

Oak Ridge STUDENT ATHLETE HANDBOOK

Introduction

This handbook communicates important information concerning athletic policies and procedures to our parents and students. After reviewing this information, we ask that the parents and student sign the signature page in the back of the handbook and turn it into his/her coach.

Anything not covered in this handbook will be left to the judgment of the Athletic Director and Administration.

This athletic handbook coexists with, but is not intended to supersede or overrule, the Oak Ridge Discipline Management Plan and Student Code of Conduct. If, for any reason, the two documents conflict, the latter mentioned shall preside. Any inconsistencies will be directed to the principal.

Philosophy of Athletics

Athletics is an integral and desirable part of the total education process for those students who participate. Participation is optional and shall not be a required activity. For those who desire to be a part of a program, stringent rules involving discipline, hard work, and academic achievement are invoked.

The athletic program is set up to teach our students more than just the rules of a particular sport. Hard work, loyalty, and character are points of emphasis that will be taught.

Our program will strive to be continuously improving and well balanced. Every athlete who wishes to participate will be given an equal opportunity to compete for a position. Every student who participates must be made to feel equally important to the success of the program.

It is our desire that a student's involvement in Oak Ridge's athletic programs will be one of the most memorable and enjoyable experiences in their life.

Program Overview

Mission Statement

The mission of Oak Ridge Athletics is to provide a competitive and successful athletic environment while promoting and embodying the ideas of teamwork, sportsmanship, hard work, and self-discipline.

Oak Ridge has established, and supports, a broad based athletic program. The athletic program maximizes participation by offering a variety of athletic opportunities. Equal emphasis is given to all sports, and quality of competitions is similar for all. Oak Ridge supports student athletes in the effort to attain high levels of competitive performance and excellence by providing them with competent coaching, facilities, and proper and safe protective equipment.

Oak Ridge promotes sportsmanship by student athletes, coaches, and spectators. Oak Ridge believes in providing a positive, meaningful, and educational environment at its athletic events.

The Student Athlete

Student athletes attend Oak Ridge for the primary purpose of an education. Nothing should interfere with this purpose. Athletics is a part of education, requiring from the student athlete self-discipline in organizing study schedules and work habits that will contribute to educational success.

A student's grades should not suffer because of athletics. There is plenty of time in the day to excel in both, provided students use their time wisely.

Standards for Oak Ridge Athletics

ELIGIBILITY

Academic Eligibility

In the area of academics, a good athlete becomes a good student. The character and competitiveness of the athlete should carry over into the classroom. The athletes must plan their schedule so that they give sufficient time and energy to their studies to ensure acceptable grades.

In addition to maintaining good grades, an athlete should give respectful attention to classroom activities and show respect for faculty and other students at all times. Athletes can be positive leaders at school as well as in athletic competition.

The athlete must meet the UIL guidelines to be eligible for competition. They must meet standards of residence, credits toward graduation, age limits and class schedule to be eligible for varsity competition. At any level they must meet the no pass no play expectations. They must pass all courses to be eligible unless otherwise specified by the UIL or TEA. Students failing a course will be ineligible for competition for three weeks. Ineligible athletes however are still allowed to practice.

School Suspension

Any athlete suspended from school (ISS or AEC) for any reason will not be allowed to participate in any extracurricular activity until they have been reinstated by the school administration.

Rules and Regulations

Practice and Game Attendance

It is the obligation and responsibility of team members to attend all scheduled practices, meetings and games regularly and on time. Practice times will be scheduled and announced. All absences from practice or games will be made up to ensure that the student athletes do not miss out on the opportunity to improve themselves and the team. Make-ups will be determined by the coach in each sport and must be consistent.

The following types of absences will be excused if the coach is informed in advanced.

- Funeral
- Medical or dental appointment
- Family emergency
- School function
- Religious function

Students must tell the head coach **before practice** if they are going to be absent. If a student is going to be absent on the day of a contest, they must notify the attendance office at school and their coach in advance of their absence. If the absence is considered excused, in accordance with the student athlete handbook, the student will be allowed to participate in the contest the same day of the absence.

The head coach should always be notified immediately when a conflict arises with a practice or a game. Being late is considered a tardy. Each tardy will be dealt with on an individual basis. All tardies will also be made up. Any team member who arrives late to practice or who leaves early is disruptive to the team's improvement and game plan. It is very important that individual athletes are not pulled out of a team practice until the practice concludes unless for emergencies. Consequences for unexcused absences will be determined by the coach in each sport and must be consistent.

