



Athletics Handbook

Comets Athletics Philosophy

Welcome to Robert Thirsk High Athletics where our students strive for excellence on the field, the court, and in the classroom. Athletics has an important role to play in helping students develop on a personal level to become all that they can. Whether considering sportsmanship or weighing the needs of others, the building of character and ability to overcome adversity is inherent in sport. Some of the most authentic and applicable learning experiences our students can have involve extra-curricular participation. At Robert Thirsk High School we value leadership, character, teamwork, integrity, and the pursuit of excellence. Student athletes are ambassadors of our school and are held to the high personal and academic standards. In our athletic program there exists a strong connection between academics and athletics, with a focus on developing the student athlete. Participation in athletics demands a high level of commitment, excellence, and self-motivation, which helps prepare students for the challenges they will meet outside the school community.

Calgary Senior High School Athletic Association

All of our teams participate in the Calgary Senior High School Athletic Association which believes that interscholastic athletics, as a recognized part of the school program, is educationally sound and will enhance the physical, mental, emotional and social development of young people. The Association promotes safe and fair competition for all students of member schools by offering a balanced program of quality learning experiences in a competitive sporting environment.

Head Coaches, Teacher Sponsors, Community Coaches

As per the Calgary Senior High School Athletic Association constitution the head coach of any team must be a teacher. Teacher sponsors are teachers who fill the role of the teacher while supporting a community coach that may possess the technical knowledge needed to coach the team, in this case the teacher sponsor is the head coach. Teacher coaches and community coaches are all held to the same standard when it comes to code of conduct.

Junior & Senior Teams

Varsity athletics are comprised of Junior and Senior teams. Junior teams are made up of grade 10 and some grade 11 students that might not be ready to compete at the senior level. The focus at the junior level is on skill acquisition and an exploratory experience, through competition. The emphasis at the junior level is on the development of the athlete. As the student athlete matures and reaches the senior level expectations increase as does the level of play. Senior level teams place a higher premium on team success versus development. Often parents and student will inquire about grade 10 student playing on senior teams. Student and parents do not determine the level at which their student will participate. This decision is made in consultation between the Athletic Director and the respective sport teams coaches. Any student or parents wanting to make a formal request must approach the Athletic Director.

Attendance

As per Robert Thirsk High School Student Code of Conduct students are expected to attend 100% of their classes. Failure to attend classes due to unexcused absences will have consequences related to an athlete's ability to play in games. Classroom attendance is the shared responsibility between the parent, student, coach and athletic director. Our Athletic Department expects students to attend 100% of their practices. Students needing to miss practice must communicate directly with their coach. It is then at the coaches discretion with how to proceed with regards to eligibility.

Academic Expectations

Students are expected to maintain academic integrity at all times. Communication between student athlete and teacher is critical. It is the student athlete's responsibility to communicate absences in advance to their teacher. Students are responsible for all course work regardless of athletic participation. The Athletics Department expects that students apply themselves to the best of their ability.

Tryouts & Team Selection

Students are permitted to try out for any and all teams. Each student will have the opportunity to attend tryouts before any team selection occurs. Team selection is the responsibility of the Head Coach and or Assistant Coaches for each sport. Many factors are involved in determining the selection of the team. These include sport specific attributes: student ability, future potential, the students' ability to be coachable, attitude, work ethic, sportsmanship, ability to function as part of a team. The actions and behavior of student athletes outside the sport are also taken into consideration. Should a parent have a concern regarding this process or the decision that was made they should contact the school's Athletic Director.

Student Uniform/Jersey

Students will be provided with a game jersey for their respective sport that is their responsibility to take care of for the duration of the season. Students are not permitted to modify the team uniform in any way. Game uniforms are not to be worn in physical education classes. Students will provide their coach with a cheque that is equal to the replacement value of that jersey. The cheque will be returned to the athlete at the end of the season when the jersey is returned undamaged.

Playing Time

Student playing time is determined by the coach. Playing time is earned and not given. In some contact sports student safety is a primary concern. Should a student have concerns about playing time they should first approach their coach to discuss this matter. As a parent if you wish to engage the coach in a discussion of playing time please make an appointment to speak to your students coach. Should a parent have further concerns they should approach the school's Athletic Director.

Hazing

There is a zero tolerance for anyone engaged in hazing at Robert Thirsk High School. Students who engage in this behavior will be subject to the CBE's progressive discipline policy.

Student Code of Conduct

At Robert Thirsk High School student athletes represent our school both in and out of competition. As members of the Calgary Senior High School Athletic Association (CSHAA) we follow the guidelines laid out by its constitution. Students are prohibited from:

- Engaging in the use of alcohol, illicit drugs or performance enhancing drugs
- Demonstrating disrespectful behavior as a participant, spectator, visitor or representative of RTHS
- Abusing officials when participating or spectating any sport
- Demonstrating obscene gestures to players, coaches, officials or spectators

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