for their team (not a platoon player)
- d) Named to league (or local committee) All-Public, All-City or All Area team including honorable mention



## **Parental involvement:**

A strong home and school connection is vital to the success of all school based programs. However, parents/guardians must recognize the assigned coach is an employee of the school and the playing field is essentially a practice classroom or performance area. We encourage parents/guardians to help in matters of field set up, providing snacks after games, setting up booster clubs (see booster club section), and providing emotional and moral support. Thank you in advance for your assistance.

Any parent/guardian who wishes to volunteer and assistant coach a team must speak to the head coach. IF the head coach agrees, the parent must get all of the required volunteer clearances AND required PIAA, NFHS, SDoP coaching certifications. Similar to field trips, parents/guardians serving in a "guest role" one time, may be supervised by the head coach.

There are at times parents become overzealous, excited and possibly disruptive. Parents/Guardians may not approach a coach during a game/contest to argue, debate, accuse or otherwise interfere with the current game when there is a designated coaching area OR player bench area. If a parent/guardian violates this "approach" clause, they will be asked to move to the designated parent or spectator area. If they continue to violate the rule, their child will be removed from the game and the parent/guardian and their child will be asked to leave the field.

Student-Athletes are instructed to listen only to their coach and/or official school staff during contests so parents should refrain from yelling in contradictory instructions.

Any Issues with a coach should be discussed between the player and/or parent/guardian and the coach. Any Parents/Guardians who contact Principal will be referred to this manual and Athletic Director for follow up. Athletic Director in most cases, will encourage communication between parents/guardians, player and coach. If a formal ruling must be made, the Athletic Director will conference with the parents/guardians and coach. The conferences may be separate.

In addition, any parent who approaches any school district staff, student, official, or other parent and threatens, harasses, violates the School District of Philadelphia's bullying, harassment or discrimination policies or otherwise attempts to harm may be excluded from attending any school events. Any threat or act of violence will also be reported to School Police as well as Philadelphia Police. Furthermore, coaches are School District Instructional staff and thus, a "protected class" under city and state statutes. Assault on a coach may result in criminal prosecution.

## **Parent and Alumni Support, Booster Clubs or Grants/Donations**

Alumni are encouraged to give financial donations to the individual teams or the athletic program as a whole.

Parents and Alumni are encouraged to create a Booster club for a specific sport OR the entire athletic program. This may or may not be part of the current established Rush Arts Home and School Association. Booster clubs, parent clubs or Alumni clubs are meant to support the “extras” that go along with the teams such as but not limited to Awards, Secondary jerseys, hooded sweatshirts, warm up suits or jackets or other special apparel.

In the event an official Alumni, Parent or Booster Club is established:

- Must be a formal non-profit organization established with a tax id number.
- Booster Clubs must have a constitution, executive board, and their own account.
- There must be a minimum of 2 representatives from the Booster Club board counting and confirming all transactions including signing of checks.
- All financial records of money in and money out must be shared with the Athletic Director and Principal at the end of the season.

If the Booster Club is part of the existing home and School they must follow Home and School By-laws

If the Booster club is un-official aka, an alumni group or a parents club, any fundraising efforts should be coordinated as if being facilitated by the coach and team (approval by Athletic Director, Principal, and all monies deposited directly into team accounts via student activity fund)

People (including alumni, parents/guardians, other family members/friends or anyone from the general public, choosing to give a donation OR For profit companies choosing to give a donation/grant, must give donations/grants to the School directly following School District of Philadelphia guidelines OR make direct purchase of items to donate to the team/programs. There will be NO ADVANTAGES such as but not limited a child being admitted into the school or a contract being granted with a particular company, for donations.

## **NCAA ELIGIBILITY**

Students who might be interested in playing a sport in College NEED to get educated in the process. There is information on our school athletics website

In short, if a student is planning on playing for a school listed as an NCAA Division 1, Division 1A, or Division 2 school, they must register for the NCAA Eligibility Center and meet certain requirements in GPA, courses completed AND SAT scores by the end of 11<sup>th</sup> grade. Failure to do so will forfeit their ability to play sports in college as a freshman and may affect their future eligibility as well.

Students who are attending NCAA Division 3 schools do not need to register for the NCAA Eligibility Center but it is a good idea to do so anyway.

In addition, if students are going to attend a school designated as an NAIA school or junior college and plan on competing in athletics, they also need to register for separate league specific eligibility centers by the end of 11<sup>th</sup> grade.

Questions should be addressed with Athletic Director BY October of 11<sup>th</sup> grade!