Practice and Game Attire

All athletes are required to wear school-issued equipment and clothing at all practices. Students must learn to be organized and prepared, as they will not be allowed to go home to get practice gear or game uniforms.

Athletes that are injured or unable to participate in a practice are still required to suit out and pay attention to the mental aspects of the workout. (Some injuries do not allow for the athlete to dress out. If there is a question, the head coach will make the decision if the athlete is required to dress out or not for workout.)

Failing to wear appropriate workout clothes will result in reminders to be determined by the head coach.

Poor Attitude

An athlete may be suspended for all or part of a sports season for demonstrating behavior that is detrimental to the team. Suspensions will be dealt with on an individual basis. What is best for the team, first and foremost, and then what is best for the individual athlete will be the approach of the Athletic Department. Examples of unacceptable behavior include, but are not limited to:

- Inappropriate language
- Unwilling or lazy attitude
- Disrespect to the coaching staff
- Fighting
- Negative effect on team morale

Procedure for Quitting a Sport

Quitting is an intolerable habit to acquire. Every athlete is encouraged to finish what has been started. Athletes that quit are also “giving up” on themselves and those that depend on them. Commitment to being a War Eagle or Lady War Eagle is one of the most valuable lessons learned in athletics. Concerns and frustrations can usually be worked out with proper communication between the athlete and coach.

1. Any athlete wishing to quit a sport must notify the head coach in writing by completing a Request to Quit form. A conference will be scheduled and the Athlete, Parent, and Coach must all sign this form.
2. If an athlete quits a sport after the third week or is dismissed from the sport at any time without justifiable cause (injury, family hardship, etc.) as determined by the athletic director and head coach, **the athlete will not be allowed to participate in his/her next sport until the sport they quit is completely over.** This includes not getting in the next sport’s off-season program. If justifiable cause is determined, the athlete may return to any part of the program by filling out a re-entry form and having a re-entry conference.
3. Athletes removing themselves from the athletic period for the semester will be sent to the counselor’s office for a schedule change.
4. Any athlete quitting a sport without justifiable cause or removing themselves from enrollment in the athletic period may choose to participate in the **Athletic Re-Entry Program** but will not be allowed to participate in his/her next sport.

Athletic Re-Entry Program

After quitting a sport or removing themselves from enrollment in the athletic period, an athlete can regain participation privileges for that sport the **next calendar season** by choosing to complete the Athletic Re-Entry Program as detailed below.

1. Successfully complete a ten-mile run at a pace acceptable to the coach. Must be completed before or after school and at the coach’s convenience.
2. Write a two-page essay on a topic deemed appropriate by the head coach.
3. Quitting for a second time will require a twenty-mile run and a four page report assigned by the head coach.

Equipment and Uniforms

Team uniforms, warm-ups, and equipment are the property of Oak Ridge and must be treated with care. Athletes are responsible for keeping their school-issued equipment clean and secure. Do not use any equipment or protective gear that is no longer safe or functional. Get a replacement.

All athletes must return their uniforms and equipment to their coach immediately following their last game or competition. Theft, loss, or damage of any equipment is the athlete’s financial obligation.

No athlete will be allowed to check out any equipment or uniform for another sport until payment for missing or destroyed equipment is made. Letter jackets may also be withheld until all uniforms and equipment are returned.

Locker Room

Locker rooms are provided for athletes changing into practice or game attire. It is the responsibility of the athletes, not the coaches or janitors, to throw away trash, pick up equipment, and keep the locker room clean.

Please lock up all valuables every day. Ask a coach for a combination lock if you do not have one. Oak Ridge is not responsible for any loss or theft in the locker room. Be on the safe side; do not leave cash, jewelry, electronic gadgets, or anything of value in the locker room.

Personal Appearance and Conduct

The Oak Ridge War Eagles and the Lady War Eagles are quite often the only contact that many people in other communities have with our school. Appearance, expressions, and actions always influence opinions of our athletes, teams, and our school. It is expected that Oak Ridge athletes will conduct themselves in a manner that will be positive for our school. Our student-athletes will:

- Respect fellow teammates, coaches, trainers, managers, and school officials
- Respect our opponent's team, coaches, trainers, managers, and school officials
- Respect all officials, umpires, referees, etc.
- Display desirable behavior, desirable language, a cooperative attitude, and great sportsmanship in and out of the arena of competition.
- Be well-groomed and dressed appropriately at all games and contests.

