

# **OLHMS**

## **PARENT and STUDENT ATHLETE HANDBOOK**

### **Introduction**

Welcome to the OLHMS athletic program! This information is being presented to you because you have expressed an interest in participating in middle school athletics.

We appreciate your interest in the athletics program and believe that participation in athletics will provide your child with many gratifying experiences, as well as contribute to your child's physical and emotional maturity.

Our staff is committed to providing your child with proper equipment and facilities, trained and experienced coaches, and athletic contests with skilled officials.

Your child's decision to participate in athletics is a commitment to her or his team. The decision to participate requires a commitment of self-discipline and self-sacrifice on the part of the student. The student must follow the rules for proper training, performance, and conduct.

As a parent or legal guardian, we know that you will ensure that your child will participate in the middle school athletics program with the full knowledge that he or she is expected to follow all the rules and regulations of the OLHMS, some of which are outlined in this handbook, as well as all school and athletic conference rules

### **Expectations of the Student Athlete**

Being a member of the school's athletic team is a privilege that carries certain expectations and responsibilities. During athletic events, including but not limited to practices and contests, the student represents her or his school and community. The student athlete is therefore obligated to uphold the rules and responsibilities of participation in middle school athletics. Some of the expectations that the school staff require of the student athlete are outlined below.

#### **A. Academic responsibilities:**

The student's academic studies and achievement are priorities. Participation in athletics and other extracurricular activities enhances the student's academic achievement by preparing the student for life as an adult. Students are expected to have a well-rounded middle school experience that includes a balance of athletic and academic performance.

#### **B. Respect for one's school responsibilities:**

The student's respect for his or her school is another priority. By participating in athletics, the student contributes to the betterment of her or his school's reputation.

Additionally, other students look up to student athletes as role models. Thus, the student athlete should always remember that she or he is in a leadership role, and has the responsibility to make good choices and be a positive contributor to enhancing school spirit and community pride.

#### **C. Good team player responsibilities:**

The student represents her or his family, school, and self when she or he chooses to participate in athletics. The student is expected to follow rules, regulations, policies, the athletic staff and her or his coach's directives during training, practice, and participation in athletic events.

### **Expectations of the Parent/Legal Guardian**

Being a parent or legal guardian of a student athlete of the school's athletic team carries certain expectations and responsibilities. During athletic events, including but not limited to practices and contests, the parent or legal guardian represents her or his school and community. The parent or legal guardian is therefore obligated to uphold the rules and responsibilities of attending middle school athletic events. Some of the expectations that the school staff require of the parent or legal guardian are outlined below.

### **A. Parent/Legal Guardian Responsibilities:**

1. Teach your children the value of education and good citizenship.
2. Refrain from criticizing officials, coaches, spectators or the student athletes.
3. Understand and support the OLHMS and School District 123 policies, school, and athletic department rules.
4. Team selection, playing time, strategy and coaching philosophy are solely left to the professional judgment of the coach.

### **B. Steps to Address Parent/Legal Guardian Concerns:**

Parents and legal guardians may have concerns dealing with their child's participation on a school athletic team. Certain steps should be followed in addressing these concerns. Parents and legal guardians should not confront the coach before or after a practice session and a game or contest.

1. Have your child speak to the coach about the concern.
2. Make an appointment to meet with the coach about the concern.
3. Make an appointment to meet with the athletic director about the concern.
4. Make an appointment to meet with the principal about the concern.

## **Athletic Philosophy**

An objective of an athletic program is to aid in the student's physical and psychological development, thereby preparing the student for life as an adult. The athletic program conducts itself in compliance with federal and state laws, Board of Education policies, regulations, standards of practice, and school rules.

## **Athletic Goals**

Our goal is for student athletes to become effective citizens by learning to:

### **A. Work with others:**

In athletics, the student will learn the importance of teamwork and that the team is more important than personal desires or performance. Students will learn to work with others by developing self- discipline, respect for authority, and the spirit of hard work and self- sacrifice.

### **B. Strive for excellence:**

Although the team may not always win, striving for excellence in character must still be demonstrated even in defeat. This means giving one's best effort in practice and at games, and learning to improve from one's mistakes.

### **C. Build character:**

In athletics, students must learn to be courteous in victory and in defeat. Students will treat others with the same respect that they would want to receive from others.

### **D. Enjoy the sport:**

Students must acknowledge that after all, it is just a game. A goal of athletics is to nurture students by encouraging them to learn to enjoy their experiences, to have fun with their teammates and opposing players, and to be a contributing member of their team.

### **E. Develop good personal health habits:**

Physical fitness is a life-long goal. Each student should work towards having a healthy body, mind, and spirit. Students should continue the good habits of physical fitness and healthy living throughout their lives.

## **Requirements for Participation**

### **A. Physical Examination**

All student athletes must complete the Illinois State Physical Examination Form for Athletes, which is valid for one calendar year. Physical examinations may only be conducted by medical doctors, osteopathic physicians, advanced practice registered nurses, and physician assistants.

All Physical Examination Forms must be completed and in the possession of the Athletic Director before the student can participate in any athletic activity, including practice and tryouts. No exceptions.

