

**LIFE SCHOOL**  
**Athletic Department**  
**Staff Athletic Handbook**  
**2025-2026**



Preparing student-athletes for success  
through the four core principles of

*Leadership*

*Integrity*

*Family*

*Excellence*

...in everything we do

## Mission of Life School Athletics

The mission of the Life School Athletic Department is to prepare student-athletes for success through the four core principles of *Leadership*, *Integrity*, *Family* and *Excellence*—in everything we do.

## Philosophy of Life School Athletics

Life School believes that a dynamic program of student activities is vital to the educational development of the student.

The Life School Athletic Department provides a variety of experiences to enhance the Life School mission of training leaders.

Athletics should function as an integral part of the total curriculum. It should offer opportunities to serve the school and community, to assist in the development of positive relationships and good will, to promote self-realization, all-around growth, and good citizenship qualities.

**The Life School athletic program is based on the premise that athletes are students first and that athletic participation is a privilege rather than a right.** Students learn teamwork and group responsibility. They also learn to deal with success and to overcome adversity.

The athletic program in Life School is structured very intentionally, with specific goals in mind for athletes at each level. All athletes are required to properly represent Life School on and off the field, or they will not be afforded the privilege of representing Life School in interscholastic competition.

**At the middle school level** our primary goal is to make the athletic experience for the students enjoyable. It is a time to focus on participation and camaraderie among team members. This allows the students to have fun while learning the fundamentals of the sport. All athletes who try out and make a middle school team, are in attendance daily at practice, and are eligible academically will have an opportunity to participate in every single game. Winning is a secondary issue for our program at this level. We believe that if middle school student has a great experience with their friends, and learns the fundamentals of their respective sport, we have accomplished the most important foundational goals in building the total athletic program.

As the students move up through our program into **high school**, we begin shaping them toward the day they will begin competing at the varsity level. Similar to middle school, our freshmen and junior varsity teams are

centered on player development. While the playing time percentage may vary, we attempt to ensure each student has an opportunity to participate in all games. Again, the final score is less important than facilitating player growth.

**At the varsity level we play to win championships, without sacrificing our character and integrity.**

Playing time is at the varsity head coach's discretion, driven by the intent to win. Varsity players are mature both athletically and mentally and their dedication and commitment to their team must supersede their personal desires. One of life's greatest lessons and gifts is the privilege of living for a purpose bigger than self. We firmly believe a team can, and should compete at the highest level, giving maximum effort, in a way that honors Life School and the teams in which they compete.

## WHAT WE VALUE

- We are about academic achievement in middle school and high school.
- While we value championships, we value developing championship people more.
- We value graduation rates more than winning percentages.
- We are about the education of students more than entertainment of the public.
- We focus on the team not the individual.
- We focus on developing character, leadership and integrity. Winning will be the by-product.
- We are about the process.
- We are an education-based program.
- We value our outstanding reputation with those against whom we compete by fielding competitive teams that play hard with good character and sportsmanship.

## **JOB DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **ATHLETIC DIRECTOR**

1. Develops and maintains a comprehensive athletic program which seeks the highest development of all participants and respects the individual dignity of every athlete.
2. Considers the well-being of the entire student body as fundamental in all decisions and actions.
3. Supports the principle of due process and protects the civil and human rights of all individuals.
4. Organizes, directs, and promotes an interscholastic athletic program that is an integral part of the total educational program.
5. Cooperates with the staff and school administration in establishing, implementing, and supporting school policies.
6. Acts impartially in the execution of basic policies and in the enforcement of the conference, league and state high school association rules and regulations.
7. Fulfills professional responsibilities with honesty and integrity.
8. Upholds the honor of the profession in all relations with students, colleagues, coaches, administrators, and the public.
9. Improves the professional status and effectiveness of the interscholastic athletic administrator through participation in local, state and national in-service programs.
10. Promotes high standards of ethics, sportsmanship, and personal conduct by encouraging administration, coaches, staff, student-athletes, and community to commit to these high standards.
11. Abides by and enforces the policies as described in the athletic handbook.
12. Oversees and develops the athletic program to develop leadership, character, and scholarship in student athletes.
13. Oversees and develops coaches so they perform to the best of their ability and that the students are receiving the best instruction and training.
14. Facilitates the coaches' desires, concerns and/or complaints with the administration.
15. Works with the school business administrator and respective administration in setting and implementing athletic budget.
16. Approves any Purchase Order (P.O.) and check request from the athletic department.
17. Approves all equipment and supply orders for athletic department.
18. Submits one-year and submits and updates five-year plan as needed.
19. Maintains compliance with all UIL and TEA mandates regarding eligibility and safety training.
20. Works with the administration in the development and improvement of athletic facilities.
21. Follows any other duties as assigned by the administration.
22. Abides by the job duties as described in the Athletic Staff Job Duties and Responsibilities.
23. Annually updates and submits athletic manuals for board approval.
24. Coordinates policy and implementation.

**ATHLETIC COORDINATOR**

1. Serves as game administrator as assigned.
2. Assists in recruiting and interviewing coaches.
3. Oversees respective athletic periods
4. Oversees game scheduling.
5. Oversees practice schedule and times for all teams.
6. Oversees the collection, organization and filing of student athletic paperwork.
7. Holds respected coaches accountable in following all athletic policy and procedures.
8. Enforces student athlete discipline procedures.
9. Oversees uniform and equipment inventory.
10. Oversees summer sports camp and leagues.
11. Communicates with Athletic Director (A.D.).
12. Mentors new coaches.
13. Mediates conflicts before they go to the A.D.
14. Coordinates transportation schedule.
15. Coordinates home games.
  - a. Oversee the concession and gate.
  - b. Work with maintenance department to make sure that the gym is clean and for an athletic event.
  - c. Coordinate with the gate keeper to secure revenue, count, log, and deposit money.
  - d. Work with the coaches to ensure athletic sportsmanship and uniformity.
  - e. Oversees audio/visual presentations.
  - f. Be available to coaches, referees, security, and administration.
  - g. Turn in paperwork for referees' payment.
  - h. Admin on duty is last to leave a home game except for coach or school personnel. Make sure that all entrances are secure and all equipment, concessions, money, etc. is put away.
  - i. Fulfill all other responsibilities necessary to ensure that the game is running well and in order.
16. Implements the vision and policy of the athletic director.
17. Schedules and holds coaches' meetings, as necessary.
18. Holds coaches accountable for fulfilling responsibilities and following policy and procedures.
19. Submits facility request for all games and practices before the start of each season.
20. Schedules and submits check requests for all referees.
21. Submits purchase requisitions and/or check requests for equipment, meets, tournaments, and travel.
22. Counts, records, and deposits any money collected for fee, concession, ticket sales or miscellaneous to the Athletic Office.
23. Oversees the inventory all athletic equipment and supplies at the end of the year and submits to the athletic director.
24. Oversees Licensed Athletic Trainers who track all athletic files to determine if they have all the proper forms, waivers, medical evaluation and fees on file. Ensures that no one participates in practice or games without all paperwork and fees complete.
25. Coordinates all game scheduling with the head coach of each sport. Submits final schedule to athletic director for approval.
26. In case of sudden cancellation, contacts the administrative staff and affected schools as soon as the information becomes available.
27. Coordinates the operation of the concession at home games.
28. Performs any other duties as assigned.

