

**LIVE OAK CLASSICAL SCHOOL
ATHLETICS PARENT & STUDENT HANDBOOK
(2016-17)**

REQUIREMENTS

Participation in athletics develops the student mentally, physically, socially, and spiritually. The activities of the athletic department are a part of Live Oak Classical total educational program of affirming and challenging a student's potential. Athletics can be a very unconventional classroom that teaches MANY life lessons in ways that cannot be achieved in the school classroom. We feel like there is significant value in the physical part of our being and that sports are a part of God's created order. We feel that competition is a biblical concept and can bring glory to Christ in how we approach it. We want athletes with proper priorities, learn how to work hard, be team players and are resilient and mature through difficult times. Participants are expected to strive for Christ-like character just as they do during the school day. The standards of conduct apply to practice sessions, home and away games, and any other time the student is representing the school. **THIS INCLUDES SOCIAL MEDIA.** All students represent Live Oak at sporting events, whether on the field or in the stands; so, one's conduct needs to reflect Christian sportsmanship toward the opposing team(s), officials, teammates and coaches.

Participation at Live Oak in team and individual athletics is a privilege and not a right. Team and individual athletics is offered for both boys and girls at different class levels depending upon the athletic event. It is the goal of the athletic program to promote fitness, teamwork, and sportsmanship while reinforcing the Christian principles that are central to Live Oak. In the younger grades, emphasis will be placed on participating and developing the skills of the sport. In the older grades, greater emphasis will be placed on winning the competition; and as such, the opportunity to participate will be equal but the level of participation by individual students may not be equal.

All Live Oak Classical sports are governed by the rules of the Texas Association of Private and Parochial Schools (TAPPS).

REQUIREMENTS

1. Ensure that all required paperwork is on file in the Athletic Office
 - a. Obtain an annual Pre-participation Physical Exam .This may be performed by the student's personal physician or at the Live Oak Physical Day.
 - b. Signed TAPPS Pre-participation Physical, Medical History and other TAPPS paperwork.
 - c. Signed Covenant page in this handbook

Note: Students WILL NOT be allowed to participate in PRACTICES or GAMES until they have completed all the above mentioned paperwork and it is on file in the Athletic Office.

2. Maintain Academic eligibility as outlined in the Live Oak handbook.

POLICIES

Athletic Period

All athletes, no matter how many sports they participate in, are required to be involved with the off-season/weight-lifting program year-round.

Discipline

Discipline will be enforced in regards to conduct, responsibility, and other areas deemed necessary by the athlete's coach. Coaches must have freedom to discipline athletes as they feel necessary.

Eligibility

Eligibility is an important factor in the athletic program. It is our desire that students do well in their studies and therefore, when grades seriously drop, the ineligibility system serves as a reminder to students to keep a healthy balance between school work and other activities.

SCHOOL AND ACADEMICS ALWAYS COMES BEFORE ATHLETICS.

If a student is deemed ineligible, he/she may practice but will not participate in athletic competition. We as coaches and administrators also withhold the right to hold our student athletes to a higher level academically than TAPPS expects and therefore we may declare a student ineligible "in house" if it is deemed in the best interest of that student. Eligibility will be assessed every TWO weeks during the grading period.

An athlete must maintain an average of 70 or above in each class but one to remain eligible for competition in an extra-curricular activity. If an athlete does not maintain an average of 70, he or she will be ineligible for 2 weeks.

1. At two weeks, if the student is passing all classes but one, they regain their eligibility.
2. Eligibility reports go out on Mondays. The term of ineligibility will be from the Monday of the report to TAPPS until the Monday of the next grade reporting period.
3. An athlete deemed academically ineligible may not ride with his or her team to or from the extra-curricular activity which he or she is involved in. This includes any and all riding arrangements. If a team is carpooling, the ineligible athlete may not ride in a car with any other athletes going to the game.
4. An ineligible athlete may not leave school early to go watch the game in which his or her team is playing.

5. Eligibility rules will be strictly enforced. We feel strongly that students are here first and foremost to be students. We want our students to keep the perspective of FAITH first, FAMILY second, ACADEMICS third, and ATHLETICS fourth. Athletics teaches many valuable lessons and is a vital part of any education but it is A PART of that education, NOT the focus.

FREEDOM TO PARTICIPATE

Student athletes that have made a commitment to a team that are academically eligible by school standards, and have not been suspended from athletic competition by the school or athletic department, are expected to fulfill their commitment to all workouts and competitions. Please do not withhold your child from competition for grades or other discipline at home if they are eligible by school rules. If there are disciplinary issues that you are dealing with at home, please talk to us about them instead of pulling your child off of the team for a duration of time. We can come along side of you and assist in discipline. We have found that involving the coach/athletics with disciplinary issues you are struggling with can be much more effective than removing your child from the guidance and instruction provided by coaches and sports.

Parent Coaching

Coaches need freedom to teach athletes the techniques and skills they deem necessary for the betterment of their program. Please allow the coaches to do this without negating the things they are teaching. Please allow the coaches to do their job. If you have a question about a technique or why it is being taught a certain way, please come see us and we'll be glad to discuss it. Disagreeing and/or teaching your child something different is never good and always causes problems. We are all on the same team and the students need to see us united in how things are done. Just like a marriage, there will be disagreements in methodology but the kids need to see a united front. There will be varying opinions on the proper way to do things, please handle this with integrity.