### **B. Parental/Guardian Consent, Release, and Assumption of Risk Form**

To participate in athletics, students and their parents or legal guardians must sign a form acknowledging these risks and releasing OLHMS from any liability. This form will also request emergency contact information, in the event the student requires medical attention. Like the Physical Examination Form for Athletes, this form must be signed and in the possession of the Athletic Director for the school before the student can participate in any athletic activity, including practice and tryouts.

Health insurance coverage is not required for participation in athletic activities, but is strongly recommended. OLHMS is not responsible for any student's medical costs, including medical costs incurred as a result of injury from participation in any athletic activity or event.

### **C. Scholastic Eligibility**

To participate in athletics, student athletes must be receiving a 2 or better for all standards on the report card. Students are responsible for their own grades.

## **Athletic Department Rules**

### **A. Conduct of Athletes**

Student athletes should display high standards of conduct and citizenship, and comply with the requirements of this Handbook.

## **B. Hazing Prohibited**

OLHMS strictly prohibits hazing. Hazing is any conduct or method of initiation into any student group that endangers a student's physical or mental health. Students caught participating in these actions will be subject to removal from OLHMS athletics.

## **C. Dropping a Sport**

Although students are encouraged to participate throughout the athletic season, some students may find it necessary to drop a sport. In such a case, the student athlete must (1) consult with her or his coach, (2) report the situation to the athletic director, and (3) return all equipment issued prior to quitting the team. The parent or legal guardian and student shall be responsible for the replacement cost of all equipment not returned in the same or substantially similar condition, with the exception of normal wear and tear; it was in at the time of issuance.

## **D. Squad Selection and Cut Guidelines**

Coaches are encouraged to keep as many students on a team as possible, without affecting the integrity of the sport. Time, space, facilities, equipment, and other factors will place limitations on the most effective squad size for any sport.

Before team selections are made, the coach should notify all candidates of the (1) length of the tryout period, (2) practice commitments, (4) game commitments.

If a candidate attends all required meeting(s) and tryout sessions, a coach may cut a candidate after the candidate: (1) competed in a minimum of one tryout session.

Although the coach should generally follow this squad selection and cut guideline, some procedures may not be practical due to the unique nature of each individual sport. In such case, the coach may deviate from the selection procedure. In this case, a cut list will not be posted.

### **E. Reporting of Injury**

All injuries that occur during participation in athletics should be immediately reported to the coach. An Injury Report Form must be completed by the coach.

Student athletes who are required to sit out of athletics due to illness or injury and who received treatment from a doctor must get written permission from the doctor or designee clearing the student athlete to once again participate in athletic activities.

### **F. Travel to Athletic Events**

All athletes must travel to and from athletic events in transportation provided by the athletic department, unless the student's parents or legal guardians make alternative arrangements that are approved by the coach.

Athletes will remain with their team and under the coach's supervision when attending away contests.

Athletes who miss the bus may not be allowed to participate in the contest at the coach's discretion.

All regular school bus rules will be followed.

Athletes should dress appropriately while traveling on athletic trips.

Parents or legal guardians are responsible for arranging the student athlete's transportation to and from the event when transportation is not provided by the school. If a student is transported in another student's private vehicle, the school will not assume any liability resulting from such transportation.

### **G. Athletic Equipment**

All athletes are responsible for the proper care and security of equipment issued to them. School-issued equipment should be used only for games and practices, and should be kept in good condition. The parent or legal guardian and student shall be responsible for the replacement cost of all equipment not returned in the same or substantially similar condition, (with the exception of normal wear and tear) it was in at the time of issuance.

## **H. Class Attendance**

Students missing school for reasons other than illness may not participate in events or practices.

## **I. Missing Practice**

Athletes should consult his or her coach before missing practice. Unexcused absences from a practice or contest may result in suspension from the event.

## **J. Discipline Requirement**

Suspension means exclusion from school for a specific period during the school year. Suspended athletes shall not participate with their respective team in practice or in a contest on the day(s) of the suspension period. When reinstated from the suspension, the athlete will then be eligible to resume participation, unless otherwise noted in the suspension documents.

## **K. Conflicts With Extracurricular Activities**

Students participating in several extracurricular activities may be in a position of conflicting obligations. The athletic department recognizes that students should have a broad range of experiences and, as such, will attempt to schedule events to minimize conflicts. Students may be required to make choices in the event of conflicting activities which may affect her or him to get the most benefit from all aspects of the educational experience.

## **L. Vacations During the Sports Season**

If an absence during a sports season due to vacation is unavoidable, the athlete must (1) notify the coach prior to the vacation, and (2) be willing to accept the consequences related to playing time in future contests.

## **M. Locker Room Regulations**

1. Only coaches and assigned players are allowed in the locker room.
2. Physical contact and hazing of any kind is strictly prohibited.
3. The opposite gender is not allowed in the locker rooms.



## **Conclusion**

Thank you for your interest in OLHMS athletics. We hope your experience will be a rewarding one. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact your athletic director or coach.