**HEAD COACH**

1. Provides technical expertise in coaching the assigned athletic activity.
2. Upholds board policies and follows administrative procedures; promotes a favorable image of the school.
3. Works with the athletic coordinator to evaluate program needs.
4. Requisitions program supplies and equipment.
5. Promotes proper use and care of school property.
6. Reviews procedures and schedules before the start of the season.
7. Attends all mandatory programs (e.g. rules interpretation, first aid/CPR training, etc.)
8. Encourages student involvement in program activities.
9. Helps parents and students understand program objectives.
10. Explains student responsibilities (e.g. eligibility, parental permissions, physical exams, training/performance schedules, requirements for letters, insurance coverage, waiver forms).
11. Organizes team tryouts and maintains the integrity of the selection process. Organizes and carries out a practice schedule.
12. Coordinates activities with the school calendar.
13. Gives the athletic coordinator a copy of all student and parent communications.
14. Maintains accurate records and submits reports on time.
15. Respects personal privacy and maintains the confidentiality of privileged information.
16. Avoids public criticism of training/coaching methods used by other individuals.
17. Assumes responsibility for the development of off-season activities (e.g. summer camps, leagues, etc.).
18. Teaches precautions and procedures to help students prevent injuries.
19. Ensures that medical authorization forms are on file and readily available.
20. Promptly documents all injuries that require medical attention.
21. Evaluates individual and team performance; Prepares statistics and makes them available to the media.
22. Promotes athletes using positive public relation methods.
23. Develops and refines game strategies.
24. Helps the athletic coordinator secure personnel for home games.
25. Provides guidance, communicates high expectations, and shows an active interest in student progress.
26. Promotes academic success as an important priority for all students.
27. Reports student discipline problems, vandalism, and other related concerns.
28. Verifies that participants have fulfilled all requirements for letters, awards, and/or certificates.
29. Participates in student recognition programs.
30. Helps with supervision responsibilities related to the preparation of athletic fields, gyms, and practice areas.
31. Assigns and keeps track of athletic equipment issued to students and staff.
32. Ensures that students keep locker rooms and practice areas orderly.
33. Helps arrange transportation and lodging for sanctioned activities.
34. Obtains permission to be away when duties conflict with other assigned duties.
35. Takes precautions to ensure staff/student safety. Does not leave students unsupervised.
36. Watches for student behavior that may indicate a problem. Intervenes and/or reports concerns to an administrator.
37. Monitors innovations, evaluates activities, and recommends program improvements.
38. Supervises approved fund-raising activities. Works with the athletic coordinator to ensure that all financial activities are processed properly.
39. Follows medical guidelines (i.e. red in RankOne, physician notes to ATs, rosters, SWAY test
40. Practices Emergency Action Plans with teams each season at each location.
41. Participates in national, state, and/or regional activities that advance district goals. Participates in staff meetings and professional growth opportunities as directed.
42. Accepts personal responsibility for decisions and conduct.
43. Strives to develop rapport and serve as a positive role model for others.
44. Performs other specific job-related duties as directed.

**ASSISTANT COACH**

1. Provides technical expertise in coaching the assigned athletic activity.
2. Maintains loyalty to head coach and program.
3. Upholds board policies and follows administrative procedures.
4. Promotes a favorable image of the school.
5. Works with the head coach to evaluate program needs.
6. Promotes proper use and care of school property.
7. Assists head coach in reviewing procedures and schedules before the start of the season.
8. Attends all mandatory programs (e.g. rules interpretation, first aid/CPR training, etc.)
9. Encourages student involvement in program activities.
10. Assists head coach in helping parents and students understand program objectives.
11. Is knowledgeable of student responsibilities (e.g. eligibility, parental permissions, physical exams, training/performance schedules, requirements for letters, insurance coverage, waiver forms).
12. Assists head coach in organizing team tryouts and maintaining the integrity of the selection process.
13. Assists the head coach in organizing and carrying out a practice schedule.
14. Gives the head coach a copy of all student and parent communications.
15. Maintains accurate records and submits reports on time.
16. Respects personal privacy and maintains the confidentiality of privileged information.
17. Avoids public criticism of training/coaching methods used by other individuals.
18. Assumes responsibility for promoting and assisting in off-season activities (e.g. summer camps, leagues, etc.).
19. Teaches precautions and procedures to help students prevent injuries.
20. Ensures that medical authorization forms are on file and readily available.
21. Promptly documents all injuries that require medical attention.
22. Assists head coaches in evaluating individual and team performance.
23. Assists head coach in preparing statistics and makes them available to the media.
24. Gives input in developing and refining game strategies.
25. Recruits, trains, and supervises student managers, trainers, and scouts.
26. Helps the head coach secure personnel for home games.
27. Provides guidance, communicates high expectations, and shows an active interest in student progress.
28. Promotes academic success as an important priority for all students.
29. Reports student discipline problems, vandalism, and other related concerns.
30. Participates in student recognition programs.
31. Helps with supervision responsibilities related to the preparation of athletic fields, gyms, and practice areas.
32. Ensures that students keep locker rooms and practice areas orderly.
33. Obtains permission to be away when duties conflict with other assigned duties.
34. Takes precautions to ensure staff/student safety. Does not leave students unsupervised.
35. Watches for student behavior that may indicate a problem. Intervenes and/or reports concerns to an administrator.
36. Monitors innovations, evaluates activities, and recommends program improvements.
37. Follows medical guidelines (i.e. red in RankOne, physician notes to ATs, rosters, SWAY tests)
38. Practices Emergency Action Plans with teams each season at each location.
39. Participates in national, state, and/or regional activities that advance district goals.
40. Participates in staff meetings and professional growth opportunities as directed.
41. Accepts personal responsibility for decisions and conduct.
42. Strives to develop rapport and serve as a positive role model for others.
43. Performs other specific job-related duties as directed.



## CODE OF CONDUCT FOR UNIVERSITY INTERSCHOLASTIC LEAGUE COACHES

We, at the University Interscholastic League, believe that high school athletic competition should be fun, but that it must also be a significant part of a sound educational program. We believe that those who coach student-athletes are, first and foremost, teachers who have a duty to assure that the essential elements of character-building are embodied in the concept of sportsmanship and six core ethical values: trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring, and good citizenship. Finally, we believe that the sincere and good faith efforts to honor the words and spirit of this Code will improve the quality of our programs and the well-being of our student-athletes. This Code of Conduct applies to all full-time and part-time coaches involved in University Interscholastic League sports.

I understand that in my position as a coach, I must act in accord with the following code:

### TRUSTWORTHINESS

1. **Trustworthiness** - Be worthy of trust in all I do and teach student-athletes the importance of integrity, honesty, reliability, and loyalty.
  - Integrity - Model high ideals of ethics and sportsmanship and always pursue victory with honor; teach, advocate, and model the importance of honor and good character by doing the right thing even when it is unpopular or personally costly.
  - Honesty - Do not lie, cheat, steal, engage in, or permit dishonest or unsportsmanlike conduct.
  - Reliability - Fulfill commitments; be on time. Do what I say I will do.
  - Loyalty - Be loyal to my school and team; put the team above personal glory.
2. **Primacy of Educational Goals** - Be faithful to the educational and character-development missions of the school and assure that these objectives are not compromised to achieve sports performance goals; always place the academic, emotional, physical, and moral well-being of athletes above desires and pressures to win.
3. **Counseling** - Be candid with student-athletes and their parents about the likelihood of getting an athletic scholarship or playing on a professional level. Counsel them about the requirement of many colleges preventing recruitment of student-athletes that do not have a serious commitment to their education, the ability to succeed academically, or the character to represent their institution honorably.
4. **College Recruiters** - Be honest and candid with college recruiters about the character, academic abilities, and interest of student-athletes.

### RESPECT

1. **Respect** – Treat all people with respect at all times and require the same of student-athletes.
2. **Class** – Be a good sport. Teach and model class and be gracious in victory and accept defeat with dignity; encourage student-athletes to give fallen opponents a hand, compliment extraordinary performance, and show sincere respect in pre- and post-game rituals.
3. **Taunting** – Do not engage in or allow trash-talking, taunting, boastful celebrations, or other actions that demean individuals or the sport.
4. **Respect Officials** – Treat contest officials with respect; do not complain about or argue with official calls or decisions during or after an athletic event.



5. **Respect Parents** – Treat the parents of student-athletes with respect; be clear about my expectations, goals and policies, and maintain open lines of communication.
6. **Profanity** – Do not engage in or permit profanity or obscene gestures during practices, sporting events, on team buses, or any other situation where the behavior could reflect badly on the school or the sports program.
7. **Positive Coaching** – Use positive coaching methods to make the experience enjoyable, increase self-esteem, and foster a love and appreciation for the sport. Refrain from physical or psychological intimidation, verbal abuse, and conduct that is demeaning to student-athletes or others.
8. **Effort and Teamwork** – Encourage student-athletes to pursue victory with honor, to think and play as a team, to do their best, and continually improve through personal effort and discipline. Discourage selfishness and put less emphasis on the outcome of the contest, than upon effort, improvement, teamwork, and winning with character.
9. **Professional Relationships** – Maintain appropriate professional relationships with student-athletes and respect proper student-teacher boundaries. Sexual or romantic contact with students is strictly forbidden, as is verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature directed to or in view of student-athletes.

