



**STUDENT & PARENT
INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETIC
HANDBOOK**

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(Items highlighted in **BOLD** are revisions in 2012 of previous Handbook editions)

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INTRODUCTION

The athletic program at Lake High School and Lake Middle School is an integral part of the overall education program in Lake Local Schools.

As with the academic program, we offer levels of competition and strive to be as competitive as possible in those programs while maintaining a caring and positive posture toward students.

In addition to instilling a winning attitude and providing our athletes the desire to gain a competitive edge, we also want to stress the importance of good sportsmanship by all parties involved. Moreover, we want our athletes to follow not only the letter.... but also the spirit..... of the rules.

It is our belief that through diligent perseverance, hard work, and sacrifice, both on the part of coaches and the athletes, we can be competitive and successful in our endeavors on and off the playing fields.

This handbook has been prepared in order to give direction and definition to the athletic program in Lake Local Schools.

Lake Athletic Department

Mission: To provide an environment through athletics to achieve success.

Vision: To be a distinguished athletic program that promotes Blue Streak pride.

We Value: Sportsmanship, work ethic, spirited competition, every athlete and the engagement of students, staff and community.

Goals:

- Providing intentional communication
- Fostering participation in multiple athletic programs
- Supporting coach development and professional growth
- Promoting collaboration between our community and our school

FOCUS AREAS OF
THE LAKE LOCAL SCHOOLS
ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT

Our athletic department will:

- provide the educational benefits available through interscholastic competition to a maximum number of participants that can be efficiently and properly handled.
- provide the best facilities and qualified staff possible
- provide a variety of sports activities according to the interests and needs of our students within the confines of our budget and facility.
- provide a program with the physical welfare and safety of all participants and spectators of prime concern.

The Lake Local Schools Athletic Department believes the interscholastic athletic program, and other programs which support the interscholastic program, exist for the purpose of:

- Providing boys and girls who have interest and ability in sports with an outlet for the expression of these interests and abilities
- Providing an opportunity to experience important lessons of life which is a part of athletics.
 - * The opportunity to see that many limitations, both physical and mental, can be conquered.
 - * The ability to accept limitations, which cannot be overcome.
 - * The joys of teamwork as well as individual accomplishments.
 - * The ability to accept both victory and defeat gracefully.
- * Teaching physical skills and good health habits which will be of lasting benefit to the individual.

In relating the desire to win with the purposes listed above, the Lake Athletic Department feels that the lessons can be most easily taught in a winning atmosphere.

Although the Athletic Department encompasses both middle and high school students, each sport program should show evidence of articulation from one level to the next. In so doing, it is imperative that each head coach work with the athletic director and building principals.

Lake athletic programs are a means to the end in developing well-rounded individuals. Lake athletic programs are never an end in themselves.

The objectives of the Lake Athletic Program are to provide:

- * Understanding and knowledge of the value of athletics.

- * An understanding of why the school has athletics.
- * Better health and fitness.
- * A desire to succeed and excel.
- * The opportunity for developing self-discipline and emotional maturity.
- * The opportunity for developing social competence.
- * The opportunity for developing an understanding of why rules are necessary.
- * The opportunity for developing respect for the rights of others.
- * The opportunity for developing a respect for authority.
- * The opportunity for developing a sense of fair play and sportsmanship.
- * The opportunity to think both as a member of a group and as an individual.
- * The opportunity to develop the values of striving for and reaching group **goals**.
- * The opportunity to develop and improve motor skills.
- * The opportunity to develop skills, interests, and knowledge that will make life now and as an adult more enjoyable.

PROGRAM OPERATIONS

Keeping in mind that the head coaches are hired to coach and oversee the entire program and that their philosophy and style permeate the program, the head coaches shall work with all coaches in the total sport program to develop a style of play and direction of the program. The head coaches must set those parameters within the broader scope of the school district's philosophy and goals.

The head coaches shall work with the athletic director and building principals in setting parameters for the program. Specifics of each sport are not addressed in this philosophy because they may change from one sport to another and from one head coach to another.

