

Lincolnton Middle School



Student-Athlete Handbook

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Attendance

Attendance at all games and practice sessions is mandatory for all team members. If a student-athlete will not be attending a practice, meeting, or game, the coach must be notified at least one day prior to the event being missed. Any student-athlete who misses practice or games without first talking to the coach can be subject to disciplinary actions from the coach. Sickness does occur, but when the student-athlete is out sick please have the student-athlete reach out to the coach and let them know.

Concussions

Lincolnton Middle School will follow all NCHSSA and LCS policies regarding head injuries. If a player is suspected of sustaining a concussion, he/she will be removed from the game or practice and will need to be seen by a doctor for a full concussion evaluation. A player will need a doctor's note if a player plans to practice or play. If, in that evaluation, the player is diagnosed with a concussion, he/she will enter the concussion protocol and will need to complete the [Gfeller-Waller Concussion Clearance-NCHSSA Return to Play Form](#) before returning to practices or games. Please Note:

- The progressive return-to-play steps in Gfeller-Waller form must be completed under the supervision of a doctor and **may not be completed at school**. Athletes may not participate in practices or games until the clearance form is returned to the Athletic Director (not the coach).
- Any school personnel has the right to remove a player from a practice or game if they suspect a concussion has occurred, this decision **may not be overridden by anyone** (player, or parent), until the player is cleared by a doctor.

Conference Affiliation

Lincolnton participates in the Tri-County Conference with the following schools:

Eastern Conference

- Burns Middle School - 215 Shady Grove Road Lawndale, NC 28090
- East Lincoln Middle School - 4137 NC-73, Iron Station, NC 28080
- Kings Mountain Middle School - 1000 Phifer Road Kings Mountain, NC 28086
- North Lincoln Middle School - 503 Amity Church Rd, Denver, NC 28037
- West Lincoln Middle School - 260 Shoal Rd, Lincolnton, NC 28092

Western Conference

- Chase Middle School - 840 Chase High Rd, Forest City, NC 28043
- Crest Middle School - 315 Beaver Dam Church Rd, Shelby, NC 28152
- East Rutherford Middle School - 259 East Church Street Bostic, North Carolina 28018
- RS Middle School - 545 Charlotte Road Rutherfordton, NC 28139
- Shelby Middle School - 1480 South DeKalb St. Shelby, NC 28152

Early Dismissal from Class - Classwork

Student-athletes are only ever dismissed early from class on away game days. Players are to remain in class until an announcement is made that they are released. On home game day or practice days, athletes are dismissed with car riders. Any work missed is up to the student-athlete to get from the teacher and is to be completed in a timely manner.

Athletic Eligibility Requirements

Only students in grades six through eight may participate in middle school (6th, 7th and 8th grades) interscholastic athletic competition. **Sixth grade students are ineligible to participate in football.**

Eligibility - LCS Policy

Responsibilities of Parent and Student-Athletes:

- Must adhere to all North Carolina Department of Instruction (DPI) and LCS athletic eligibility regulations.
- Must have a new concussion form at the beginning of each physical school year.
- Must receive a medical examination each year (395 days) by a duly licensed physician, nurse practitioner or physician assistant (immunization records and wellness visits DO NOT qualify as a sports physical - Sports physicals must be on a sport-specific form, include the date of the exam, and the signature and stamp of the physician).
- In grades six, seven and eight, the student must pass at least one less course than the number of required core courses each semester (**Example: Student-Athletes must pass 3 out of 4 core classes, Math, ELA, Social Studies and Science**), and meet promotion standards established by the LEA/Charter School.
- A player must have attended school at least 85% of the previous semester.
- If an athlete is "academically eligible" or "academically ineligible" at the beginning of any semester, that status is retained throughout the full semester.

Ejections

The DPI-mandated (LCS follows) suspension for an athletic ejection from a game are as followed:

- First Offense:
 - A. The person shall be reprimanded and suspended for the next game at the level of play for football, and two games for all other sports (middle school, junior high, varsity or junior varsity) and for any intervening games at either level.
 - B. Fighting – for football miss the next two contests, and for all other sports miss the next four contests.
- Second Offense:
 - A. The person shall be suspended from all sports for the remainder of that sport season (middle school, junior high, varsity or junior varsity).
- Third Offense:
 - A. The person shall be suspended for one calendar year (365 days from the date of the third ejection).
- A coach who is suspended at any level of grades 6-12 (middle school, junior high, varsity or junior varsity) may not coach at any other grade level in grades 6-12 during the period of suspension.
- Penalties are cumulative from sport to sport and from sport season to sport season.

Bullying

Lincolnton Middle School has a zero tolerance of Bullying. If a student-athlete is found guilty of bullying another child, this student-athlete will be dismissed from that team, and will not be able to try out for any other sport for the rest of the year. A severe case will be handled with the Athletic Director, Principal and Superintendent.