### **BEHAVIOR/CONDUCT:**

Exclusion from Interscholastic athletic contests as a punishment from any person other than the Principal, Athletic Director or coach is not permitted UNLESS the exclusion is a result of an in school or out of school suspension issued for a behavior infraction by a Principal, Dean or other Principal designee including school wide detention supervisor

Student Athletes are expected to conform to all rules, regulations and policies as related to the School District Code of Conduct, Arts Academy of Benjamin Rush, PIAA, NFHS and individual coach. That includes, for example, dress code for traveling to away games. If a student athlete does not conform to code of conduct rules, the coach may choose to refer them to disciplinary action as if the infraction occurred in school.

If a student athlete violates a level 2 or level 3 infraction as per school district code of conduct, they will be held accountable as if in school. In addition, additional penalties from the league or state association may be issued.

### **Removal from a team:**

#### **By Principal or Athletic Director:**

A student may be removed from a team at the discretion of the Principal or Athletic Director as part of consequences for violation of school rules following due process. In most cases, the infraction must be a level 2 or level 3 offense. Level 1 offenses may result in removal from the team if a direct result of being a member of the team OR repeat violation.

**By Coach:** A student may be removed from team by a coach after all the following criteria is met:

- Violation of team based rules including rules dictated by School District of Philadelphia, PIAA, or NFHS
- A student/coach conference was held
- A suspension from the team or school was issued prior to removal

If a student is being removed from a team, the removal must be made following contact with a **parent/guardian**

### **SPECIAL NOTES ON SPECIFIC VIOLATIONS OF CONDUCTS FOLLOW**

## **SPECIAL NOTE: CYBER BULLYING & SOCIAL MEDIA**

The School and School District have a strict policy against bullying INCLUDING cyberbullying. Tormenting, Harassing or threatening any other students in our school, on your team, in another school team, or on an opposing team, will be dealt with by consequences including suspension or removal from the team. Any accused act of Cyber-Bullying or Social Media Misuse will be investigated

Normal “talking up your team” in the spirit of the game can be permitted so long as threats or degrading actions are not taken toward **an** opposing team.

Following investigation, if found to be accurate, violation of cyberbullying rules and policies will result in a 1-3 game suspension based on severity and in coordination with Principal, Athletic Director and Dean/Disciplinarian. **In addition, The Office of Athletics may also impose suspensions or removal from teams for violations**

**THE NFHS has an informative, free, online course concerning use of Social Media. It can be accessed by visiting our school’s athletic webpage at <https://rush.philasd.org/athletics/> Then clicking the selection on the right titled Safety and Student-Athlete Education. Scroll down on this page and view ALL of the available courses for student information**

## **SPECIAL NOTE: BULLYING & HAZING:**

**As in life, light-hearted teasing where everyone is laughing together is permitted. However, Bullying, Harassment or any form of hazing is not permitted. Perpetrators will be suspended following due process and investigation. They *may* be removed from the team pending Principal review.**

**Telling non-seniors to carry equipment is not considered hazing.**

**Asking non-seniors to move so that seniors have preferential seating on buses is not hazing.**

**Both of these items are privileges afforded to our seniors.**

**THE NFHS has an informative, free, online course concerning bullying and hazing. It can be accessed by visiting our school’s athletic webpage at <https://rush.philasd.org/athletics/> Then clicking the selection on the right titled Safety and Student-Athlete Education. Scroll down on this page and view ALL of the available courses for student information**

## **SPECIAL NOTE: SPORTSMANSHIP**

It is expected that Student-Athletes practice good sportsmanship AT ALL TIMES towards but not limited to our coaches, opposing coaches, officials including referees and supervisors, opposing players and teammates. Violation of this rule will result in appropriate consequences based on severity when compared to code of conduct. Referees, supervisors and opposing coaches are considered an extension of School staff. Violations may also result in a 1 game suspension followed by removal from team if repeated again.

In addition, support of your partner sports team(s) in season at the Arts Academy at Benjamin Rush is essential for a solid athletic program. Opinions portraying jealousy, dis-respect, unsportsmanlike behavior or insinuating favoritism, should be kept to one's self. Failure to do so may result in removal from their team.

Example: Saying "They like watching the boys basketball team more than us" may be an appropriate statement because it may be observable that more spectators go to see the boys basketball team rather than the girls. However Saying "He likes seeing us lose" or "they hate our team" is not appropriate. Bottom line: BE SUPPORTIVE of the ENTIRE Athletic Program not just your own team.

THE NFHS has an informative, free, online course concerning Sportsmanship. It can be accessed by visiting our school's athletic webpage at <https://rush.philasd.org/athletics/> Then clicking the selection on the right titled Safety and Student-Athlete Education. Scroll down on this page and view ALL of the available courses for student information

## **SPECIAL NOTE: CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES including Appearance and Performing Enhancing Drugs**

In general, the Athletic Controlled Substances policy will follow the School District of Philadelphia Code of Conduct and in the case of Appearance and Performance enhancing drugs, the PIAA and NFHS.

