

Lampasas ISD Athletic Department Parent Overview

INTRODUCTION

We hope this handbook will serve as a reference guide, answering some of the questions that will concern you during the course of the year. Please call the athletic office anytime you have a concern or question.

The University Interscholastic League is the governing body of the athletic programs in Texas Public Schools. The LISD Board of Education, administrators, coaches and teachers fully support the UIL and its enforcement of the rules.

Understand that athletics is designed to accommodate students who have the ability and emotional stability to handle competition, as we know it in the LISD. One of the difficult tasks faced as a coach is making the judgment as to who should be selected to compete in this program.

Students are not obligated to take part in athletics, nor is it required for graduation. **It should be stressed that being a member of an athletic team is a privilege and not a right.** Since it is a privilege, the coach has the authority to revoke the privilege when rules are not followed.

We are all aware that being involved in athletics demands a lot of time and dedication from coaches and players alike. As a coach, your players and program reflect your attitudes, beliefs and your work ethic. This does not necessarily translate into a superb won-loss record but it does mean that your players and program will have discipline, responsibility and a strong work ethic if you demonstrate these traits. Never assume that each athlete is born with these traits. Rather, these traits need to be brought out through a developmental process by you, the coach. We all desire an athletic program that will support the mission of Lampasas ISD and we ask that all of you involved work hard to make this a reality.

Troy Rogers

Athletic Director
Lampasas ISD

GENERAL GUIDELINES

∞SPORT PROGRAMS

A. PARTICIPATION IN MULTIPLE SPORTS

Lampasas ISD guidelines allows and encourages a student/athlete to compete in multiple sports as long as the student/athlete can abide by all team rules and regulations and there is no seasonal conflict. **No coach shall discourage any athlete from participating in multiple sports.**

A student/athlete who decides to quit one sport and enter another will be ineligible for participation in another sport until the end of the season in the sport for which he/she has quit, or unless the head coaches of both sports mutually agree to the student/athlete's participation, with approval from the Athletic Director. A student/athlete quitting a sport after the first contest will forfeit any award for that sport.

LISD does not endorse player cuts but realizes that there are certain sports where cuts are necessary due to financial parameters or game management.

B. PARTICIPATION CONCEPTS

7th grade thru Sub-Varsity: **Everyone participates (if meets eligibility requirements and is in good standing)**

Varsity: Play to win the contest

C. TEAM RULES/ DISCIPLINE SCHEDULE

Team rules are to be established by each head coach and based on LISD policies and administrative guidelines and regulations. Team rules should be approved by the Athletic Director. A Discipline Schedule is to be created by each head coach of their sport. Submit a hard copy to athletic office and post in locker rooms.

D. ATHLETIC AWARD GUIDELINES

Sub Varsity Certificate -- Awarded to athletes who participate in a sport but do not letter.

Varsity Certificate -- Awarded to an athlete who receives a letter after the first letter no matter what the sport. An athlete can receive numerous certificates depending on whether he/she letters.

Letter Jacket -- Awarded one time during an athlete's high school career. A letter jacket is received for the first letter an athlete receives. Letter jackets must be paid for by the student/athlete. A student/athlete quitting a sport after the first contest will forfeit any award for that sport.

Criteria for Lettering

Each head coach is responsible for establishing and adhering to the criteria by which an athlete may letter. As the demands and expectations of each sport are different, so will be the letter criteria. Basic considerations such as attendance, eligibility, sportsmanship, citizenship, training rules, participation and general attitude will be included in each coach's criteria. It is up to each head coach to inform his/her athletes of the LISD athletic award guideline criteria prior to the start of his/her specific season. Lettering criteria for each sport should also be submitted to the Athletic Director and communication to the parents of athletes via pre-season parent information meeting.

General Requirements for Lettering

1. Practice habits and attendance are criteria for lettering and are left up to the discretion of the individual head coach.
2. If an athlete fails a class that affects the season it could be considered grounds for not lettering based upon the judgment of the head coach.
3. If a player is injured in a sport, it is up to the head coach if that athlete will letter.
4. Freshmen -- Varsity awards can be awarded to a freshman that meets his/her sport criteria.
5. Managers/Trainers -- Managers will receive appropriate awards based upon recommendation of head coach. Student Trainers will receive appropriate awards based upon recommendation of the athletic trainer.

