

**McALESTER
PUBLIC SCHOOLS
ATHLETIC
STUDENT/PARENT
HANDBOOK**

**McALESTER ATHLETIC
STUDENT/PARENT HANDBOOK**

Student-Athletes and Parents,

We are very pleased to have you as a part of the McAlester Athletic Program. We sincerely hope that the experience you have in your sports programs will be both enjoyable and successful. Your coaches are looking forward to helping you grow through athletics.

The information contained herein has been provided for you to read and study carefully, as it is your responsibility to know the rules and regulations of the McAlester Athletic Program. This handbook is used as a guide for all our programs. However, your coach in each sport may give additional rules. Any questions that you may have should be brought to the attention of your coach. He/she will be happy to help you in any way possible.

Once again, we want to welcome you to our team!

LEGAL NOTICE

McAlester Public Schools is responsible for compliance with a variety of federal laws, which cover school districts. These laws include, among others, *Title IX of the Education Amendments*, *Title VI of the Civil Rights Act*, §504 of the *Rehabilitation Act*, and the *General Education Provisions Act*.

Compliance with the above and other federal laws incorporates the Policy of the School District to provide equal opportunities in its programs, activities, and services without regard to race, color, sex, national origin, disability, religion, age or veteran status in any of the School District's programs, services, financial aid, or employment.

The District's prohibition of discrimination includes, but is not limited to, admissions to all general education classes, advanced courses, vocational education classes, as well as educational services, financial aid, and employment.

McAlester Public Schools is an equal opportunity employer. Inquiries concerning the School District's programs, equal opportunity to programs and activities, or participation opportunities should be directed to: Compliance Officer for the McAlester Public Schools, 200 East Adams McAlester Oklahoma 74501.

PHILOSOPHY OF ATHLETICS

The philosophy of the McAlester Schools is that athletics is an important part of the school's program, which provides experiences to help students physically, mentally, and emotionally. The element of high competition and striving to be the best we can possibly in all areas of life are at the foundation of our program. These elements are important because of the training it offers for living in a competitive society. Students are stimulated to want to succeed and excel, but principles of good sportsmanship prevails at all times.

We believe that participation in athletics, both as a player and a spectator, is an integral part of the student's educational experience. Such participation is a privilege that carries with it responsibility to the team, school, student body, community, and the student him/herself. In play and conduct, the student represents all these groups. Such experience contributes to the knowledge, skill and emotional patterns of the student, making him/her a better person and citizen.

MISSION STATEMENT

- That every member of our teams be a better person for being a part of our programs.
- We must do something **EVERYDAY** to make ourselves better people and players. Nothing stays the same. We either get better or we get worse.
- To be a **CHAMPION** on and off the field, we must achieve goal 1 and 2 before we can claim a **CHAMPIONSHIP**.

OKLAHOMA SECONDARY SCHOOLS ACTIVITIES ASSOCIATION

The High School and Middle School of McAlester Public Schools are members of the Oklahoma Secondary School Activities Association (OSSAA), and all rules and regulations of the OSSAA will be strictly adhered to by the McAlester Athletic Department. The policies in this handbook are a supplement to the OSSAA rules. McAlester Athletic Department will, in some cases, require students to perform academically beyond the limits set forth by the OSSAA policy. Interpretation and clarification of OSSAA policies may be made through the McAlester Director of Athletics.

WHAT TO EXPECT FROM A COACH

- A genuine and up to date knowledge of the sport.
- A fair and unprejudiced relationship with all players.
- Firm disciplinary action if an athlete displays unsportsmanlike conduct or breaks the team rules.
- 100% effort to help each student reach his/her maximum potential.
- Genuine concern with all areas of the athlete's growth (academic, athletics, and citizenship).