## RESPONSIBILITY

1. **Life Skills** - Always strive to enhance the physical, mental, social, and moral development of student-athletes and teach them positive life skills that will help them become well-rounded, successful, and socially responsible.
2. **Advocate Education** - Advocate the importance of education beyond basic athletic eligibility standards. Work with faculty and parents to help student-athletes set and achieve the highest academic goals possible for them.
3. **Advocate Honor** - Prominently discuss the importance of character, ethics, and sportsmanship in materials about the athletic program and vigorously advocate the concept of pursuing victory with honor in all communications.
4. **Good Character** - Foster the development of good character by teaching, advocating, and modeling high standards of ethics and sportsmanship.
5. **Personal Conduct** - Refrain from profanity, disrespectful conduct, and the use of alcohol or tobacco in front of student-athletes or other situations where my conduct could undermine my positive impact as role model.
6. **Role-Modeling** - Be a worthy role-model, always be mindful of the high visibility and great influence I have as a teacher-coach, and consistently conduct myself in private and coaching situations in a manner that exemplifies all I want my student-athletes to be.
7. **Competence** - Strive to improve coaching competence and acquire increasing proficiency in coaching principles and current strategies, character-building techniques, and first aid safety.
8. **Knowledge of Rules** - Maintain a thorough knowledge of current game and competition rules and assure that my student-athletes know and understand the rules.
9. **Positive Environment** - Strive to provide challenging, safe, enjoyable, and successful experiences for the athletes by maintaining a sports environment that is physically and emotionally safe.
10. **Safety and Health** - Be informed about the basic first aid principles and the physical capacities and limitations of the age group coached.
11. **Unhealthy Substances** - Educate student-athletes about the dangers and prohibit the use of unhealthy and illegal substances including alcohol, tobacco, and recreational or performance-enhancing drugs.

12. **Eating Disorders** - Counsel students about the dangers of and be vigilant for signs of eating disorders or unhealthy techniques to gain, lose, or maintain weight.
13. **Physician's Advice** - Seek and follow the advice of a physician when determining whether an injured student-athlete is ready to play.
14. **Privilege to Compete** - Assure that student-athletes understand that participation in interscholastic sports programs is a privilege, not a right, and that they are expected to represent their school, team and teammates with honor, on and off the field. Require student-athletes to consistently exhibit good character and conduct themselves as positive role models.
15. **Self-Control** - Control my ego and emotions; avoid displays of anger and frustration; do not retaliate.
16. **Integrity of the Game** - Protect the integrity of the game; do not gamble. Play the game according to the rules.
17. **Enforcing Rule** - Enforce this Code of Conduct consistently in all sports-related activities and venues.
18. **Protect Athletes** - Put the well-being of student-athletes above other considerations and take appropriate steps to protect them from inappropriate conduct.
19. **Access** - Help make my sport accessible to all diverse communities.
20. **Improper Commercialism** - Be sensitive to and avoid unwholesome commercialism including inappropriate exploitation of my name or the name of the school. Make sure any affiliation or association with a corporate entity is approved by school and district officials.

## FAIRNESS

21. **Fair and Open** - Be fair in competitive situations, selecting a team, disciplinary issues, and all other matters; be open-minded and willing to listen and learn.

## CARING

22. **Safe Competition** - Put safety and health considerations above the desire to win; never permit student-athletes to intentionally injure any player or engage in reckless behavior that might cause injury to themselves or others.
23. **Caring Environment** - Consistently demonstrates concern for student-athletes as individuals and encourages them to look out for one another and think and act as a team.

## CITIZENSHIP

24. **Honor the Spirit of Rules** - Observe and require student-athletes to observe the spirit and letter of all rules, including the rules of the game and those relating to eligibility, recruitment, transfers, practices, and other provisions regulating interscholastic competition.
25. **Improper Gamesmanship** - Promote sportsmanship over gamesmanship; **DO NOT CHEAT**. Resist the temptation to gain competitive advantage through strategies or techniques that violate the rules, disrespect the highest traditions of the sport, or change the nature of competition.

## UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT PROCEDURES

Life School reserves the right to penalize coaches for unsportsmanlike conduct. Life School shall enforce the minimum penalties as directed by UIL for such conduct and will enforce the following policy and procedures:

### 1. **Technical Foul and/or Other Unsportsmanlike Conduct whether penalized or not**

Coach MUST self-report to the athletic coordinator.

- a. Verbal warning by athletic coordinator/director.

### 2. **Subsequent Offenses**

- a. Written reprimand and/or a possible game suspension and/or probation.

### 3. **First Ejection**

- a. Coach MUST self-report to the athletic coordinator.
- b. Coach is suspended for the next scheduled game.
- c. Written warning by athletic director to go in the employee's personnel file.

### 4. **Second Ejection**

- a. Coach MUST self-report to the athletic coordinator.
- b. Coach is suspended for the next two scheduled games.
- c. Written warning by athletic director to go in the employee's personnel file.
- d. Evaluation of coaching assignment

### 5. **Third Ejection**

- a. Removal as a coach from the athletic department from all sports.
- b. Further determination will be made by the executive board.

## **GENERAL POLICY AND PROCEDURES**

### **1. Practice**

- a. The athletic coordinator and head coaches work together to schedule the practice times and reserve the facilities.
- b. The coach should be at practice early with a prepared practice schedule.
- c. The coach is responsible to make sure that athletes are supervised until they leave the practice or school facility.
- d. Practice can only be cancelled with the authorization of the head coach with notification to the Athletic Coordinator and should be done with advance notice except in cases of inclement weather or emergency. Notice of the cancellation should be communicated in the most efficient means possible (social media, email, text) with notice also given to the principal.

### **2. Team Rules**

Coaches are responsible to develop their own team rules that support the philosophy and procedures of the overall athletic program. These shall be approved through the athletic director and kept on file in the athletic office.

### **3. Academic Progress**

Coaches are responsible for monitoring the weekly grade reports for all athletes who are on their team when in-season OR athletes in the off-season for whom they are responsible during the athletic period. Coaches are also responsible to making sure athletes attend tutorials as needed.

### **4. Service Requirement**

All student-athletes should perform a service project during the year in order to be eligible for a letter jacket or end-of-season awards. Head coaches will be responsible for coordinating service projects to help athletes meet this requirement. Coaches are also required to participate as determined by the athletic coordinator. Athletes may substitute 10 hours of community service as approved by the athletic coordinator in place of this requirement.

### **5. Travel Procedures**

- a) All coaches are required to go through the vehicle safety training and orientation.
- b) The athletic coordinators will coordinate the scheduling of transportation.
- c) Vehicle key and maintenance reports must be turned in upon arrival.
- d) All coaches must carry a first aid kit and travel files to all off-campus extracurricular activities.
- e) Athletes must travel to the game with the team. A student will only be released to ride home with a parent/guardian after a game. Parents must sign a release waiver which the coach shall have at all games before releasing the student to the parent. Students with a valid driver's license may, in special circumstances, drive to an off-site practice facility. A waiver signed by the parents must be on file with the athletic coordinator.

### **6. Scheduling Procedures**

The varsity head coach of each sport is responsible for scheduling all games and activities and coordinating the schedule with the athletic coordinator. Coaches may recommend non-district teams to schedule. All athletic schedules must be approved by the athletic director and Life School administration in accordance with UIL game limits. Non-district games over 60 miles away must be approved in advance by the athletic director and/or designee.

**7. Meal Allotment**

The coach in charge will pay for all team meals from the district athletic fund for playoff games, regional/state meets, clinics and athletic events that require overnight stay. Meals will be limited to:

- a. \$8 breakfast
- b. \$13 lunch
- c. \$18 dinner

The coach is expected to turn in all meal receipts to the Athletic Department immediately upon return to school. This must be done within 48 hours of returning from the trip.

**8. Purchasing**

Coaches must submit a quote for all prospective expenses and turn into the athletic coordinator. The athletic coordinator will submit the purchase requisition. The athletic director may approve or disapprove the purchase. If the athletic director approves the purchase, the athletic director will then submit the purchase order to the business manager. Once approved, the athletic coordinator will give a copy of the purchase order to the coach to order. The coach is responsible to inventory the equipment upon arrival and turn in all packing slips to the athletic coordinator. If a school credit card is used for purchases, it is the responsibility of the person using the card to be sure no sales tax is applied and that an itemized receipt is returned with the card. It is advised to take a picture of the receipt at the time of the purchase. Requests for credit card use must be made at least two days in advance.

**9. Team Selection**

- a) Coaches are to retain the most players on a team without sacrificing the team's integrity and to have impartial tryouts that provide equal opportunity for all students to make the team.
- b) The head coach is responsible for setting the standards for which to make the team. Academics and discipline may be considered in the team selection.
- c) The head coach is responsible for choosing the team. The athletic director has the right to set both a minimum and maximum number of players for each team.
- d) The head coach is responsible for informing the students in person whether they made the team.
- e) The head coach is responsible for publishing the dates and times of the tryouts. This information will be given to the athletic coordinator for approval two weeks in advance. The athletic coordinator will work with the administration as necessary to ensure that there are no unnecessary conflicts.
- f) The coach is responsible for updating rosters in RankOne as soon as the decision has been made.
- g) All decisions of the head coach regarding access and opportunity for participation, including decisions involving selection, practice, and playing time, must be made on individual assessments of skill, ability, and other appropriate benchmarks, and shall be the same for all students, regardless of disability. The School does not discriminate against individuals with disabilities based on their disability in its programs, services, or activities and mandates full compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; Title IX of the Education Amendment Act of 1972; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act; and all other applicable laws.