MIDDLE SCHOOL PROGRAM

A participation certificate may be awarded to each athlete for every sport he/she participates. Criteria for these awards will be set by Middle School coordinators.

Lampasas ISD Athletics **The Parent's Role**

Being the parent of an athlete can be a great experience. Lampasas ISD has many different sports. Parents' participation with their son or daughter can be and should be an enjoyable activity. Their support is very important to their athletes, the school and community. To make this experience the most rewarding for all concerned, the following are some suggestions on being a supportive athletic parent:

1. **Be positive** - Being on a school team is quite an accomplishment. Do not let playing time dictate the athlete's happiness. Celebrate the fact he/she was good enough to make a team. When things are not going well for your son/daughter or for the team is when parents need to be most positive and supportive.
2. **Be supportive of coaching staff in front of your son/daughter.** Nothing can injure teamwork faster than athletes doubting the capabilities of their coaches. The coaches are trying to do their best at every moment. If you have concerns, follow the LISD Athletics communication process. Our staff will listen, appreciate your confidentiality and give you a timely response.

3. **Be part of a parent network** - Whether you are part of a booster club or not, very special relationships can be fostered over the careers of athletes by socializing with other parents. This socialization can take place at games, after games, at team dinners, etc. Parents need support too! Be positive with each other and do not hesitate to remind each other about remaining positive at all times. If you hear a "rumor" that concerns you about any athletic issue, call an LISD coach to verify or clarify what you've heard. Don't perpetuate a rumor by passing it on or by remaining silent about an issue that could affect a program.
4. **Booster parents** - We appreciate the fact that you are an active booster parent and supportive of our need to generate more funds for our programs. Your involvement in our booster clubs is vital to the growth and development of the program. Your countless hours do not go unappreciated. The role of the booster clubs are for the betterment of the given program and to supplement, support and promote the vision and needs the head coach deems necessary. Your attendance at our sporting events and encouraging other fans to come and watch our athletic teams perform would be of tremendous support. Booster parents are also encouraged to be involved in ongoing booster meetings and projects of their program. We need to continue to recruit and retain as many parents as possible to join the booster clubs of their son/daughters sport. The support booster clubs give our programs is very much appreciated.
5. **Winning and losing** - It shall be our staff's goal to pursue excellence in the school's athletic program, through motivating students to achieve to the best of their ability, while honoring themselves with their talents. Everyone enjoys a well-played victory, but a "Winning is Everything" philosophy cannot become the controlling force. Too much is sacrificed when that philosophy is dominant. The philosophy should be to be honorable in our attitudes and skills.
6. **College Scholarships** - Having lofty expectations for our children is a normal and healthy goal. In striving for these expectations, we must also be realistic. Not everyone can receive a college scholarship, nor should your child's athletic success be measured by the number of offers he or she receives. Our coaches will help individuals and parents in whatever way they can to find an opportunity for those who wish to pursue collegiate careers. Coaches will not, however, recommend a school at which the athlete cannot potentially be successful.

Other thoughts - The success of our athletic program is not dictated by the athlete alone. Our school's teams, students and adult supporters should work together. If the contributions of either are less than total, everyone stands to lose. We have a tremendous amount of support for our athletes by the coaches, administration and the board. We thank you for your support and participation.

Expectations Involving Parents, Athletes and Coaches:

Parent's Expectations of Coach:

1. Treat my athlete fairly.
2. Let me know if my athlete is experiencing any problems (physical, social, emotional).
3. Communicate clearly your expectations of me and my athlete.
4. Keep in mind that as parents we identify with our athlete's achievements.
5. Be a good role model.
6. Protect my athlete from bullying or social ostracism by cliques.

Coach's Expectations of Parents:

1. Recognize my commitment and that I am not doing it for the money.
2. Offer praise for accomplishments and support for my efforts.
3. Keep me informed of any home issues that might affect your athlete.
4. Follow established chain of command guidelines when there is a problem.
5. Be an enthusiastic and respectful fan at games.
6. Support your athlete's efforts and commitment to the program.
7. Monitor your athlete's schedule to help avoid over involvement in diverse activities.
8. Screen your athlete from conflicting input from outside coaches and experts.
9. Do not gossip or complain about me at home, in the community and in social media.
10. Do not substitute your agenda for your athlete.