Students who violate these policies will be referred to the Principal and disciplinarian/dean and given due process to state their case in front of the Principal, Athletic Director, and disciplinarian/dean (if applicable). The student will be suspended from competition during the due process investigation.

If found in violation of the controlled substance policy or policies related to Appearance and Performing Enhancing Drugs a suspension of not less than (3) games and not more than one full season will occur (including any games already missed IN ADDITION to school based consequences including suspension from school).

For additional details, please see illegal activity

Specific to Athletics, these variations must be understood by student athletes:

- off-site athletic venues and locations are extensions of School District property
- Nutritional supplements must not contain medication, steroids or any prohibited substances
- Cortico steroids prescribed by a Physician are permitted so long as they are used the way they are intended (to decrease rash or inflammation) for a limited time or to treat an emergency.

THE NFHS has an informative, free, online course concerning Appearance and Performance Enhancing Drugs. It can be accessed by visiting our school's athletic webpage at <https://rush.philasd.org/athletics/> Then clicking the selection on the right titled Safety and Student-Athlete Education.

Scroll down on this page and view ALL of the available courses for student information

**SPECIAL NOTE: TOBACCO and ALCOHOL and other “legal” drugs/medications**

- Tobacco and Alcohol are banned on School District property. Use of these substances during practices or games on site or at playing venues OR during any overnight or late night official, supervised, events, will result in referral to Principal or Dean/Disciplinarian for further school based consequences AS WELL AS a 1-3 game suspension.
- Rec Centers and other venues NOT owned by the School District but used for athletic contests are considered School District Property for the purposes of this policy
- Student Athletes are encouraged to follow safe, legal health practices for decision making in use of these substances
- In addition to the legal ramifications of under-age drinking, student athletes should recognize that the potential lack of coordination that occurs up to 48 hours after under-age drinking occurs can place un-necessary additional risk for injury.

**SPECIAL NOTE: MEDICAL MARIJUANA**

As of 2017, Pennsylvania passed a law permitting the use of marijuana for medicinal purposes that is not smoked. In addition, the law only permits the use of Marijuana to treat specific ailments under specific guidelines.

Student-Athletes utilizing Medical grade, Legal, Marijuana/THC products to treat a medical condition may participate on an athletic team IF ALL of the following criteria are met:

- Prescribed by a Physician OR permitted by the student-athlete’s family physician
- the family Physician signs the PIAA CIPPE form OR physician who prescribed/recommended the use of medical marijuana is an authorized medical examiner permitted to sign PIAA CIPPE
- Side effects of the products do not negatively affect performance including speed, agility, balance or coordination
- Published guidelines from PIAA, NFHS and School District of Philadelphia are followed.

Over the counter CBD infused products do not currently fall under “Medical Marijuana” SO LONG as the CBD products are permissible to be used on school grounds AND by students under 18

**SPECIAL NOTE: Illegal Activity.**

In the un-likely but possible event that a Rush Arts student athlete is involved in illegal activity resulting in arrest INCLUDING any activity outside of school, they will be suspended from competition until they return to school and complete, if applicable, any School District related consequences IF they are eligible under PIAA and School District guidelines.

If they are being held for trial OR their arrest is a result of an alleged violation of a level III School District offense, they will be removed from the team and lose all future eligibility status with the following two exceptions:

- If a student is accused of a crime, attends court, and found not guilty, they will regain their eligibility status for current and future school years. PAST time will not be recuperated
- If a court order is given allowing the student to return to school with all rights and privileges while awaiting trial, they will be eligible as if no such infraction has taken place so long as no School District consequences were issued

**Constitutional and Federal mandated rules on Athletics:**

**TITLE IX:**

Title IX was created in the 1970's and adapted in 1978 to ensure equal opportunities, facilities, etc. for girls in athletics as boys at that time received. It has evolved to ensure equal opportunities regardless of gender. Rush Arts follows Title IX in all aspects. For specific PIAA rules, please go to PIAA.org. In short, we offer a suitable, acceptable number of sports for the population we have interested in participating in sports.