**10. Dress Code**

Coaches are to be in proper dress attire at both games and practices. At no time should coaches wear jeans during a contest. No caps or visors should be worn for indoor sports. Athletes should be in Life School or team-assigned attire during practices and games. At no time should athletes be allowed to practice shirtless (this includes open gym/field).

Coaches are required to wear the following:

**a. Football and Golf**

1. Game-Professional coaching attire (or dress shorts in warmer weather; no cargo pants/shorts), athletic polo
2. Practice- professional coaching attire

**b. Volleyball and Basketball**

1. Game (Men)-dress shirt or athletic polo, dress slacks, sport jacket (optional)
2. Game (Women)- business dress preferred, dress slacks, athletic polo (optional)
3. Practice- professional coaching attire

**c. Softball and Baseball**

1. Game—Appropriate uniform (baseball), khaki pants or shorts (no cargo shorts), athletic polo or wind suit
2. Practice--professional coaching attire

**d. Track & Cross Country**

1. Game-Khaki pants or shorts (no cargo pants/shorts), wind suit, athletic polo
2. Practice- professional coaching attire

**11. Coaches Uniforms**

- a. Athletic T-shirts, shorts and hats given to coaches will become the coaches' property at the end of the year.
- b. Coaching jackets, pullovers, coats, or warm-ups that have not been used for three or more years must be turned in when the coach resigns his/her coaching position.

**12. Coaches Office**

The coaches' office is to be always kept clean and orderly.

**13. Multiple Sport Athletes**

Coaches are not to discourage athletes from playing other sports. If an athlete is not qualified for a sport, the coach may cut him/her from the team; however, this shall not be done for the benefit of another sport. Failure to comply with this guideline may result in removal from the coaching position. Club sports shall not be promoted over other school sports.

**14. Professional Leave Requests**

Professional leave requests must be submitted to your designated principal at the beginning of each season. Failure to have these processed in advance may forfeit your permission to leave. Coaches should follow up with the substitute coordinator to confirm their approved request. In tournaments or post-season play, the coach must have the approval done in advance for all possible alternatives and then contact the substitute coordinator as soon as the time needed off is known. If a professional leave has been processed and the need no longer exists, failure to contact the substitute coordinator in advance may result in loss of personal day(s). As long as a conflict does not exist with coaching responsibilities and substitute teachers are available, high school head coaches and varsity assistants may use a professional day to attend their sport's state championship game.

**15. Early Release**

Early release requests for student-athletes must be submitted in advance to the principal, teacher, and attendance clerk. Failure to do so may result in a written reprimand. If there is a change in the original approved form, the coach must notify the principal and attendance clerk.

**16. Locker Room**

- a. The locker room is to be always kept clean and orderly.
- b. Before athletes begin any practice, game, or PE activities, coaches should inspect the locker room to ensure all items are secured in the lockers.
- c. Coaches are to secure the locker room during game or practice time.
- d. Lockers will be assigned to each athlete at the beginning of the year. The locker number, student, and combination must be kept on file in the office.
- e. Only players, coaches, and authorized personnel are allowed in the locker room during game or practice time.

**17. Chain of Command**

Coaches should try to work things out among themselves if a conflict arises first. Next, they speak to their respective head coaches. After that, the Campus Athletic Coordinator can be consulted. Finally, the District Athletic Director will make the final decision. Coaches may also take advantage of any employee grievance process available to staff members.

**18. Overnight Trips / Team Building Activities**

All students participating in overnight trips must have a waiver form signed and on file with the athletic coordinator. Students must have lights out at the head coach's discretion. Student participation in team-building activities is strictly voluntary, and parental consent for participation is required. Team-building activities in coaches' homes are not allowed, and overnight team-building activities may only occur on school grounds or an approved location/event. Coaches are to go first to the athletic coordinator to approve an event or activity that is not a regularly scheduled activity or function of the team or athletic department. The athletic coordinator will then get approval from the athletic director.

**19. Transportation of Students**

Life School has a strict policy prohibiting any member of its staff from transporting a student in the employee's personal automobile, except in potentially life-threatening or other emergency situations where employees should exercise professional judgment.

Any staff member who opts to transport students personally is not considered an agent of Life School, may be personally liable in the event of accident and/or injury, and may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

**20. Use of Electronic Media with Students**

**An employee who uses electronic media to communicate with students shall observe the following:**

The employee may use any form of electronic media **except** text messaging. Only a teacher, trainer or other employee who has an extracurricular duty may use school messenger or an approved one-way text messaging program (Remind 101) and then only to communicate with students who participate in the extracurricular activity over which the employee has responsibility. Text messaging students during the academic day is prohibited.



The employee shall limit communications to matters within the scope of the employee's professional responsibilities.

- **for classroom teachers:** matters relating to class work, homework, and tests
- **for an employee with an extracurricular duty:** matters relating to the extracurricular activity

The employee is prohibited from knowingly communicating with students through a personal social network page, unless the employee has a family relationship or other appropriate out-of-school relationship with the student, such as church or community group membership; the employee must create a separate social network page ("professional page") for the purpose of communicating with students. The employee "professional page" must have supervisor approval prior to use. A list of these pages will be shared with Central Office administration. The employee must enable the administration and parents to access the employee's professional page.

The employee shall not communicate directly with any student between 9:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m. except for school-sponsored or extra-curricular events. An employee may, however, make public posts to a social network site, blog, or similar application at any time.

To the extent allowed by applicable law, the employee does not have a right to privacy with respect to communications with students and parents.

## 21. Summer Duties

Coaches are expected to commit to improving the athletic program by working during the summer in the weight room, open gym, open fields, and sport-specific skills training. These assignments will be coordinated by the head coaches and approved by the athletic coordinator.

## 22. Removal from Athletic Team

Athletes may be removed from a team or athletic program as outlined in the Student Athletic Handbook under "Discipline." Coaches should follow the following procedures.

- a. Keep thorough documentation of the athlete's misconduct. Incidents should be documented immediately following each occurrence. Parents must be kept informed of major violations.
- b. In case of game suspension, a coach must notify the campus administration and the athletic coordinator and provide documentation before the suspension occurs. The coach must then contact the parent/guardian and inform them of the suspension.
- c. When a series of minor violations occur, documentation must be provided to demonstrate the coach's intervention. Documentation should include the date and results of at least one conference with the athlete and parent/guardian. The athletic coordinator should be included in the intervention process.
- d. In case of a major violation, an athlete may be removed immediately. This decision will be made by the campus administration and athletic coordinator upon written request of the coach. A 24-hour waiting period is required before any final decision is made.
- e. After receiving the athletic coordinator and campus administration's approval, the coach will contact the parent/guardian and athlete to inform them of the student's dismissal from the team or athletic program.
- f. The coach must consult with the athletic coordinator and the campus administrator about the dismissal of a student from the team or athletic program. The final decision to move a student out of the athletic period rests with the athletic director and campus administration.

**23. Scouting**

Coaches will be assigned to scout future opponents of the varsity team. Scouts should check with the varsity coach the day before the game to verify game time and specific information to be gathered.

- a. All scouts should arrive at the game a minimum of thirty minutes prior to game time.
- b. Scouting reports are to be completed and given personally to the head coach as assigned.
- c. Any scouting trips must be made with the prior approval of the campus athletic coordinator. The scout will use his/her personal car for traveling purposes and will be reimbursed at the school's going mileage rate.
- d. Appropriate documentation must be turned in within the following week for reimbursement requests. Reimbursements can only be made with administrative approval.

**24. End of Season Obligations**

All coaches at Life School must meet certain end-of-season responsibilities to complete their coaching assignments. Failure to comply may affect future assignments and withhold school paychecks to the extent applicable law allows.

- a. To keep the Board of Directors informed about the accomplishments of our programs, all varsity, junior varsity, and junior high coaches must submit an annual end-of-season report. These reports and a meeting with the athletic coordinator must be completed within two weeks of the final season contest.
- b. Outstanding Equipment/Uniform Obligations by Athletes
  - 1) The in-season coach is responsible for collecting all equipment at the end of the current season.
  - 2) Upon termination of sports participation, the student must clear out of his/her locker.
  - 3) The school is not responsible for personal items left in unattended lockers.
- c. A checklist form must be completed at the end of the season and the school year's end. The form must be turned in to the athletic coordinator at the end of the season.

## **ATHLETIC AWARDS POLICY**

**Varsity Letter Requirements**

The varsity award shall be presented to an athlete who satisfies the participation requirements as listed below, completes all team obligations, and receives the coach's recommendation. Athletes must complete the season in good standing with the school and coach. Athletes will be awarded letter jackets at the end of the school year. However, students must complete all re-enrollment forms with fees paid for the next school year (except seniors). (The coach may recommend waiving these requirements under an unusual circumstance).