Please do not coach your child from the bleachers. This creates a terrible dilemma for the athletes and coaches. The athletes don't know who to listen to and the coaches feel undermined in their authority.

Please don't try and discuss game strategy, playing time or other concerns right before or after a game or in public around other parents and players. We will be glad to meet with you and discuss any issue you have, but in the correct time and place. Right before and after games coaches have many responsibilities, i.e. game planning, clean-up, responsible for the players, etc., and are not mentally prepared to discuss an issue with you then. It is also our athletic policy NOT to discuss issues in public around other parents and students. This is never good, especially if emotions are running high at the time. Always wait until the next day, call us and set up an appointment, and we will be glad to discuss any issue with you as outlined in scripture. If you try and talk to a coach out

in public, they have been instructed to ask parents to wait until the next day and set up an appointment. They are not “putting you off” or ignoring your concern but following athletic policy. We want athletics to be a great experience for everyone involved and we firmly believe it can and should be. It takes all of us to make that happen.

Practice

Practice times are established based on availability of facilities and the coaches’ schedules. Varsity fall sports begin before the school year starts. Practices are not voluntary! They are a required part of being on a team. If an athlete needs to miss a practice they need to let their coaches know BEFORE THE PRACTICE, AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. Coaches spend hours organizing workouts and it really causes problems when someone doesn’t show up and the coaches are unaware and haven’t had time to plan for it. ANY ATHLETE MISSING A PRACTICE WITHOUT LETTING THE COACHING STAFF KNOW BEFOREHAND WILL BE HANDLED AS AN UNEXCUSED ABSENCE! Excused absences need to be very rare events but do happen. These will effect playing time, depth chart position, and constitute making missed workouts up. This is only fair that the athletes at practice get most of the playing time and missing practice will affect that. Unexcused absences from practice will usually have severe consequences.

Quitting/Dropping Sports

We want our athletes to learn to finish what they start. With this in mind we take quitting very seriously. If an athlete “quits” during an athletic season they will not be allowed to play another school sport for one calendar year. Reasons for quitting would be: disagreeing or not liking the coach, upset about playing time, the sport is too hard, etc. Quitting is much different than “dropping” a sport. If an athlete, their parents, the coach involved, and the Athletic Director all agree it is in the best interest of everyone involved that the athlete drop a sport then that will be fine. The athlete and their parents would need to meet with the coach involved and the athletic director to discuss dropping a sport. Most of the time we would like for the kids to think about what is expected of them if they go out for a team and stick it out until the end of the season. After the season, if they decide not to play the next year that is fine. We just don’t want them “quitting” because things aren’t going their way. Life can be hard sometimes, even unfair. They need to learn how to handle it now.

Strength and conditioning

All High School athletes (boys and girls) will be required to participate in Athletic weight training and conditioning during their season, as well as during their off-season or seasons. All athletes need to be bigger, faster and stronger in order to be more competitive. It also teaches a lot about hard work and discipline. Lifting and conditioning are not optional during the school season and year. They are a requirement for being a part of Live Oak Athletics. Summer workouts are Optional, not required. All Middle School athletes will be required to participate in Athletic weight training and conditioning during their off-season. If their In-Season coach desires to do strength training in-season, they have the freedom to require that if they choose.

Guidelines for Student--Athletes

- Treat others as you know they should be treated, and as you wish to be treated.
- Regard the rules of your game as an agreement, the spirit and letter of which you should not evade or break.
- Treat officials and opponents with respect.
- Accept absolutely and without quarrel the final decision of any official.
- Honor visiting teams and spectators as your guests and treat them as such. Likewise, behave as an honored guest when you visit another school.
- Be gracious in victory and defeat. (Learn to take defeat well)
- Be as cooperative as you are competitive.
- Student-athletes shall conduct themselves in a way that brings positive recognition to God, Live Oak, their team, their sport and themselves. (This includes what you post on social media and in the community)!

Guidelines for Parents

- We shall conduct ourselves in a way that brings positive recognition to God, Live Oak, their team, their sport and themselves.
- We shall provide positive support for our children during the game and be part of the “home court advantage”
- We shall remember that the only instructions our children should receive during a game or practice is from the coaches.
- We shall support the drills, techniques and strategies taught by the coaching staff, and feel free to dialogue with the coaches at the appropriate time.
- We shall respect our opponents in all that is said and shouted on the court/field and off.
- We shall respect the officials and their decisions.
- We shall remember that coaches are not infallible evaluators of talent and potential. We should always feel free to discuss with our coach how our child can get better, but never ask why another player is getting more playing time.
- We shall not place our child between the coach and ourselves. We shall support our coach in front of our child.
- We shall wait to solve any problems or address concerns with the coaches at another time other than immediately before or after a game or practice. If we would like to speak to our coach, we shall schedule an appointment.
- If we have an issue or concern with a coach, we shall first speak with the coach (Matthew 18) before going to the next level of authority.

Our mission statement, Purpose and Philosophy are covered in-depth in *The Standard*. Please reference it for any other questions you might have.