Illness & Injury

All injuries should be reported to the coach, and/or athletic director at the time they occur so further injuries can be avoided. If you are injured, remember the following:

1. Tell the coach and/ or athletic director that you are injured before leaving the field/floor.
2. No matter how small the injury, get treatment.
3. Student-athletes are expected to attend team practices while injured, unless getting treatment from a medical professional.
4. Anyone who becomes sick, nauseated, dizzy, and/or very hot should notify the coach and/or athletic director immediately.
5. It is the responsibility of the parents to inform a coach of special medical needs of a player. It is important that players bring necessary medical equipment (inhaler, EpiPen, etc.) to every practice/game.

ALC/OSS

Student-athletes who receive ALC or ISS as a punishment during the sport season will be addressed by their coach. If the student-athlete receives ALC/ ISS/OSS any day throughout the week they will miss the next Game. (Ex. If Johnny is written up on Friday and his next game is on Tuesday, he will have to sit out that Tuesday due to his write up on Friday.) If a player is written up at any point and the team has practice they are expected to be at practice that day. Just because ALC/ISS is housed in the office does not make them readily available for a coach's decision. If a student-athlete receives OSS during that sport season they can be subject to suspension from the team. If a player is suspended right before try-outs, the try-out session will not be extended.

Parent Expectations

Parents of student-athletes in any Wildcat Athletic Program are expected to adhere to the following expectations:

1. Support the “team first, individual second” belief.
2. Demonstrate sportsmanship at all games.
3. Show positive support and encouragement for your son/daughter, his/her teammates, and Wildcat Athletics.
4. Let **24 hours** elapse before initiating communication with the 4-step process below. Do not try to resolve a conflict with a coach before or directly after a game- that will likely create more conflict.
5. Encourage your son/daughter to begin the 4-step communication process:
 - a. The athlete meets with the individual coach and/or head coach.
 - b. The athlete and parent meet with the individual coach and head coach.
 - c. The athlete, parent and head coach meet with the Athletic Director.
 - d. The athlete, parent, head coach, and Athletic Director meet with the Principal.
6. Things parents may not ask a coach about:
 - a. Playing time
 - b. Game Strategies
 - c. Other players on the team

Parent/ Coach Communication

When concerns or issues arise, please follow these steps of communication to help ensure that healthy lines of communication remain intact:

1. Step 1: Student-athlete speaks to Coach

- a. One of the greatest opportunities for student-athletes is learning skills for effective conflict resolution. When there is a concern, student-athletes are encouraged to speak with their coach directly. It can be very satisfying for all parties involved when student-athletes and coaches are able to find mutually agreeable solutions for an issue that they are preempting to resolve.

2. Step 2: Parent Contacts Athletic Director

- a. If the coach and student-athlete are unable to resolve the issue together, then parents should contact the Athletic Director. If a parent has concerns to discuss with the coach, the parent should contact the school and ask for the Athletic Director. Please do not approach a coach with a concern (during, or immediately preceding/following a practice/game). As emotions of all parties tend to run high immediately after a game, parents are asked to wait until the next day before contacting the Athletic Director. Taking this time to reflect on the situation should allow for more effective dialogue, ensuring a more successful experience for everyone. It is not appropriate for parents to complain about team strategy (including playing time), play calling, or other student-athletes. It is appropriate for parents to contact the Athletic Director with concerns about their son/daughter's behavior, their skill development, and for physical treatment advice.

3. Step 3: The Athletic Director will talk with the coach, to determine the best time for the Athletic Director, coach and parent to sit down and meet.

4. Step 4: If the Athletic Director is unable to provide a satisfactory resolution, the Athletic Director will take the issue to the Principal.

Playing Time

Playing time is not guaranteed at the middle school level. This is not an optometrist program and we do not require any players to pay. Playing time is determined by the coaching staff. The coaches evaluate the players every single practice and determine who will be starting and playing in every game. Players who have questions about playing time should talk to their coach outside of game/practice time to ask how to improve to earn more playing time.

Team Selection

Most teams at Lincolnton Middle will be assembled through a tryout/selection process. Disappointments are inevitable when teams are selected, but coaches pledge to handle the process as compassionately as possible. No cuts will be made until after the third day of tryouts.

Uniforms/ Warm-Ups

Unless purchased by the athlete before the season, uniforms and warm-ups are the property of Lincolnton Middle School. They are to be kept in good condition, outside the normal wear and tear, and returned *cleaned* within **one week** of the end of the season. Athletes who do not turn in their uniform will:

1. Be charged the cost to replace it
2. Not permitted to try out for other teams until the uniform is returned or replaced.

Please wash uniforms in cold or warm (**not hot**) water, without using bleach, and please hang them to dry.

Allison K. Rhyne

Allison K. Rhyne
Principal

Amber Willard

Amber Willard
Athletic Director

Signatures

I as the student-athlete and parent have read and reviewed these rules and expectations and understand them. With a breach of any of these rules, I as the student-athlete can be subject to dismissal from the sports team I am on.

I, _____ (student-athletes name), have read these rules and regulations and plan to follow the rules and regulations set forth in this handbook.

I, _____ (parent name), have read these rules and regulations and consent to hold myself and my student-athlete to these standards.

Student-Athlete Signature: _____

Parent Signature: _____