- a. Baseball/Softball:
  1. play in at least one-fourth of all innings
  2. pinch-hit or pinch-run in three-fourths of the games
  3. pitch in four starts or six game appearances
- b. Basketball: participate in fifty percent of regular season games
- c. Cheerleading: meet ninety percent of the contest and practice requirements and attend at least one cheer competition.
- d. Cross Country: participate in at least seventy-five percent of meets, which shall include the district meet
- e. Golf: participate on the varsity team in at least fifty percent of the matches/tournaments
- f. Football: participate in fifty percent of all quarters or play a specialist position, e.g., punter, kick-off squad, return man, extra-punt kicker, in fifty percent of regular season contests
- g. Soccer: participate in fifty percent of the regular season games
- h. Track: be a regional alternate or score points in varsity meets

- i. Volleyball: participate in fifty percent of the regular season matches
- j. Power Lifting: qualify for regionals or participate in at least seventy-five percent of meets
- k. Seniors: will qualify for lettering if they make any team at the varsity level
- l. Managers: Managers may letter in a sport where they have served a varsity team for the whole season.
- m. Athletic Training Student Aides: complete all assigned duties for 2 of 3 sporting seasons (Fall, Winter, Spring)

## **ATHLETIC EQUIPMENT AND FACILITIES**

### **ISSUING ATHLETIC EQUIPMENT**

Each head coach is directly responsible for the care and control of all equipment used in his/her program.

1. The head coach will be responsible for ensuring that all equipment is inventoried when received by the department before equipment is issued by members of the coaching staff. The coach shall retain the form for the end-of-season equipment check-in.
2. Coaches should carefully consider the selection of all student equipment managers and thoroughly explain their duties. These individuals are the key to equipment control and maintenance.
3. The head coach, although he/she may delegate the issuing of equipment to assistant coaches and managers, is ultimately responsible for the security of athletic equipment issued to all team personnel. The coach who issues equipment must have the knowledge required to ensure proper equipment fitting.
4. Players are to be instructed in properly using and maintaining their equipment at the time of issue. This is particularly important for safety equipment.
5. Athletes will be responsible for all equipment issued to them. If the equipment is lost or has had abnormal usage, the athlete will be charged accordingly.
6. Periodically, coaches shall inspect equipment and facilities during the season and shall report any hazards to the campus athletic coordinator.
7. All general equipment used by more than one sport (video equipment, pylons, etc.) will be stored in a specific area. Always return equipment to this area promptly for others to use.

### **USE OF ATHLETIC EQUIPMENT AND FACILITIES**

It is important to emphasize to all athletes their responsibility to take care of school equipment and facilities and to report any abuses to their coach or the athletic administrator. Replacing equipment and repairs to facilities can only result in a loss of funding that could be used elsewhere in the athletic program.

1. Athletic department-issued equipment is to be worn only during practice sessions and interscholastic contests or by coaches' permission. At no time are athletes to wear school-issued equipment or uniforms for:
  - a. Gym classes
  - b. Work or job
  - c. Socially
2. Varsity-level teams may only wear warm-ups or team shirts to school on game day or on Friday if the game is on Saturday with prior principal and athletic coordinator approval.
3. Sports where athletes personally buy a portion of their practice or game uniforms, these may be worn at the athlete's discretion outside of the school.
4. Warm-up jackets (basketball, softball, etc.) may be worn to and from school, but only on contest days. Clothing, if supplied by the school, is never to be worn as a school item.
5. School district athletic equipment will not be loaned to outside groups without the permission of the athletic coordinator.

6. Game uniforms are to be issued and collected at the discretion of the head coach or designee.
7. The athletic coordinator will schedule all athletic facilities on request.
  - a. The athletic coordinator will keep a facilities schedule.
  - b. Head coaches in each sport will meet with the athletic coordinator before the season starts to schedule facilities equitably.
8. Athletic Facilities must be examined and maintained to ensure that athletes are participating in a safe environment free of equipment that is not being used.

## **COLLECTION AND STORAGE OF ATHLETIC EQUIPMENT**

Coaches are responsible for collecting all equipment issued to players during the year. When equipment is collected immediately after the season, more of it is returned with less effort. In fact, coaches are encouraged to collect uniforms and other equipment on the day and directly after their last contest.

1. The head coach shall supervise the collection, inventory, and storage of all the equipment issued within his/her sports program.
2. As athletes turn in their equipment, it should be checked off the master list, noting the condition of all returned equipment.
3. If any equipment is lost or has abnormal usage, the athlete will be charged replacement costs.
  - a. The coach shall inform each athlete he/she will not receive any athletic awards until all financial obligations are met.
  - b. Players still delinquent at the end of the school year will not be allowed to sign up for athletics for the following year.
4. Within two weeks after the season's end, all equipment will be collected, cleaned, inventoried, and stored in the designated (central) storage area.
  - a. No equipment is to be discarded without the approval of the athletic coordinator.
  - b. Equipment to be repaired/reconditioned shall be marked appropriately and stored in the central storage area.
  - c. Make sure that all clothing equipment (game and practice uniform) is either laundered or dry-cleaned before storage.
5. The head coach shall turn in his/her equipment inventory with any outstanding player obligations and next year's budget request to the athletic coordinator two weeks after the last contest.
  - a. In the inventory, the number of items, the description of the equipment, the cost of the equipment when new, and the condition of the equipment should be listed.
  - b. Equipment should be kept clean, repaired, and in a secure area when not in use.  
use if required (certificate of insurance, facility contract).

## **USE OF LIFE SCHOOL FACILITIES**

All Life School facilities are considered public property for all purposes under state law. As such, Life School facilities may generally be used only for purposes described in the Life School charter. Life School Staff must be approved to use facilities for training or any other personal use outside of business hours/days. Any usage of facilities outside school hours must be approved by the Athletic Coordinator and appropriate paperwork must be in place before use if required (certificate of insurance, facility contract). Board approval may also be required in accordance with Board Policy PG-1.9 (School Property).

## **SCHEDULING CHANGES**

1. Have any scheduling or changes to an athletic schedule approved in advance through school and athletic administration.
2. Reprint the new schedule with the revision date.
3. Distribute the schedule to the following:
  - a. Athletic Director/Athletic Coordinator
  - b. All principals and secretaries
  - c. Cheerleading Sponsor
  - d. Athletic Trainers
4. If it is a sudden cancellation of a game, verbally and electronically communicate the cancellation to the same people above as soon as it is confirmed.
5. Submit the new schedule to the administration in charge of facility requests.
6. Failure to communicate scheduling changes may result in facility and/or transportation conflicts. Previously scheduled activities will be given priority.

## **PUBLIC ADDRESS ANNOUNCEMENTS AND MUSIC POLICY**

1. The athletic coordinator must approve All music to be played at events. Music must not be vulgar or include profanity or other content inappropriate for the school setting.
2. Music may only be played as allowed by UIL guidelines.
3. UIL and district-sanctioned announcements shall be used during athletics events during pre-game and intermission.

## **Athletic Injuries or Emergencies**

### **Responsibilities**

1. Injuries may occur in interscholastic events at all levels, regardless of precautions such as safe playing conditions, proper coaching techniques, the best safety equipment, and the required injury warnings.
2. The athletic trainer, when present, will be responsible for administering first aid to all injured athletes and making the proper recommendations.
3. If the athletic trainer is absent, the coach in charge of the activity will assume the responsibility. He/she must be prepared to recognize and properly administer first aid and/or refer injured players to appropriate medical personnel.
4. No coaching staff member should exceed his/her capability or scope of responsibility and attempt to diagnose or treat an injury. Coaches must understand first aid and be ready to administer it. In addition to knowing what to do, the coach should know what not to do.
  - a. Students may be used in the emergency action plan but should not be expected to provide first aid or make any medical decisions for another athlete.
5. the coach in charge of a team is responsible for having a complete sanitary, first aid kit at every practice and contest.
6. All coaches are required to be certified in first aid/CPR/AED and UIL Coaching.
7. All coaches must know and practice EAPs for their teams' practice/play venues.

### **Emergency Procedures.**

1. Check for consciousness and vital signs (breathing, bleeding, and pulse); look for abnormally displaced or misshaped body parts. If the athlete is unconscious, assume the injured athlete may have a spinal injury.