ATHLETIC PARTICIPATION

Before an athlete can practice they and the parent/guardian must:

- Have an up-to-date Physical and Parent Consent Form on file in the AD's office.
- Fill out and sign all forms at www.rankonesport.com
 - a) OSSAA Eligibility Form
 - b) Insurance Verification Form
 - c) Drug Testing Consent Form
 - d) Concussion/Head Injury Acknowledgment
 - e) Sudden Cardiac Arrest Form
 - f) House Bill 2615
 - g) Biological Sex Affidavit
 - h) Transportation Permission Form
- Pay Activity Fee

STRENGTH TRAINING

McAlester Athletics is committed to the continued development of your student/athlete. We have instituted a required strength training component to all our sports and are offering times during the school day to perform this task. If a student/athlete, due to scheduling conflict, cannot complete this task during the school day, they are permitted to come in before school or after practice to complete the training.

ACADEMICALLY INELIGIBLE PLAYER/MANAGER

An ineligible player/manager:

- May practice with a team.
- Cannot participate in any inter-school contest at any level.
- Citizenship, attitude, and scholastic work must be acceptable or the privilege of practicing may be denied.
- May not travel or be on the sideline/bench area during the contest.

SUSPENDED PLAYER/MANAGER

- Students who are suspended from school cannot participate in practices or contests until reinstated by the Administration.
- Students who are in “In-School-Suspension” will not practice and may not participate in contests until reinstated by the Administration.
- Athletes that are suspended from a competition or competitions by the O.S.S.A.A. will be suspended from all contests until reinstated by the administration.

SPECIALIZATION/RECRUITING

- Specialization in any one sport is discouraged by the Athletic Department, especially at the Middle School level.
- All athletes are encouraged to participate in all sports in which they have interest.
- Athletics will not be restricted to any one sport by a coach.
- Athletes will not be recruited away from one sport to another by a coach.
- Any athlete, parent, or coach suspecting a violation of these rules is asked to notify the Athletic Director at once.

PRACTICE SESSIONS

- Parents/spectators are welcome at practice sessions. However, please do not interrupt by trying to talk to players or coaches during practice.
- Poor attendance and tardiness will not be tolerated.
- Practice sessions will extend beyond normal school hours and/or when school is not in session. Parents must provide transportation for their students to and from practice sessions in a timely manner.

EQUIPMENT

- Students are responsible for all school equipment checked out to them.
- Parents and students are expected to take care in washing and cleaning of athletic clothing when appropriate.
- Parents or students will be expected to pay for lost or damaged equipment.
- School equipment will not be given out for use over the summer months without approval of the Athletic Director.
- Athletes are not to wear school athletic clothing or equipment outside of practices or contests without approval from their coach.
- Anyone who sees someone wearing or using McAlester athletic equipment outside of the athletic program is asked to report to the Athletic Director at once.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

- No student shall be eligible to participate in McAlester athletics until there is on file with the Athletic Director a Physical Examination and Parent Consent Certificate approved by the OSSAA.
- In the event of a serious injury to a player, a coach or athletic trainer will report to the parent and will check on the player as long as he/she is injured. Students under a physician's care for such injuries will require a medical release prior to their participation.
- Athletes are to report all injuries to their coaches, no matter how minor.
- Coaches will plan water breaks during practices appropriate for the heat and humidity.
- Coaches will not give permission for athletes to use the facilities without supervision.
- Keys to the athletic facilities will not be given to students or unauthorized persons.
- We recommend that all athletes be insured against injury.
- All athletes in the McAlester programs are automatically enrolled in a Liability/Lifetime Catastrophe Medical Plan. The premium for the plans paid by the Athletic Department to the OSSAA. All activities covered by OSSAA are included in this Catastrophe Medical Plan.

GENERAL CONDUCT

- The conduct of an athlete at McAlester is closely observed in many areas of everyday life. You are an athlete every day, 24/7. It is important that actions at all times be above reproach. Thus, all athletes in our program must follow some guidelines.
 - a) Conduct in competition: The athlete must be gracious in defeat, modest in victory, and maintain complete control at all times.
 - b) Conduct at school: The student/athlete should set examples for all students by following rules set forth by the administration and individual teachers.
 - c) Conduct on trips, after school hours and weekends: The athlete represents not only him/herself, but also the community, school, coaches, and parents. Thus, it is expected that the athlete will dress and behave in an acceptable manner.
- The following acts could result in suspension or dismissal from an athletic program:
 - a) Immorality, profanity, or obscenity.
 - b) Stealing or cheating.