The participation in an athletic program is a privilege (*not a right!*), which the Lake Local School affords its young people. Although the department recognizes the value of athletic participation, the department does adhere to the belief that the structure or the interscholastic athletic program is triangular in shape. At the base of the triangle is the physical education/intramural program where everyone who wants to participate can participate. The next step is middle school interscholastic athletics. At this level, there is not universal participation. This is still a learning experience and there is more participation than at the next level of the triangle. At each successive step in the triangle, there are greater demands placed upon each student-athlete, yet more greater rewards. At the varsity level,

there is no guarantee of playing time; however, each individual athlete who is part of the team should be made to feel as an integral part of the team.

In building this triangle, the coaching staff for each sport, with the approval of the building administration, does determine the size of it. While it is true that not every member of the team receives equal playing time, and some may receive very limited playing time, the coaching staff needs to develop each individual athlete as much as possible.

The athletes, as team members, must also understand that they are part of a team and have a responsibility to work diligently and to sacrifice personal glory for team success and team goals.

It is the goal of the department that the principals, athletic director, assistant coaches, and head coaches will work together toward excellence and (1) will offer a quality program to the athletes, (2) will be competitive in all sports, and (3) will help each athlete reach his/her potential in that sport while still operating within the premise and guidelines of the philosophy of the Lake Local School District.

STUDENT-ATHLETE GUIDELINES

Athletic Award System

Lake athletic awards will be presented according to the following guidelines:

- A. VARSITY awards: A student-athlete will receive only one six-inch block “L” letter. All succeeding varsity awards will be a metallic award indicative of the sport in which he/she successfully meets the requirements necessary to win the award.
 - 1. The letter shall have no emblem of said sport woven in the letter.
 - 2. The second, third, and fourth year award is the one metallic award per sport earned.
 - 3. A senior who has been a faithful member of an athletic squad for a period of three years, but failed to make necessary requirements to earn a letter, may upon special recommendation of the head coach, receive a varsity “L”. This provision also applies to foreign exchange students.
 - 4. A manager, statistician, or other team aide may receive a “Manager’s Letter” (four-inch block “L”) at the discretion of the head coach. It is recommended that this letter be presented to those who have provided significant assistance to the athletic program.

- B. JUNIOR-VARSITY awards: Any student-athlete who is a faithful member of a junior-varsity athletic team, upon recommendation of the head coach receives a certificate.

- C. FRESHMAN awards: Any student-athlete who is a faithful member of a freshman athletic team, upon recommendation of the head coach, will receive a certificate.

- D. CHEERLEADER/DANCE TEAM awards: A varsity cheerleader/dance team member will receive one varsity letter. All succeeding varsity awards will be a metallic insert. “Letter” recognition will be per sport season.
 - 1. Junior-Varsity and Freshman CL/D will receive a certificate.

NOTE: All awards will be distributed by the athletic director to the respective head coach upon receipt of “Award Winners” list and completed inventory list from post-season coach packets. The head coach will receive these awards prior to the banquet date. Each head coach/assistant coach should sign certificates prior to the banquet.

- E. No awards other than those designated in this handbook shall be given to any student-athlete.
- F. Minimum requirements for winning a Varsity “L” Award:
 - Baseball:* Participation in one-half of the played innings. Pitchers must participate in one-fourth of total innings played. If the athlete plays a “specialty” position (e.g., designated runner, designated hitter, etc.), the coach may submit documentation to support the number of games

participated in, which must total a minimum of 60% of games played by the varsity team.