2. Take appropriate steps to control excessive bleeding.
3. Movement of the injured athlete should be kept to a minimum.
4. Keep the injured athlete as warm and comfortable as possible, except in the case of a heat-related illness.
5. When there is any question as to the extent, seriousness, or nature of an injury by the athletic trainer/coach, seek professional medical help immediately.
6. Notify the parents of the injured athlete immediately.
  - a. Parents should assume the responsibility of contacting the family physician for any injury. However, the coach or athletic trainer should recommend this as a routine procedure.
  - b. Less serious injuries - Have parents provide transportation for necessary medical attention.
  - c. More serious injuries - If professional medical help is not readily available, the athletic trainer or coach should call 911 immediately.
7. If unable to access RankOne from their phone, the coaches should always take their emergency travel notebooks to any athletic event, and the notebooks should include the following:
  - a. Athlete's home phone number
  - b. Work and cell phone number(s) for athlete's parent(s)/guardian
  - c. Athlete's preferred hospital
  - d. Athlete's preferred physician
  - e. Emergency medical authorization forms for all athletes
8. If the parents are not available, a member of the coaching staff will accompany the athlete to seek the necessary medical attention. The emergency medical authorization form will be taken to the treatment facility by the coach or athletic trainer. The coach or athletic trainer should continue to try to contact the parents.
9. Notify parents of all noticeable injuries, illnesses, infection, etc. The parents should always contact the family physician.

## Accident/Injury Reporting Procedures

1. Reporting and Procedures
  - a. The Coach will notify parent, athletic coordinator and athletic trainer immediately following an athletic injury or accident that involves any student under his/her supervision during a practice, contest, or while traveling to or from a contest.
  - b. During/After first aid is provided parents should be notified about the injury by a Coach.
  - c. The Coach will turn in all athletic injury reports to the Athletic Trainer, with a copy sent to the Athletic Coordinator.
    - i. The Athletic Trainer will keep all athletic injury reports. These injuries will be recorded in an electronic medical record.
  - d. In case of a serious injury in which an athlete is taken to the hospital, the athletic coordinator, principal, and athletic director should be contacted immediately.
  - e. Coach/Athletic Trainer is to ensure that the parent/guardian receives applicable insurance forms and information.
  - f. Coaches should follow up on all injuries by attempting to make personal contact with the parent/guardian.

Return to Participation- Athletes who have been out of action for a time because of illness or injury and have been under the treatment of the trainer or family physician, must have a written doctor's statement allowing them to return to athletic competition. Notes must be given to the athletic trainers.

## **LIFE SCHOOL ATHLETICS CRISIS MANAGEMENT PLAN**

1. Implement First Responders Plan
  - Immediate care of injured or ill athlete (Know the location of AED)
  - Call 911 if necessary
  - Direction of EMS to scene
2. Contact Family
  - Have copies of waiver and liability forms at practice and contests
3. Contact Campus and District Athletic Administration
4. Stress no contact with media; only the spokesperson reports
5. No comments from staff except through Crisis Team spokesperson
6. Meet with athletes to discuss the situation; No outside discussion of the meeting
7. Complete documentation of events from everyone involved in an incident with signatures
8. Collect all equipment and materials involved and secure in a locked area
9. Acquire appropriate counseling/clergy personnel - including family, athletes, and staff
10. Athletic department staff members are assigned to always be with family upon arrival. Try to isolate family from outside persons.
11. Contact insurance providers
12. Make frequent reports from the Spokesperson to the media (respect family decisions in this area)

## **Health and Safety**

### **Safety Training**

Senate Bill 82, in effect since the 2007-2008 school year, related to safety regulations for certain public school extracurricular activities.

This legislation:

1. Requires safety training for all coaches or sponsors for athletic activities, and any marching band director. UIL has developed a safety training program for coaches and sponsors of athletic activities that is available through the UIL Online as part of the Coaches Certification Program. Visit the **UIL Portal** to complete Safety Training.

Additional information from the Texas Administrative Code, Chapter 76.1003, on these requirements as they pertain to athletic trainers and team physicians.

2. Mandates that schools, at least once per year, conduct a safety drill that incorporates the training described in the safety training program developed by UIL.
3. Requires that student athletes be provided training in recognizing symptoms of catastrophic injuries,



including head and neck injuries, concussions, asthma attacks, heatstroke, cardiac arrest and injuries requiring use of an AED, the risks of using nutritional supplements. This training can be conducted by the school, using the materials available on the SB 82 portion of the Health and Safety Section of the UIL web site. **Download safety training PowerPoint presentation.**

4. Mandates that unsafe athletic activities are prohibited, and schools must make sure that safety precautions are required (asthma medication, hydration materials present, emergency lanes clear etc.)
5. Requires that any student who is rendered unconscious while participating (in practice or game) cannot participate further in that practice or game anymore and must get written clearance prior to any further participation.
6. Mandates that record of compliance with the requirements of the legislation be kept and be made public upon request.
7. Requires that non-compliance with the provisions of the bill could subject the school to penalties as outlined in section 27 and 29 of the Constitution and Contest Rules.
8. Mandates that the Texas Education Agency create hotline number and email address for reports of non-compliance and schools must post that information in their administration offices. To report complaints or violations, contact the Curriculum Division of the Texas Education Agency by phone at 512-463-9581 or by email at curriculum@tea.state.tx.us.
9. Requires the text of sections of bill as well as the Parent Information Manual must be provided to parents of participants. The bill does allow that the required materials can be provided electronically, unless specifically requested otherwise.

## Perry Weather

Life School will utilize weather stations, website, and app provided by Perry Weather to monitor environmental changes. The weather station at each campus is equipped with a horn and a light. The horn will sound, and the light will turn on if lightning is detected within 10 miles of the campus. The horn will sound again, and the light will turn off when it is safe to return from shelter. All coaches will have access to this system if not please see athletic training staff. As technology and research evolve, we will continue to adapt procedures according to industry standards and highest standard of care available to our athletes. If better technology is available, we will use that information.

Perry Weather website: <https://dashboard.pocketperry.com>

## Lightning Safety

Lightning may be the most frequently encountered severe storm hazard endangering physically active people each year. Millions of lightning flashes strike the ground annually in the United States, causing nearly 100 deaths and 400 injuries. Three quarters of all lightning casualties occur between May and September, and nearly four fifths occur between 10:00 am and 7:00 pm, which coincides with the hours for most athletic events. All coaches should have the Pocket Perry app installed on their phones and understand the horns/lights process at each Life School stadium.

## Recommendations for Lightning Safety

1. All coaches should maintain their Pocket Perry account and location.
2. Establish a chain of command that identifies who is to make the call to remove individuals from the field.
3. Participants and spectators must seek a safe shelter when the range is lower than 10 miles.

4. Name a designated weather watcher (A person who actively looks for the signs of threatening weather and notifies the chain of command if severe weather becomes dangerous). Utilize I-Strike technology.
5. Have a means of monitoring local weather forecasts and warnings.
6. Designate a safe shelter for each venue. See examples below.
7. Use the Perry Weather App to determine when to go to safety.
8. Once activities have been suspended, wait at least thirty minutes following the last sound of thunder or lightning flash prior to resuming an activity or returning outdoors.
9. Avoid being the highest point in an open field, in contact with, or proximity to the highest point, as well as being on the open water. Do not take shelter under or near trees, flagpoles, or light poles.
10. Assume that lightning safe position (crouched on the ground weight on the balls of the feet, feet together, head lowered, and ears covered) for individuals who feel their hair stand on end, skin tingle, or hear "crackling" noises. Do not lie flat on the ground.
11. Observe the following basic first aid procedures in managing victims of a lightning strike:
  - Activate local EMS
  - Lightning victims do not "carry a charge" and are safe to touch.
  - If necessary, move the victim with care to a safer location.
  - Evaluate airway, breathing, and circulation, and begin CPR if necessary.
  - Evaluate and treat for hypothermia, shock, fractures, and/or burns.
10. All individuals have the right to leave an athletic site in order to seek a safe structure if the person feels in danger of impending lightning activity, without fear of repercussions or penalty from anyone.

## Definitions

### Safe Shelter:

1. A safe location is any substantial, frequently inhabited building. The building should have four solid walls (not a dug out), electrical and telephone wiring, as well as plumbing, all of which aid in grounding a structure.
2. The secondary choice for a safer location from the lightning hazard is a fully enclosed vehicle with a metal roof and the windows completely closed. It is important to not touch any part of the metal framework of the vehicle while inside it during ongoing thunderstorms.
3. It is not safe to shower, bathe, or talk on landline phones while inside of a safe shelter during thunderstorms (cell phones are ok).

# HEAT STRESS AND ATHLETIC PARTICIPATION RECOMMENDED PLAN

## Recommended Heat Protocols and Procedures for Outside UIL Athletic and Marching Band Activities

In 2023, the UIL approved Wet Bulb Globe Temperature (WBGT) as the recommended forecast measurement to be used to monitor environmental conditions during outdoor physical activities. WBGT estimates the effect of temperature, relative humidity, wind speed, and solar radiation using a combination of temperatures from three thermometers.