- c) Consistent violation of McAlester Student/Athlete Handbook or team rules.
- d) Possession, threat or use of a dangerous weapon.
- e) Assault and battery.
- f) Destruction of school property.
- g) Possession or use of any illegal narcotic drug, alcohol, or tobacco.
- h) Conduct that jeopardizes the safety of others.
- i) Disrespect to coach, official, opponent, or any person of authority.
- j) Habitual tardiness or absence.

SPORTSMANSHIP

- Always keep a good relationship with opposing players and coaches.
- Athletes are expected to treat game officials with the respect due them. Players showing disrespect to officials may be dismissed from the program.
- The use of profanity is inconsistent with the philosophy of athletics and will not be tolerated.

TEAM TRAVEL

- Team members will travel to and from contests on school provided transportation. At the discretion of the coach, students may be allowed to travel with their parents.
- There will be no gambling, tobacco, drugs, or alcohol allowed on any trip.
- Teams must travel as neatly dressed as possible.
- The coaches will see that teams return to McAlester as soon as possible after a contest, especially on school nights. Parents will be told when to expect the team home. Once a team has returned from a contest, parents must provide transportation for their students in a timely manner.
- Athletes should help keep the bus as clean as possible. Coaches will expect them to pick-up around their seat before leaving the bus.
- Food and drinks are not allowed on the bus unless approved by the coach.
- Athletes should be on time or be left behind.
- To ensure good relations with our opponents, athletes should pick-up around dressing rooms, showers, bleachers, etc. before leaving the opponents' facility.

ATTENDANCE

- A student who has not attended classes ninety percent of the time for the semester in a member school becomes ineligible. Exceptions may be made by the principal due to illness, injury, death in the immediate family, valid reasons for late enrollment, or late with the beginning of attendance.
- A player must be in class on the day of a contest. With the exception of a personal emergency or school-related business, or prior approval of the coach.
- An unexcused absence or habitual absences from practice or games may result in dismissal from the athletic program.

ACTIVITY ABSENCES

In accordance with the policy of the Board of Education, the following shall govern student activity absences:

The maximum number of absences for activities, whether sponsored by the school or outside agency/organization, which removes the student from the classroom shall be ten (10) for any one-class period of each school year. Excluded from this number will be at State and National levels of school-sponsored contests. State and National contests are those for which a student must earn the right to compete. (The criteria for earning the right to represent the school in any activity or contest must be submitted in writing by local school sponsors and approved by the local Board of Education.) The Board shall also approve yearly at its September meeting a listing of all activities, which shall be exempt from the ten (10) period limitations. Examples of activities which may be exempted include: college visitation days, assemblies, serving as a page for the Legislature, academic contests, field trips which complement classroom studies, etc. The Board may also approve additional days for individual students or groups. Requests for such deviations must be presented in writing to the Superintendent at least two (2) weeks prior to the Board's next meeting date. Such requests must be initiated by the student and must first be approved by the building principal. Any student applying for a deviation must have at least a 2.5 grade point average, be passing all classes with a "C" or better, and have a good attendance record otherwise.

GROOMING STANDARDS

- Appearance should be socially and morally acceptable to our school and community.
- Athletes are expected to be as neat and clean as possible at all times.

CHANGING SPORTS/QUITTING A TEAM

- From the time a team plays its first scheduled contest, a student cannot quit or be dismissed from that team and join another team until the first team's season is over (this includes off-season teams).
- Exceptions to this rule may be permitted under these conditions:
 - a) If the athlete has a doctor's statement recommending that he/she drop the first sport for medical reasons permitting participation in the second sport.
 - b) If both coaches involved and the Athletic Director agree that a mid-season change would be beneficial to the athlete without being unfair to the individuals of either team.
- Before an athlete is cleared to go to another sport, he/she must turn in all equipment and pay for lost or damaged equipment.
- An athlete must not change classes or stop reporting to a sport until notified that the change has officially been made through the counselor and Athletic Director.
- Students who quit a team may receive an "F" for that sport.
- When a student athlete quits or is dismissed from a team, a conference between the athlete, coach, and athletic director must be held before an athlete may re-enroll or rejoin the program.