All athletes representing Oak Ridge should establish and maintain a high standard of appearance at all times. Athletes must follow the student dress code and grooming policy as outlined in **The Oak Ridge Discipline Management Plan and Student Code of Conduct**. The head coach of each sport will establish attire guidelines for the team.

Team Travel

The school will provide transportation for away contests. Team members, managers, statisticians, etc. should ride to and from the contest on school provided transportation. This policy is necessary for obvious liability reasons.

Team Buses

Be on time and ready for the bus. Be appropriately dressed. Please keep the noise to a minimum and remain seated at all times. No metal spikes should be worn on buses. Please do not leave valuables and expensive items on the bus. Restrict food and beverages to a reasonable amount. Pick up your trash and help clean the bus when arriving back at school.

Hazing

No athlete at any time, by means of practical jokes, initiation rites, horseplay, ect, will humiliate any fellow athlete. The Oak Ridge Athletic Department will not tolerate hazing in any form.

No one has to “earn his or her way” on a team by submitting to ridicule from other member of the team. It is the duty of each team member to discourage this behavior.

Athletes found guilty of hazing will be disciplined according to **The Oak Ridge Discipline Management Plan and Student Code of Conduct** and will also be reported to local law enforcement officials.

College Athletic Scholarships

High school coaches **do not get** scholarships for their athletes. The coach will do everything they can to help get your child as much exposure as possible. The coach will send out game tapes, fill out questionnaires, call college coaches, get camp information to your child, and make themselves available to you to answer any questions you may have. Athletic scholarships from various universities and colleges are offered to high school athletes whose talents and grades are exceptional. It must be understood that the philosophical intent of the high school athletic program is **NOT** to guarantee college athletic scholarships to its participants. Please contact the counselor’s office for any information regarding scholarships or grants.

ATHLETIC LINES OF COMMUNICATION

Parent/Coach Relationship

Both parenting and coaching are difficult vocations. By establishing lines of communication and understanding each position, we are better able to accept the actions of the other and provide greater benefit to children. As parents, when your children become involved in our program, you have a right to understand what expectations are placed on your child. This begins with clear communication from the coach of your child’s program.

Communication parents should expect from coaches:

- Expectations the coach has for your child as well as all the players on the team
- Locations and times of all practices and contests
- Team requirements (fee, special equipment, off-season participation, etc.
- Procedure should your child be injured during athletic participation
- Discipline that results in the denial of your child’s participation

Communication Coaches Expect form Players:

- Notification of any schedule conflict well in advance
- Communicate specific concerns in regard to a coach’s philosophy and/or expectations (it is important to understand that there may be times when things do not go the way the athlete wishes. At these times, a discussion with the coach is encouraged.)

Appropriate Issues to Discuss with Coaches:

- Treatment of your child
- Ways to help your child improve
- Concerns about your child's behavior

Issues Not Appropriate to Discuss with Coaches:

- Playing time
- Team strategy
- Play calling
- Other student-athletes

Parent/Coach Conference Procedure

If you have a concern to discuss with a coach, please follow this procedure below:

- Please do not attempt to confront a coach before, during, or after a contest or practice. (This can be an emotional time for both the parent and the coach. Meetings of this nature do not promote resolution. Productive meetings require calm, rational attitudes in a private setting.)
- Call the school (832-592-5470) to set up an appointment with the head coach during his/her conference period the next school day.
- If you are not satisfied with your conference with the head coach, you may then call to set up an appointment with the Athletic Director.
- After discussing the issue with the head coach and the Athletic Director, you may then call the Assistant Superintendent and after him the Superintendent if you feel the situation has not been justly attended to.
- Any decision of the Superintendent may then be appealed to the Board of Trustees.

Health Issues

Athletic Physical Examinations

No student-athlete shall be eligible to practice or play a school sport until they have passed an adequate physical examination and have it on file with the athletic trainer. The UIL physical form must be completed and signed by a licensed physician, a parent or legal guardian, and the student. Students may use their own physician or attend the sports physical day offered by our school district. Specific dates and times of these physicals will be announced and posted.

Injury

The potential for injury is inherent in all interscholastic sports. Even with the best coaching, the most advanced protective equipment, and a strict observance of rules, injuries can happen. Although serious injuries are not common in supervised school athletic programs, it is impossible

to eliminate the risk. Parents and students must be willing to accept the risks associated with school sports.