The American College of Sports Medicine has recommended WBGT guidelines that dictate modifications in activity (work: rest ratios, hydration breaks, equipment worn, length of practice) at given WBGT temperatures to prevent Exertional Heat Stroke. The below table represents modified guidelines from the American College of Sports Medicine regarding:

- The scheduling of practices at appropriate WBGT levels
- The ratio of workout time to time allotted for rest and hydration at various WBGT levels
- The WBGT levels at which activities should be terminated

It is recommended that UIL member schools utilize WBGT to monitor practice and workout conditions and alter practices as outlined in the chart below based on recommendations from the American College of Sports Medicine.

#### WBGT Means and Methods of Measurement when practices are outside in WBGT of 80.0 or higher

- It is recommended that schools utilize a scientifically approved instrument that measures Wet Bulb Globe Temperature (WBGT) or other scientifically proven method, such as an internet-based weather station software or application, to monitor the wet bulb globe temperature.
- If utilizing an on-site instrument, the instrument should be set up 30 minutes prior to practice and should be read 15 minutes prior to the start of practice. If utilizing an internet-based application, the WBGT should also be checked at the 15-minute mark prior to practice. In both cases, WBGT readings should be taken every 30 minutes during practice.
- When there's a change in WBGT from one level to the next, responsible modifications to practice activities should be made based on the above WBGT Activity Guidelines.
- It is recommended that schools record and keep on file the WBGT temperatures associated for outside practices.
- Practices are defined as the time period that a participant engages in a coach/director-supervised, school-approved sport or band conditioning-related activity. Practices are timed from when players report to the outside practice/workout area until the players leave the area.

#### Emergency Action Plans & Procedures for the Prevention of Heat Related Illness

- Each member school's emergency action plan must include procedures to address heat emergencies that include onsite rapid cooling using cold-water immersion or equivalent means.
- Rapid cooling zones must be available for each outdoor athletic and marching band contest, practice, workout, or conditioning session that is held in wet bulb globe temperatures of 80 degrees or higher. Rapid cooling zones are required to have immediate availability of cold-water immersion tubs or tarps that can be filled with ice and water and wrapped around individuals to rapidly cool internal body temperature (TACO method) and are encouraged to include a combination of the following options: ice sponges, towels, water misters, and shade. The presence of an employee or volunteer trained to administer cold-water immersion is recommended.
- Coaches and directors must adopt a heat injury prevention philosophy by promoting unrestricted access to water at all times and a student-athlete should never be denied access to water.
- Rest breaks must involve unlimited hydration intake and rest without any activity involved.

#### Competitions & Possible Modifications to Competitions

- WBGT practice guidelines and limitations do not apply to UIL competitions, but it is recommended that schools monitor WBGT conditions prior to and during the game and use appropriate emergency action plans for high temperature and humidity.
- Any contest played in WBGT of 80.0 degrees or higher must have a rapid cooling zone on site and available at all times to allow for full body, rapid cooling of athletes experiencing heat illness.
- It is recommended that additional appropriate and responsible modifications to contests are made as needed to keep participants safe.
- Modifications that potentially can be made include (but are not limited to the following):

-Alteration of start times as possible to allow for participation in the best conditions possible

-Allowing teams that are waiting to warmup access to airconditioned gyms or locker rooms until organized warmups begin.

-Consider hydration and fueling strategies for participants on long pregame bus rides.

-Unlimited access to cool water.

-Shade structures/tents on the sideline to allow for athletes to get out of the direct sunlight.

-Fans/Misters to allow for evaporative cooling.

-Ice towels/sponges

-Potentially using additional strategically placed official timeouts (possibly at 6-minute mark or halfway through each quarter) agreed upon by both coaches and officials prior to the start of the game. This would allow the quick stoppage of play and permit officials, athletes, and coaches to quickly hydrate and cool off.

-Lengthening halftimes to allow for more complete cool down and hydration/refueling processes to occur.

-Having resources that allow athletes to refuel at halftime by providing appropriate snacks

-A modification, in addition to those listed above, for sub-varsity contests, including middle school, may include reducing the length of quarters if agreed upon by both schools.

## INFECTIOUS PATHOGEN PROCEDURES

*The Medical and Athletic Training staff, because of the increasing risks involved in the acquiring and spread of the numerous fatal infectious diseases (HIV, hepatitis B Staphylococcal, etc.), has adopted the following procedures for dealing with blood and bodily fluid borne pathogens. First, the Universal precautions include:*

1. Routine use of barrier precaution to prevent skin & mucous membrane exposure when contact or other bodily fluids is anticipated. Gloves are to be worn when treating or coming in contact with any blood, bloody fluids, mucous membranes or non intact skin (e.g. abrasions, dermatitis) of all athletes, for handling items or surfaces

soiled with blood or body fluids. Gloves will be available at all treatment areas and should be changed after contact with each student athlete. Gloves should also be carried and used during competition for the same treatment referred to above.

2. Hands and other skin surfaces should be washed immediately and thoroughly if contaminated with blood or other body fluids. Hands should be washed immediately after gloves are removed.
  3. Surfaces contaminated with blood should be cleaned with a solution made to kill bacteria, fungus and virus including HIV.
  4. Precautions should be taken to prevent injuries caused by needles, scalpels and other sharp instruments or devices. To prevent needlestick injuries, needles should not be recapped, purposely bent, or broken by hand, removed from disposable syringes, or otherwise manipulated by hand.
  5. Although saliva has not been implicated in HIV transmission, to minimize the need for emergency mouth to mouth resuscitation, mouthpieces, resuscitation bags or other ventilation devices should be available for use.
  6. Health-care workers who have exudative lesions or weeping dermatitis should refrain from all direct patient care until the condition resolves.
  7. Blood soiled linen should be bagged and washed in hot water with detergent.
  8. In the athletic environment, universal guidelines should be considered in the immediate control of bleeding and when handling bloody dressings, mouth guards and other articles containing bodily fluids
- In Addition to Universal Precautions the following will also be precautions procedures:
9. Athletes that have open wounds should have them properly treated and covered. Furthermore, any dressings that have become saturated with blood should be changed immediately and redressed as to be approved by medical personnel. All bloody dressings should be disposed of in the appropriate manner as explained in the universal precautions.
  10. Educational information will be provided to all incoming athletes to make them more aware of the precautions they should take, as well as new information regarding the spread or acquisition of pathogens, primarily HIV.
  11. Inoculations to protect students and staff health care personnel when available (Hepatitis B) will be provided.
  12. When uniforms, equipment or padding become blood stained and medical personnel feel that a reasonable threat of pathogen transmission is at risk, the uniform, equipment, or padding should be changed as soon as possible.

(From UIL)

## **PREVENTION STRATEGIES**

**HAND WASHING IS THE SINGLE MOST IMPORTANT BEHAVIOR IN PREVENTING INFECTIOUS DISEASE. EMPHASIZE THIS TO YOUR ATHLETES. HANDS MUST BE CLEAN BEFORE YOU TOUCH**

**YOUR EYES, MOUTH, NOSE, OR ANY CUTS OR SCRAPES ON THE SKIN. YOU ARE THE ROLE MODEL! WASH YOUR HANDS OR USE AN ALCOHOL-BASED HAND SANITIZER FREQUENTLY.**

Hand washing Procedure:

1. Use warm water.
2. Wet hands and wrists.
3. Using a bar or liquid soap.
4. Work soap into a lather and wash between fingers, up to wrists, and under fingernails for at least 15 seconds.
5. Dry, using a clean cloth towel or paper towel.
6. Provide and encourage the use of alcohol-based hand sanitizers to wash hands immediately if they meet anybody fluid on the playing field or at other places where hand-washing facilities are not available.

Wash your hands as described above:

1. After sneezing, blowing, or touching the nose.
2. After using the toilet.
3. Before leaving the athletic area.

## **OTHER PRECAUTIONS**

1. Do not share towels, soap, or other personal care items.
2. Shower with soap and water as soon as possible after direct contact sports.
3. Dry using a clean, dry towel.
4. Do not share towels, even on the sidelines at game.
5. Ointments or antibiotics must not be shared.
6. Prewash or rinse items that have been grossly contaminated with body fluids.
7. Wash towels, uniforms, scrimmage shirts, and any other laundry in hot water and ordinary detergent and dry on the hottest cycle.
8. Inform parents of these precautions if laundry is sent home (laundry must be in an impervious container or plastic bag for transporting home).
9. Clean the athletic area and sports equipment at least weekly using a commercial disinfectant or a fresh (mixed daily) solution of one part bleach and 100 parts water (1 tablespoon bleach in one quart of water).

Your facilities should introduce a policy in which students must inform the athletic trainer if they have a skin infection and in which students will not participate in contact activities until the athletic trainer has approved their return to the activity. Have the students and parents sign a release to that effect.