- Basketball:* Participation in one-half of total regulation quarters played.
- Cross-County:* Finish in the top seven for Lake and participate in one-half of total meets.
- Cheerleading:* Participation in practices and contests during the fall and/or winter sport seasons.
- Dance Team:* Participation in practices and contests during the fall and/or winter sport seasons.
- Football:* Participation in one-half of total regular season quarters played. If on a specialty team, participation in a minimum of five varsity games.
- Golf:* Participation in one-half of varsity matches.
- Gymnastics:* Required to be a level 7, 8, or 9 optional gymnast. Routines must meet level 8 or 9 by December 31st. must practice an average of three times per week during the season. May only compete in high school competition during the month of February and must compete in two scheduled meets plus the OHSAA District Competition.
- Soccer:* Participation in one-half of varsity regulation halves played.
- Softball:* Participation in one-half of the played innings. Pitchers must participate in one-fourth of total innings played. . If the athlete plays a “specialty” position (e.g., designated runner, designated hitter, etc.), the coach may submit documentation to support the number of games participated in, which must total a minimum of 60% of games played by the varsity team.
- Swimming:* Attend 90% of team practices AND average at least one point per meet for the regular season and participate in one-half the total meets..
- Tennis:* Participation in one-half of varsity matches played.
- Track:* Average at least one point per meet for the regular season and participate in one-half the total meets.
- Volleyball:* Participate in one-half the total games played.
- Wrestling:* Participate in eight varsity points (matches).
- Bowling:* Participated in one-half of all varsity matches.

NOTE: Alternative determinations may be recommended by the coach. Such changes must meet with the approval of the athletic director and building principal *prior* to the start of the season. All team members and parents shall be informed in writing prior to the start of the season of the qualifications to be eligible for an award.

A student-athlete is *not* eligible for an award if he/she quits the team prior to the conclusion of the total season. All award winners must finish the season, including post-season events, and be in good-standing with the team. To receive their award, student-athletes must be in attendance at the awards presentation (or receive absentee permission from the Athletic Director).

All middle school sport participants may receive a certificate of participation. No special awards are presented at the middle school level.

G. SPECIAL ATHLETIC AWARDS:

NOTE: Any change in the number or name of individual sport awards may only be done with the prior approval of the athletic director. No coach may arbitrarily adjust, add or otherwise alter the stated awards without such prior approval.

Fall Sports:

Football: Most Valuable Player, Most Improved Player, Best Offensive Lineman, Best Offensive Back, Best Defensive Lineman, Best Defensive Back, Coach's Award (optional).

Boys/Girls Soccer: Most Valuable Player, Most Improved Player, Best Offensive Player, Best Defensive Player, Coach's Award (optional).

Boys/Girls Cross-Country: Most Valuable Runner, Most Improved Runner, Coach's Award.

Volleyball: Most Valuable Player, Most Improved Player, Best Defensive Player, Best Offensive Player, Coach's Award (optional).

Girls Tennis: Most Valuable Player, Most Improved Player, Coach's Award.

Boys and Girls Golf: Most Valuable Player, Most Improved Player, "Mr./Miss Class"

Award

Winter Sports:

Boys Basketball: Most Valuable Player Most Improved Player, Leading Rebounder, Best Foul Shooter, Most Assists, Coach's Award (optional).

Girls Basketball: Most Valuable Player, Most Improved Player, Best Defensive Player, Best Foul Shooter, Leading Rebounder, Coach's Award (optional).

Wrestling: Most Valuable Player, Most Takedowns, Most Pins, Most Improved Player, Coach's Award (optional).

Swimming: Most Valuable Swimmer, Most Improved Swimmer, Coach's Award (optional).

Dance Team: Most Improved Athlete, Most Valuable Athlete

Cheer: Most Improved Athlete, Most Valuable Athlete

Boys and Girls Bowling: Most Improved Bowler, Most Valuable Bowler, Coach's Award

Spring Sports:

Baseball: Most Valuable Player, Most Improved Player, Highest Batting Average, Coach's Award.

Softball: Most Valuable Player, Most Improved Player, Highest Batting Average, Coach's Award.

Boys Tennis: Most Valuable Player, Most Improved Player, Coach's Award.

Boys and Girls Track: Most Valuable, Most Improved, Best Sprinter, Best Field Event, Best Distance Runner, Coach's Award (optional).

H. ALL-FEDERAL LEAGUE: Criteria for selection to All-Federal League teams are listed in the “Forms” handbook. Selection of All-League student-athletes are made by league head coaches at established selection meetings following each sport season.