Athletes should report all injuries to the athletic trainer, coach and athletes' parents. **Our athletic trainer is certified to evaluate and treat injuries.** If an athlete is seriously injured, he/she must have a doctor's release before continuing practice or competing in athletic contests.

Insurance

A supplementary insurance plan is provided by the school district for high school and middle school athletes. It insures the athletes while participating in school athletic activities. It most often will **NOT** cover the total cost of a doctor's bill. Athletes are advised to have other insurance.

The combination of parental and school insurance plans has been very effective in covering the reasonable and customary costs of athletic medical expenses. All Oak Ridge athletes are covered by the school's supplementary policy. However, all claims must first be submitted to the individual's personal insurance carrier. Once the parent's primary carrier has assigned its benefits, the school's supplemental plan will review the claim and pay only the usual and customary portion of the balance of the medical expenses not provided or reimbursed by the parent's insurance. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to file any and all insurance claims within 90 days of the injury. Injury claim forms are available through each feeder zone's high school Licensed Athletic Trainer.

In order to expedite payment of claims, parents of students who have sustained an injury as a result of athletics should obtain a claim form from the athletic trainer as soon as possible. Remember, filing claims is the parent's, not the school's responsibility.

AWARDS

Letter Jackets

Athletes will receive, upon the head coaches' recommendations, an athletic letter jacket at the completion of their varsity year in a particular sport. If they lettered as a freshmen they will get two bars on their letter following their sport during their sophomore year. Students will receive only one jacket during their high school career. The school will not provide varsity letters for every sport or patches for every championship. Student-athletes must order and purchase these items themselves.

Listed below are the criteria to letter for each sport. The head coach, however, has the prerogative to issue or withhold a letter jacket for extenuating circumstances, such as injuries, value to a team without meeting playing time quotas, team violations, etc. Coaches must provide documentation of these circumstances to the Athletic Director.

All athletes in all sports must meet the following requirements in order to be eligible for a letter jacket:

1. Must compete the entire scheduled season in the lettering sport in good standing.
2. Must turn in or pay for all equipment and uniforms used in all sports.
3. Not been suspended from any games due to violation of team rules and regulations.

Varsity Letter Criteria

1. Football: participate in one half (50%) of the scheduled varsity football games
2. Cross Country participate in three (3) varsity meets and the district meet.
3. Volleyball participate in one half (50%) of the scheduled varsity volleyball games.
4. Basketball participate in one half (50%) of the scheduled varsity basketball games.
5. Soccer participate in one half (50%) of the scheduled varsity soccer games
6. Tennis participate in three (3) varsity tournaments and the district meet.
7. Golf participate in three (3) varsity tournaments and the district meet
8. Track participate in three (3) varsity meets and the district meet.
9. Softball participate in one half (50%) of the scheduled varsity softball games.
10. Baseball participate in one half (50%) of the scheduled varsity baseball games.
11. Swimming lettering is based on events they swim at the district meet.
12. Wrestling participate in one half (50%) varsity tournaments or score a team point.

Athletic Awards

Individual athletes may earn various types of athletic awards and post-season honors (all-district, all-state, etc.). It should be noted that the athlete's coach could only nominate his/her own players for these awards. Coaches cannot vote for their own players. Other coaches from the district, region or state must be impressed enough to vote for our athletes.

Academic All-District and Academic All-State awards are presented to athletes who not only make a great impression on the field or court, but also are outstanding in the classroom. Players must maintain an "A" average through a particular sport season and also make a significant contribution as a varsity player in that sport.

**Oak Ridge ATHLETICS
REQUEST TO QUIT A SPORT**

Name _____ Date Issued _____

Sport _____

Coach _____

Conference Period Time _____

Reason for Quitting _____

I understand that quitting this sport will result in the following:

1. I will not be allowed to participate in my next sport until this sport is completely finished.
2. I will have to consult the counselor's office for a schedule change to P.E.
3. I may regain my participation privileges by completing the **Athletic Re-Entry Program**

Athlete's signature _____ Date _____

Parent's signature _____ Date _____

Coach's signature _____ Date _____

Oak Ridge

ATHLETIC HANDBOOK

RECEIPT

Athlete's Name _____

I have received a copy of the Oak Ridge. Athletic Handbook. I understand that all athletes and parents will be held accountable for the information outlined in this handbook.

Athlete's Signature _____

Parent's Signature _____

Date _____