Coach's Expectations of Athlete:

1. Set realistic personal goals for yourself and follow them.
2. Be honest about your ability level.
3. Let me know if you have an injury or you are ill.
4. Understand that my feedback on your performance is constructive.
5. Take pride in your team.
6. Support your fellow athletes.
7. Let me know if you are having academic problems or issues with peers.
8. Let me know if you have issues or concerns that exist in your home or personal life that might affect your participation.
9. Discuss with me if you are receiving conflicting advice about your performance from other coaches or your parents.
10. Show respect for my position as a coach and the need to make decisions that are in the best interest of the team.
11. Refrain from any use of illegal substances including alcohol.
12. Always display good sportsmanship to opponents and referees/judges.
13. Let me know if you are having conflicts with the scheduling demands of a job or other school related activities.

Athlete's Expectations of Coach:

1. Treat me fairly.
2. Do not play favorites.
3. Do not embarrass me in front of my teammates.
4. Understand that the sport/team might not be as important to me as to you.
5. Understand the pressure I am under from my parents.
6. Understand the conflicts with school work and other activities.
7. Understand that my outside job is necessary for me and my family.
8. Praise me when I am doing something good.
9. Make sure that I am not bullied or harassed by cliques on the team.
10. Help me set realistic goals for myself.
11. Be there for me if I need advice about something personal in my life.

Athlete's Expectations of Parents:

1. Allow me to follow my dreams and goals in athletics.
2. Don't live your unfilled dreams through me.
3. Find a way to support me without undue pressure.
4. Show the coach respect.
5. Have positive communication with my coach and if issues arise, follow the adopted process.
6. Understand the conflicts I have with school work and other activities.
7. Be a good listener, especially when you don't agree with everything I say.

LISD Athletics Complaints/Concerns Process and Guidelines

Our goals are to facilitate communication between player and coach, then coach and parent/student and to address concerns in a collaborative, effective manner. If you are a student or parent who has a concern or complaint about a sport, coach or coaching style, please follow the LISD Athletic chain of command policy and follow the recommended UIL guidelines.

Coaches cannot address a problem unless they know that a problem exists. Most of the time, problems stem between coaches and parents from a miscommunication or misinterpretation of an issue. Therefore, we ask that your child talk first with the coach and address the problem directly. If the outcome of that meeting is not satisfactory, we ask that the parent and student meet together with the coach. If that does not resolve the issue the next step would be to meet with the head coach of the sport. The last resort is a meeting with the Athletic Director, the coach and the parents/student-athlete.

The LISD Athletics is here to work alongside parents to encourage an enjoyable experience for the student-athlete. We will do whatever it takes in working with parents to achieve that goal. When an issue or conflict arises, please give due diligence and follow the department communication protocol.

Remember the "24 hour" rule: Please wait 24 hours before approaching a coach either in person, by phone or through email. This allows all involved a "cooling down" period and also provides for a time for reflection.

Again, we are committed to effective communication and problem solving and look forward to meeting with students and parents to build and achieve successful athletic programs in Lampasas. We ask and encourage you to follow the procedures outlined below.

PARENT / COACH COMMUNICATION GUIDELINES

PORTIONS REPRINTED FROM THE U.I.L. PARENT INFORMATION MANUAL

Both parenting and coaching are very difficult vocations. By establishing an understanding between coaches and parents, both are better able to accept the actions of the other and provide a more positive experience for everyone. Parents, you have the right to know, and understand the expectations placed on them and their children. Coaches have the right to know that if parents have a concern; they will discuss it with the coach at the appropriate time.

Communication, you as a parent should expect from his/her child's coach:

1. Coach's philosophy
2. Expectations the coach has for your son or daughter, and the overall team
3. Locations and times of practices and contests
4. Team requirements, i.e., fees, special equipment needed, school & team rules, off-season expectations
5. Procedures that will be followed if your child becomes injured during participation

Communication coaches can expect from you as parents:

1. Concerns regarding your son or daughter expressed directly to the coach at the appropriate time.
2. Specific concerns in regard to the coach's philosophy and/or expectations
3. Notification of any schedule conflicts well in advance

As your child becomes involved in interscholastic athletics, he/she will experience some of the most rewarding moments of their lives. As we all experience in life, there are times when outcomes are not as we had hoped. This will happen in athletic competitions and create lifelong learning opportunities for your child and the coach. Discussion and honest communication are needed at these times.