I. ALL-DISTRICT SELECTIONS: Criteria for All-District selections are established by coaching associations and the media, not Lake High School or the Lake Athletic Department.

J. ALL-OHIO SELECTIONS: Criteria for All-Ohio selections are established by coaching associations and the media, not Lake High School or the Lake Athletic Department. Any student-athlete who receives First Team All-Ohio honors will have a 5”x7” photo displayed at Lake High School in a designated area for such recognitions. The Lake Athletic Booster Club will assist in the purchasing of such displays.

K. Any student-athlete who earns a varsity letter is eligible to display the letter on an appropriate Lake varsity letter jacket. The student-athlete may make their own choice as to where they purchase the jacket and will make their own arrangements for such purchases.

Athlete (Definition of)

For all purposes of interpretation, a student is considered to be an “athlete” when he/she first indicates an intention to try-out for any interscholastic sports team (for example, attending a preseason information meeting).

Attendance

Extra-curricular participants (which includes student-athletes) must be in attendance at school the entire school day. Absence for medical or school-related circumstances should be verified by official documentation. Any additional exceptions must be approved by a building administrator. This applies to practices, meetings, performances, contests, and any team/sport-related activity.

ATOD (Alcohol, Tobacco and Other Drugs) Policy

A copy is found in the Appendix (“Required Pre-Season Forms” under Information for Students-Parents) and by going to the following site:

<http://lake.stark.k12.oh.us/athletics/office/images/parentForms/Lake%20ATOD%20policy%20.pdf>

All Lake student-athletes (7th through 12th grades) agree to this policy prior to their involvement with each athletic season. This school board-approved athletic policy impacts choices the athlete makes year-round. Any additional Lake Local Board of Education adoption of policy which impacts the general student population will also apply to student-athletes.

Changing Sports in Mid-Season

A student-athlete, who is a member of an interscholastic team, may not quit that team following the first regular contracted competition and join any other Lake Local Schools’ interscholastic athletic program during the same season. An athlete’s participation in another school sport may begin upon the completion of the last regular season contest of the sport quit. If a player is dismissed from a squad for disciplinary reasons during a season he/she must

refrain from participation in other Lake Local Schools' interscholastic athletic program activity for 10 school days from the date of the dismissal.

Denial of Participation ("Due Process")

If an athlete is to be denied participation from practices or contests as a result of violation of team rules, the coach must inform the athletic director of this action and request a denial of participation form (see "*Forms*" book). This form is to be completed and given to the student-athlete, the athletic director, and the principal.

The student-athlete has the right to appeal such action. The appeal may be with or without the parents. Signed codes of conduct/training rules must be on file in the athletic office. The appeal will be made to an Athletic Appeal Board comprised of the athletic director, one head coach (not of the appellant's sport), and one administrator. The appeal must be made within five days of the coach's notification of denied participation.

On matters of denial of participation related to school discipline violations (e.g., truancy, suspensions, etc.), the board-approved protocol and procedures will apply.

Eligibility

FOR STUDENTS ENROLLED IN GRADES 9-12:

- In the immediately preceding grading period, a student must receive a passing grade in a minimum of five (5) one-credit courses, or the equivalent, which count toward graduation; and
- Those grades referenced, when combined, be a total grade point average of at least 1.0 on a four point (4.0) scale.
- A student enrolled in the first grading period after advancement from the eighth grade must have passed a minimum of five subjects in the preceding grading period in which the student was enrolled; and
- Those grades must, when combined, be a total grade point average of at least 1.0 on a four point (4.0) scale;
- A student who failed one or more of the state proficiency tests may be required to participate in provided intervention programs in order to remain eligible.

FOR STUDENTS ENROLLED IN GRADES 7 & 8:

- A student enrolling in the seventh grade for the first time will be eligible for the first grading period regardless of previous academic achievement. Thereafter, in order to be eligible, a student in grade 7 or 8 must have received passing grades in a minimum of five subjects in the preceding grading period in which the student was enrolled; and
- Those grades referenced, when combined, be a total grade point average of at least 1.0 on a four point (4.0) scale; and
- A student who has failed one or more of the state proficiency tests may be required to participate in provided intervention programs in order to remain eligible.