## **Concussions**

A concussion is a type of traumatic brain injury—or TBI—caused by a bump, blow, or jolt to the head or by a hit to the body that causes the head and brain to move rapidly back and forth. This sudden movement can cause the brain to bounce around or twist in the skull, creating chemical changes in the brain and sometimes stretching and damaging brain cells.

Medical management of sports-related concussion is evolving. Recently, there has been a significant amount of research focused on the sports-related concussion in youth athletes and subsequently management standards are evolving. Life School has established this document to provide education about concussions for athletic department staff and other school personnel. This document outlines procedures for staff to follow in managing head injuries. It also outlines school policy as it pertains to academic accommodations and return to play after a concussion.

Life School desires to return concussed athletes to academics and athletics in a safe and methodological way. In order to effectively and consistently manage these injuries, procedures have been developed. The goal is to ensure that the concussed athletes are identified, treated, and referred appropriately. Then receive appropriate follow-up medical care as it pertains to academic accommodation and return to athletics.

In addition to recent research, two (2) primary documents were consulted in developing this protocol. The “Summary and Agreement Statement of the 2nd International Conference on Concussion in Sport, Prague 2004” 1(referred to in this document as the Prague Statement), and the “National Athletic Trainers’ Association Position Statement: Management of Sport-Related Concussion” 2(referred to in this document as the NATA Statement).

This protocol will be reviewed on a yearly basis, by the Life School medical staff. Any changes or modifications will be reviewed and given to athletic department staff and appropriate school personnel in writing.

## **Contents:**

Recognition of Concussion  
 SWAY Test Requirements  
 Management and Referral Guidelines for Staff  
 Procedures for the Certified Athletic Trainer (AT)  
 Follow-up care during the school day  
 Academic Modification Guidelines  
 Return to play procedures

## **I. Recognition of Concussion**

### **A. Common signs and symptoms of sports-related concussion**

#### **1. Signs:**

- Athlete appears dazed or stunned
- Confusion (about assignment, plays, etc.)
- Forgets plays
- Unsure about game, score, opponent
- Moves clumsily (altered coordination)
- Balance problems
- Personality change
- Responds slowly to questions
- Forgets events prior to hit
- Forgets events after the hit
- Loss of consciousness (any duration)

#### **2. Symptoms:**

- Headache
- Fatigue
- Nausea or vomiting
- Double vision, blurry vision



- Sensitive to light or noise
  - Feels sluggish
  - Feels “foggy”
  - Problems concentrating
  - Problems remembering
3. These signs and symptoms are indicative of a probable concussion. Other causes for symptoms should also be considered.

B. Cognitive impairment (altered or diminished cognitive function)

- i. General cognitive status can be determined by sideline cognitive testing. Athletic Trainer (AT) will utilize sideline concussion card.

**II. SWAY-neuropsychological testing requirements**

1. SWAY is a research-based software tool utilized to evaluate recovery after concussion. SWAY evaluates multiple aspects of neurocognitive functions, including memory, attention, brain processing speed, reaction time, and post-concussion symptoms.
2. All athletes at Life School are required to take a baseline SWAY test prior to participation in sports that have a significant or moderate risk of concussion. (Football, Wrestling, Water Polo, Basketball, Soccer, Baseball, Lacrosse).
3. Baseline SWAY tests are valid for two years. After two years athletes will need to retake a baseline test. Baseline SWAY tests will be reviewed to ensure that they are valid. Athletes may be required to take more than one baseline test.

**III. Management and Referral Guidelines for Staff**

A. Suggested Guidelines for Management of Sports-Related Concussion<sup>3</sup>

1. Any athlete with a witnessed loss of consciousness (LOC) of any duration should be spine boarded and transported immediately to nearest emergency department via emergency vehicle.
2. Any athlete who has symptoms of a concussion, and who is not stable (i.e., condition is changing or deteriorating), is to be transported immediately to the nearest emergency department via emergency vehicle.
3. An athlete who exhibits any of the following symptoms should be transported Immediately to the nearest emergency department
  - a. deterioration of neurological function
  - b. decreasing level of consciousness
  - c. decrease or irregularity in respirations
  - d. decrease or irregularity in pulse
  - e. unequal, dilated, or un-reactive pupils
  - f. vomiting
  - g. any signs or symptoms of associated injuries, spine or skull fracture, or bleeding
  - h. mental status changes: lethargy, difficulty maintaining arousal, confusion, or agitation
  - i. seizure activity
  - j. cranial nerve deficits
4. An athlete who is symptomatic but stable, may be transported by his parents’ home or to the hospital
  - a. Give parents the option of emergency transportation, even if you do not feel it is necessary.
5. If school medical staff is not in attendance of game or practice the head coach is to notify both the school nurse and athletic trainers of the suspected injury

**IV. Procedures for the Certified Athletic Trainer (AT)**

- A. The AT will assess the injury or provide guidance to the coach if unable to personally attend to the athlete.
  - 1. Immediate referral to the athlete's primary care physician, SWAY physician or to the hospital will be made when medically appropriate.
  - 2. The AT will perform serial assessments following recommendations in the NATA Statement and utilize sideline card.
    - a. The AT will notify the athlete's parents and give written and verbal home and follow-up care instructions.
    - b. Follow up instructions may include reprieve from the night's homework, and absence from school the next day
- B. The AT will notify the Athletic Director of a suspected head injury.
- C. The AT will notify the school nurse of the injury as soon as possible so that the school nurse can initiate appropriate follow-up care.
- D. Administer the post-concussion SWAY test
  - a. The initial post-concussion test will be administered within 48-72 hours post-injury, or whenever possible.
  - b. Repeat post-concussion tests will be given at appropriate intervals, usually 7 days unless specified by the physician

**V. Follow-up Care During the School Day**

- A. Responsibilities of the school nurse after notification of student's concussion
  - 1. The athlete will be instructed to report to the school nurse upon his or her return to school. At that point, the school nurse will notify:
    - a. The school counselor
    - b. The principal
    - c. The athlete's teachers
    - d. Other school personnel as determined by the policy
  - 2. If the school nurse receives notification of a student-athlete who has sustained a concussion from someone other than the AT (athlete's parent, athlete, physician note), the AT, and school administration should be notified as soon as possible.
  - 3. Athlete will be instructed to seek medical care from school nurse if symptoms return during the school day.

**VI. Academic Modification Guidelines**

- 1. Because of the high academic demands placed on student athletes at Life School academic modification will take place in two forms. The objective is to allow for adequate healing time prior to return to mental activity. This will encourage healing and result in less school time missed.
  - a. Following a suspected head injury, the AT or RN can allow for modification of the nights homework and school attendance as long as symptoms are present
  - b. Under recommendation by the SWAY credentialed physician.
    - i. Full Rest
    - ii. Home school
    - iii. Half school days
    - iv. Full return to school

## VII. **Return to Play (RTP)**

### A. Returning to participate on the same day of injury

1. As previously discussed in this document, an athlete who exhibits signs or symptoms of concussion, or has abnormal cognitive testing, should not be permitted to return to play. Any athlete who denies symptoms but has abnormal sideline cognitive testing should be held out of activity.
2. “When in doubt, hold them out.”

### B. Return to play after concussion

1. The athlete must meet the following criteria to progress to activity:
  - a. Asymptomatic at rest and with exertion (including mental exertion in school) AND:
  - b. Within normal range of baseline on post-concussion SWAY-testing AND:
  - c. Have written clearance from an SWAY credentialed physician
  - OR:
  - d. If the athlete chooses not to visit an SWAY credentialed physician the athlete must wait 2 weeks, be symptom free, have written physician clearance and follow the stepwise progression prior to return to play
2. Once the above criteria are met, the athlete will be progressed back to full activity following a stepwise process, (as recommended by both the Prague and NATA Statements) under the supervision of the AT. Progression is individualized and will be determined on a case-by-case basis. Factors that may affect the rate of progression include previous history of concussion, duration and type of symptoms, age of the athlete, and sport/activity in which the athlete participates.
3. Stepwise progression as described in the Prague Statement:
  - a. No activity – do not progress to step 2 until asymptomatic
  - b. Light aerobic exercise – walking, stationary bike
  - c. Sport-specific training (e.g., skating in hockey, running in soccer)
  - d. Non-contact training drills
  - e. Full-contact training
  - f. Game play

Note: If the athlete experiences post-concussion symptoms during any phase, the athlete should drop back to the previous asymptomatic level and resume the progression after 24 hours.

1. McCrory P, et al. Summary and Agreement Statement of the 2nd International Conference on Concussion in Sport, Prague 2004. Clin J Sports Med. 2005; 15(2):48-55.
2. Guskiewicz KM, et al. National Athletic Trainers’ Association Position Statement: Management of Sport-Related Concussion. J Athl Train. 2004;39(3):280-297.

For more details see Appendix C: Life School Concussion policy