Girls Sports: Volleyball, Soccer, Basketball, Softball, Bowling

Boys Sports: Basketball, Baseball, Bowling

For full year to year list, students should inquire with Athletic Director

**SEE NEXT PAGE**

## **Other Constitutional law:**

As dictated by the PIAA, the school athletic program follows Constitutional law directed for Public Schools. The Amendments most often cited in complaints to Constitutional law for Public Schools are:

- First Amendment:
  - Students are permitted to take part in voluntary religious displays in private but NOT mandated
  - Students are permitted to wear religious garb as part of their uniform with written approval by state association
  - The supreme-court has chosen not to rule on most cases concerning free speech concerning athletics as participation is voluntary.
  - Student Athletes should not speak to media without coach's consent
  - Coaches may speak to media on matters permitted with current School District of Philadelphia Office of Athletics guidelines. Other requests for interviews should be made through the Office of Athletics
- Fourth Amendment:
  - Locker and back pack searches are permitted by coaches in absence of school police if there is a reason to believe they contain contraband including but not limited to drugs, drug paraphernalia or weapons. Philadelphia Police Department should be notified.
- Fourteenth Amendment:
  - All students must have equal access to the athletic programs, equal opportunity to register, equal opportunity to try out, and must be judged impartially with the same criteria as their peers. Stating "I did not know of sign ups" has not been upheld as a valid cause for complaint.

## **State, County and City law:**

When not otherwise stated, all State, County and City laws must be followed





**The pages that follow are the**

**Official**

**School District of Philadelphia**

**Office of Athletics**

**Policies regarding**

**Student Athlete Code of Conduct**

**And**

**Expected fan behavior at Athletic contests**

**These are MANDATED for the Arts Academy at Benjamin Rush to follow**

**AS OF JUNE 2017**



## **STUDENT-ATHLETE STANDARD OF CONDUCT**

The Philadelphia Public League provides our student-athletes with an experience that challenges them to perform, lead, build character, and develop as young men and young women. Our league is built upon a strong tradition of success, where our teams play the game the way it should be played – with humility, mental toughness, gratitude, persistence, and hard work. Our league strives to prepare our student-athletes for college, be that as a student-athlete or not. Philadelphia Public League athletics provides our student-athletes with the opportunity to become winners – in the classroom, on the field of play, and in life.

All Philadelphia Public League student-athletes serve as representatives of your school. It is a privilege to participate in athletics in the Philadelphia Public League, and a student-athlete who represents your school is held to a standard of conduct, which earns them a position to honor, respect and responsibility, both in the school and the community. To uphold this position the student-athlete must adhere to and maintain the following standards of conduct set forth by the Philadelphia Public League throughout the entire school year.

- Students will comply with the concept and values of the Philadelphia Public League Athletic Playbook to which your school has subscribed.
- Student-athletes will consider athletics as only a part of a well-rounded educational experience. They will strive for success, not only as a member of a team or club, but also as a student in the classroom.
- Student-athletes must remain academically eligible as outlined in the Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association (PIAA) Constitution & By-Laws.
- Student-athletes **CANNOT** and **WILL NOT** participate in any school activities that day or evening if they were unexcused absent. If absent on a Friday, they will not participate in any school activities for the duration of that weekend.
- Student-athletes will wear team uniforms during authorized events.
- Student-athletes must turn in all uniforms and equipment immediately following their season of sport to the Head Coach. Families will be billed for any unreturned items.
- Student-athletes must be good citizens and not be involved in any criminal activities, including the use or possession of illegal drugs, nor may student-athletes be directly associated with or in the presence of a student who is under the influence of any illegal drugs or participating in any criminal activity.
- Student-athletes will not use or possess any form of Tobacco or alcohol, nor may student-athletes be directly associated with, or in the presence of, a student who is under the influence of or in possession of tobacco or alcohol.

**Failure to abide by any of these Standards of Conduct at any time may result in dismissal from the team and forfeiture of honors, or letters at the discretion of the Head Coach or Athletic Director. These consequences are supplemental to any other school administrative regulations.**

**Student-athletes must have a signed Philadelphia Public League Student-Athlete Standard of Conduct agreement on file with the Athletic Director prior to participation.**

I have read, understand and agree to abide by all the provisions and consequences of this contract. Failure to sign and return this contract will nullify the eligibility of any student-athlete to participate in athletics in the Philadelphia Public League.

**School Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Students Name:** \_\_\_\_\_  
(Please Print)

**Grade:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Student's Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Parent's Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_



## THE LAW

1. **Academically** go to all your classes, **Athletically** go to all your team sessions. Do all your work and ask for help.
2. **Always** strive for **excellence**, never accept mediocrity.
3. **Trust** your teammates. Never place blame on others.
4. Know, understand, and **accept your role** for the betterment of the team!
5. **Team will always come first**, we are selfless players, not selfish players.
6. **RESPECT** everyone yet fear no one.
7. We are the hardest working program in Philadelphia.
8. We strive to get better everyday.
9. **We do not do anything to hurt** our team, program, **Philadelphia Public League**, and our **FAMILIES**.
10. Be **mentally tough** and **spiritually strong**.

This is the **2017-18** commitment to **EXCELLENCE!**

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Print Name)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_