Eligibility requirements are clearly defined in the Ohio High School Athletic Association Constitution and Bylaws. Ultimately, the understanding of and acknowledgement to meet all eligibility requirements falls upon the student-athlete and his/her parent/guardian.

Equipment/Uniform Loaning

All uniforms, practice gear, and associated sport equipment loaned to the student-athlete remain the property of the Lake Local School District. Student-athletes, upon the completion of the respective season and with the direction of the coach, shall return all such property in a clean and appropriate condition when requested. Failure to do so will result in the student-athlete's reimbursement for **repairs, cleaning or** replacement costs to the Lake athletic department.

OHSAA Regulations

The eligibility standards for the OHSAA have been adopted by member schools and were accepted by the LLSA when it became a member of the OHSAA.

1. Scholarship: Do not change your course schedule or drop a course without first consulting your guidance counselor or athletic director to determine whether it will affect your eligibility. Eligibility for each grading period is determined by grades received in the preceding grade period. Semester and yearly grades have NO effect upon eligibility.

Grades 9-12: To be eligible, you must be currently enrolled in a member school and have received passing grades in a minimum of five one credit courses, or the equivalent, in the immediately preceding grade period.

Grade 7 & 8: To be eligible, you must be currently enrolled in a member school and have received passing grades in a minimum of five subjects in the preceding grade period.

For eligibility purposes, summer school grades may not be used to substitute for failing grades received in the final grading period of the regular school year or for lack of enough courses taken the preceding grading period.

Students taking post-secondary school courses must comply with these standards. Please see your guidance counselor or athletic director if you have questions.

2. Residence: A student is eligible at the school located in the Ohio school district where the parent or legal guardian resides when all other eligibility standards are met. If your parent/legal guardian lives outside Ohio, you are not eligible unless you meet one of the exemptions to the residency bylaws. When there has been a **court-ordered** change in custody, the student must reside in the same school district with the legal guardian ("legal guardian" will be defined by court paperwork).

3. Age Limitations: If you are 19 years of age prior to August 1, you are ineligible for the current school year.

4. Instructional Programs: Camps, clinics, workshops, etc. that involve team play may be attended from June 1-July 31 only. Team play is defined as any activity of individuals with more than one player opposing one player. There is no limit on the number of players from the same school participating on the same team from June 1-July 31. An athlete may have no instructional contact with the school coaching staff except during the season of the sport or for 10 days from June 1-July 31.

5. Non-Interscholastic Participation: Participation by an athlete in a non-interscholastic program (tryouts, practice or contests) while a member of a school squad in the same sport is PROHIBITED. An athlete becomes a member of a squad by participating in an interscholastic contest (scrimmage, preview, or regular season contest). Exceptions: In individual sports, an athlete may practice and try out for a non-school team but may NOT compete in a contest.

Additional information on OHSAA by-laws can be found at:

www.ohsaa.org/general/about/Bylaws.pdf

Pre-Participation Exams (“Physicals”)

OHSAA medical and parent consent forms are required of all interscholastic participants, cheerleaders/dance team members, and club-sport participants before they may participate in a practice or an interscholastic event. Each coach is responsible for the dispersal and collection of these forms to/from student-athletes with the original form being filed in the athletic office (see “*Required Pre-Season Forms*” section; forms are also available on the OHSAA website: www.ohsaa.org).





Lake Local Schools will help coordinate through local health-care personnel for pre-participation exam dates each academic year. Notification of the dates, times, and specific arrangements will be made from the athletic office to the student-athletes and the coaches. Lake athletic coaches may be asked to assist with the administration of these exams.