DISMISSAL FROM A TEAM

Coaches have the responsibility of providing an atmosphere that is conducive to teaching and learning. Therefore, athletes who may become disruptive to the program should be dealt with in a firm and consistent manner. The coach should try to resolve any problem before dismissing the athlete. However, if an athlete is dismissed, he/she may appeal the coach's decision.

- **1st Level of Appeal - Athletic Director/Principal:**

Following dismissal any athlete has the right of appeal by making a written request to the Athletic Director within 3 days of the dismissal. The Athletic Director and Principal will confer and uphold or reverse the original decision. The athlete has a right to appeal this decision.

- **2nd Level of Appeal - Superintendent or his/her Designee:**

If the athlete desires to make further appeal, he/she may make a written request to the Superintendent within 3 days of the previous decision. The decision of the Superintendent or his/her designee shall be final.

LETTER JACKETS

The athletic department will not purchase athletic Letter Jackets. The student/parent is responsible for payment. Contact the athletic director with any questions.

HAZING PROHIBITED

No student organization or any person associated with any organization sanctioned or authorized by the board of education shall engage or participate in hazing. No student or employee of the district shall participate in any secret organization or activity that is in any degree related to the school.

Hazing is defined as an activity, which recklessly or intentionally endangers the mental health or physical health or safety of a student for the purpose of initiation or admission into or affiliation with any organization, or activity sanctioned or authorized by the board of education.

“Endanger the physical health” shall include, but is not limited to, any brutality of a physical nature, such as whipping; beating; branding; forced calisthenics; exposure to the elements; forced consumption of any food, alcoholic beverage, drug, or controlled dangerous substance; or other forced physical activity which could adversely affect the physical health or safety of the individual.

“Endanger the mental health” shall include any activity, except those activities authorized by law, which would subject the individual to extreme mental stress, such as prolonged sleep deprivation, forced prolonged exclusion from social contact, forced conduct which could result in extreme embarrassment, or any other forced activity which would adversely affect the mental health or dignity of the individual. Any hazing will be considered a forced activity even if the student willingly participates in such activity.

Any students who engage in hazing will be subject to the District’s disciplinary policy, which may include suspension and employees who engage in hazing may be subject to termination.

OKLAHOMA SECONDARY SCHOOL ACTIVITY ASSOCIATION

McAlester High School and McAlester Middle School athletics are subject to all rules and policies set forth by the Oklahoma Secondary Schools Activities Association. OSSAA rules and policies are accessible through their website at www.ossaa.com.

PARENT/COACH COMMUNICATION

As your student becomes involved in the sports program at McAlester, they will experience some of the most rewarding moments of their lives. It is important to understand that there also may be times when things do not go the way you or your child wishes. This is the opportunity for your child to talk with their respective coach and discuss the situation. When your child handles the problem, it becomes part of the learning and maturation process. There may also be situations that require a conversation between the coach and the parent. These are encouraged.

It's important that both parties have a clear understanding of the other's position. Please follow the following procedures to help promote a resolution.

- If the concern is not resolved between your child and the coach, call the Athletic Director to arrange a conference. A meeting will be arranged with the coach, parent, and Athletic Director.
- At this meeting, the appropriate next step can be determined.
- Please do not attempt to confront a coach before or after a contest or practice. These can be emotional times for both the parent and coach. Meetings of this nature do not promote resolutions and could result in the individual being banned from all athletic events.

SPORTSMANSHIP

"The Oklahoma Secondary School Athletic Association and the McAlester Public Schools, promote good sportsmanship by its student athletes, coaches and spectators. We request your cooperation by supporting the participants and officials in a positive manner. Spectators are asked to support our games by refraining from derogatory comments or behavior. We ask you to support the competitors, the coaches, and the officials in a positive and sportsmanlike manner. Remember, whether you are on the field or in the stands, BE A GOOD SPORT!"

Anyone that has to be removed from an event by an official for any reason is subject to being banned from all school events.

Revised & Updated: 9/9/26