Appropriate concerns to discuss with a coach:

1. The mental and physical treatment of your child
2. What your child needs to do to improve
3. Concerns about your child's behavior

It is very difficult to accept your child is not playing as much as you may hope. Coach's make decisions based on what they believe and know is in the best interests of all students participating. Based on careful review of the items above, certain things can and should be discussed with your child's coach. Other items, such as those listed next, must be left to the discretion of the coach.

Issues not appropriate for discussion with your child's coach:

1. How much playing time each athlete is getting
2. Team strategy
3. Play calling
4. Any situation that deals with other student-athletes

There are situations that may require a conference between the coach and parent. These are not discouraged, as it is important for each party to have a clear understanding of the others' position. When these conferences are necessary, the following procedure is suggested to help promote resolution to the issue.

COMPLAINT/CONCERN COMMUNICATION PROCESS

If you have a concern to discuss with the coach, the following procedure should be followed:

Informal

Telephone the coach or send him/her an email about your concerns and allow the coach two (2) school days to discuss the matter with you and offer a solution. Please do not approach a coach during a game or practice. If both parties agree that it is necessary, a face to face meeting will be held.

Step 1

If the informal interaction does not resolve the issue, put your concerns in writing (email or letter) to the coach with an explanation of why the informal process did not solve the problem. You will receive a written reply from the coach offering a solution within three (3) school days.

Step 2

1. If the Step 1 response does not resolve the issue, within three (3) school days of receipt of the response from the coach put your reasons for disagreement with the offered solution in detail and in writing to the LISD Athletic Director.
2. Attach the Step 1 response from the coach.
3. The LISD Athletic Director will conduct an independent investigation of the complaint and contact you to schedule a meeting, if needed, to seek resolution of the issue.
4. Within three (3) school days from receipt of your request the LISD Athletic Director will send a written reply to the complaint/concern.

Notes:

- *Contact information for the coach and athletic director is attached.*
- *Complaint/Concern Defined: A complaint (or concern) is an oral or written communication questioning the conduct or failure to act by a coach or other athletic department staff in which the athlete's parent (legal guardian) feels aggrieved or dissatisfied.*
- *If the complaint/concern is in regards to a potential criminal act or immoral behavior by the coach, initiate your complaint in writing at Step 2.*

LISD Athletics Complaint/Concern Communication Process does not replace the district's formal grievance process. For more information about the formal grievance process, please consult with the athletic director.

PARENT MEETING

Every sport will conduct a pre-season parent meeting that will be coordinated with the campus athletic coordinators. Every head coach must keep a sign-in sheet of parents attending the meeting.

Lampasas ISD Guidelines for Conducting a Pre-Season Parent Meeting

Every sport is required to conduct a pre-season parent meeting. This meeting will be held before the start of that respective sports first contest. The purpose of your parent meeting is to address some of the below listed issues.

- A. Provide the opportunity for the parents of your athletes to meet you and your staff in a social environment. This will allow the parent to see and talk with you away from the court or field.
- B. You will have the opportunity to meet the parents of your athletes.
- C. Allow you to present your program to the parents. Parents need to have a clear understanding of what your program consists of and what your expectations of their sons/daughters are.
- D. Allow parents to ask questions regarding organizational and administrative procedures and guidelines regarding your program or the entire athletic program.
- E. To use this meeting to disperse any program or athletic department information that needs to go out to the parents.

One or both parents of all your athletes should be present at the pre-season parent meeting. Provide sign-in sheets requesting:

Name, Address, Phone Numbers, Athlete's Name. Also supply any PAPF forms, Bona Fide Proof of Residency (if needed) and any other paperwork necessary.

Agenda Items for Parent Meeting

1. The head coach as well as the assistant coaches of that sport should attend and provide an agenda for the meeting. The Head coach must also provide a sign-in sheet for the parents, which must be kept on file along with the agenda.
 2. Athletic trainer or the designee should present information on insurance, the campus treatment guideline, training room hours, and Dr. notes.
- A. Introduce staff
 - B. Coaching philosophy / team's style of play / new rules of sport
 - C. Game schedules, Rank One, directions, game changes
 - D. Practice schedules/times, length of practices/games, criteria for being selected on squad
 - E. Coaches email addresses / conference periods / LISD athletic website
 - F. Any other important phone numbers
 - G. Sportsmanship expectations for athletes and fans, UIL Parent Manual
 - H. Philosophy regarding multiple sport participation
 - I. Grade check procedures and **Drug Testing Policy**