Pre-Season Parent Information

The Lake High School athletic department requires a series of information responses from each student-athlete’s parent/guardian prior to participation in the athletic program. Parents can view and download all materials by going to:

<http://lake.stark.k12.oh.us/athletics/office/parentinfo.htm>

The following items must be downloaded and completed by the parent and then returned to the student-athlete’s coach prior to participation:

- 1) Download and print the  [Parent Sign-Off](#) Complete all data at the top of the form.
- 2) Review the “*The Sports Report*” video from the OHSAA (below). This video is about 20 minutes in length and covers many important topics.**
- 3) Download and review the new 4-page form,  “*Pre-participation Exam, Eligibility, Insurance and OHSAA Authorization Paperwork*”.
- 4) Download and print the  [Emergency Medical Authorization Form](#).
- 5) Download and review the Lake  [“ATOD Policy”](#).

To access these sites on the LLSD website, go to: <http://www.lakelocal.org/AAA/athletics/Pages/Pre-Season-Parent-Information.aspx>

Once each document has been reviewed by the parent, the parent and student-athlete sign-off on and return the “Parent Sign-off Form” to the respective coach.

Season

A student-athlete is considered “in-season” beginning with the first day of practice as defined by the OHSAA for a specific sport and continuing until the end of the same sport’s

Recognition Night. A student-athlete is considered “out of season” when their activities fall beyond the above stated season time frame. Note: The Lake “ATOD Policy” is considered a 12-month, 24-hour per day agreement between the student-athlete and the district’s substance abuse code.

Sportsmanship

Lake student-athletes are expected to treat all opponents and contest officials with respect and abide by all respective rules for their sport. Student-athletes are expected to accept seriously the responsibility and privilege of representing Lake Schools and the Lake community and display positive actions.

Transportation

All transportation to and from away contracted events is the responsibility of the LLSD and will be provided by the LLSD. Athletes are required to travel to and from away contests in transportation provided by the LLSD. Athletes may not transport themselves to or from away contests. If a special circumstance occurs, the athlete must request approval from the athletic director 24 hours in advance; forms are available in the athletic office and must be completed and signed off on by the responsible coach and the athlete’s parent/guardian (See “*Transportation Permission Form*” under “Information for Students-Parents in Appendix).

The choice of mode of transportation to and from practices ultimately lies with the athlete and their parent/guardian. We strongly encourage athletes to NOT ride with other students or athletes to or from practices. However, if they choose to ride with other students, the driver accepts the responsibility and liability of transportation.

Athletes will remain with their squad and under the supervision of the coach when attending away contests. Athletes who miss the bus are not permitted to participate in the contest unless there are extenuating circumstances. All regular school bus rules apply at all times. Athletes are expected to be dressed appropriately for all school-provided transportation.

Vacation Policy

Student-athletes and their parents need to understand the commitment involved in participating on an interscholastic team. Coaches should also be considerate of special family events and occasions, which may impact a student-athlete’s timeframe. To maintain this balance between co-curricular and family obligations, the following guideline is to be followed when student-athletes must miss scheduled athletic activity due to vacation activity:

- A. The student-athlete must personally contact the coach **prior** to any vacation, which will cause the athlete to miss a practice or athletic event.
 1. Family vacations (student-athlete travels with immediate family members): Before contest participation can resume, the athlete must practice one day for every two practices or athletic events missed.
 2. Non-family vacations (student-athlete travels without

immediate family members): Before contest participation can resume, the athlete must practice two days for every practice or athletic event missed and may be withheld from at least one contest.

NOTE: For purposes of clarity, a “practice” in the above context is a regularly scheduled practice/instructional event that is available and expected of all team members.

B. Failure to personally contact the coach prior to any vacation will result in a doubling of the above periods of ineligibility and the athlete will be withheld from at least one contest.

Weight Room

Lake Local Schools provides an outstanding weight room facility, which is available to all Lake Local students and residents. The weight room is located in the Lake Athletic Complex and maintains posted hours by sport seasons (hours are available by contacting the Lake athletic office). No students are permitted in the weight room without direct supervision by a Lake athletic department-approved weight room supervisor. Coaches and athletes may arrange specific workout hours and programs by contact the Head Strength Coach.