



SWLA HOMESCHOOL ATHLETIC CLUB
Athletics Handbook

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Welcome Letter	3
Introduction	4
Mission Statement, Program Goals, Core Values	5
Statement of Faith, Expectations, Roles	6
Parent/Guardian Expectations, Participation	7
Eligibility, SWLA Athletic Program	8
Program Levels	9
Homeschool Competitions and Tournaments, Skills Assessments, Quitting a Sport	11
Parent/Guardian Meeting, Fees and Registration	12
Attendance, Interactions	13
Discipline, Coach Code of Conduct	14
Athlete Code of Conduct	15
Parent/Guardian Code of Conduct	16
Disciplinary Measures, Incident Report, Behavior at SWLA Knights Athletic Events	18
Dress Code and Uniforms, Conflict Resolution and Communication	19
Conflict Resolution and Communication	20
Travel Policies, Medical Policies	22
Fundraising Policies, Awards, Closing Thoughts	23
Appendix	24



Dear Parents and Student-Athletes,

Welcome to the SWLA Knights Athletics program! Thank you for choosing SWLA Knights to partner with you on your athletic journey!

SWLA Knights believes that athletic competition can bring honor and glory to the name of our Lord Jesus Christ and provide the opportunity for participants to demonstrate values, such as humility, compassion, and respect, even under the stress of competitive play. We strive to teach our student athletes that sportsmanship is more than mere self-control, it is being thoughtful, kind, generous, and courteous while also being intensely competitive. Our athletes have the privilege of being a part of a team and in doing so learn their responsibilities to their teammates, coach, spectators, and their opponents. Being a part of a team teaches the important life lesson of placing the goals of the group before personal ones and demonstrates how personal contributions impact the welfare of the team. They learn to refine skills, improve physical fitness, demonstrate self-discipline, and reap the benefits of hard work. Athletics teach how to both win and lose with grace and dignity.

SWLA Knights athletes have a genuine love for their sport and the confidence to represent our program on and off the field or court. Our SWLA Knights board and coaches have a genuine love for the Lord and for the athletes entrusted to them. They work hard to improve team skills, and model both leadership and humility to everyone they meet. The parents and families of our athletes support our leadership team, directors, coaches, and our athletes, as well as volunteer their time and energies toward the improvement of our athletic program. These supporters understand that athletic programs are an appropriate and necessary part of a complete, well-rounded educational program. The hope of SWLA Knights is that all who participate in our program will be better people because of their participation.

SWLA Knights is a faith-based program and therefore will promote the kingdom of God in all we do. While we do not ask our athletes or their families to sign a statement of faith, we do ask that they are supportive of our philosophy and make the overall experience at SWLA Knights positive for all families involved in the program.

May the Lord bless our athletes as they use their God-given abilities and their desire to serve Him through athletics and your family as they also serve.

GO KNIGHTS

SWLA Board of Directors

INTRODUCTION

In 2005, SWLA Homeschool Athletic Club (SWLA Knights) was founded when some parents discovered their children's love for sports and nothing was offered to them at a high school level. After researching, it was discovered that there was a league available in Louisiana where a home school team could compete. Five families came together and formed a Varsity Boys Basketball team. The following year a Varsity Girls Basketball team was formed. By year 4, a Soccer team was formed. Soon we were able to form teams for Baseball and Softball. In 2011, the first Football team was formed and in 2013 the first Girls Volleyball team was formed along with Cheer. In 2015, we had our first Track meet and we formed a Pep Squad. Over the years we have grown from 7 athletes to over 100 involved in all the sports.

SWLA Knights from the beginning joined a league, The ACEL, that is committed to providing athletes with competitive games while being grounded in Christian values. We have always stayed committed to both of these goals: Competition and Christianity.

SWLA Knights policies are the result of building and storing reputation and the desire to maintain that reputation. As you become a SWLA Knights family, you both benefit from it and have an obligation to continue to build on it in a positive way for families, athletes, and coaches of the future.

This handbook is a reference guide for athletes and their families, concerning the policies, procedures, rules, and regulations that govern sports at SWLA Knights.

It should be noted that the policies, procedures, rules, and regulations laid out in this handbook are the direct result of the SWLA Knights Board of Directors and SWLA Knights leadership. All policies, procedures, rules, and regulations will be followed as written.

Sound reasoning, good judgement, and adherence to SWLA Knights Athletics core values will be the standard in which situations outside of these stated policies, procedures, rules, and regulations are determined and evaluated.

SWLA Knights is a voluntary program. Participation is a privilege and not a right. Accompanying this privilege is the responsibility to adhere to the standards established by SWLA Knights for its athletic program. This privilege may be removed if an athlete, or their family, fails or refuses to comply with the policies, procedures, rules, or regulations laid out in this handbook.

We look to and depend on God to lead the athletics programs and he has been faithful to do so for more than 15 years. God's provision of leaders, athletes and coaches is a clear signal to SWLA Knights leadership that it is time for a sport to flourish. We also believe the same is true for your family. If now is the time for your athlete to engage and participate, He will make that clear and also provide all the needs for your family to participate.

Participating athletes and their families are responsible for knowing the information contained in this Handbook. Registration for a SWLA Knights team indicates that the policies stated in this Handbook have been read and that the registering athletes and their parents/guardians agree to adhere to these policies in their entirety.

SWLA KNIGHTS MISSION STATEMENT

Southwest Louisiana Home School Athletic Club is dedicated to the belief that a comprehensive education for young individuals extends beyond academics to include active participation in sports. As a volunteer-driven organization, we serve homeschool children in the Lake Charles Area of Southwest Louisiana, providing young men and women, both teenagers and pre-teens, the chance to engage in organized sports within a Christian environment.

We are proud members of the Association of Christian Educators of Louisiana, aligning our values with a broader network dedicated to fostering Christian education principles. In our commitment to enriching the experiences of our participants, SWLAHAC actively seeks more opportunities through tournaments and actively participates in the National Christian Homeschool Championships. Through these avenues, we aim to contribute to the holistic development of our participants, nurturing both their physical and spiritual well-being. By blending athletics with a Christian environment, SWLAHAC endeavors to instill valuable life skills and promote a balanced educational experience for homeschooling families in our community.

SWLA KNIGHTS PROGRAM GOALS

SWLA Knights athletics presents limitless education and learning opportunities. Athletics encourage ongoing education in sport skills and personal and relational development. Athletes learn how to perform better and how to be better teammates.

SWLA KNIGHTS CORE VALUES

SWLA Knights is dedicated to helping athletes to realize their highest potential—physically, mentally, and spiritually.

Each coach strives to instill the following core values in every athlete:

- **Diligence** - they are hard workers; they keep to the task and finish it.
- **Discipline** - they conduct themselves in an orderly and obedient fashion.
- **Humility** - they are free from pride and arrogance; their achievements are a byproduct.
- **Integrity** - they are what they claim to be and demonstrate this by consistently doing what is right.
- **Self-control** - they use wise self-restraint in all aspects of life
- **Responsibility** - they are dependable; they know what they need to do, and they do it.
- **Submissiveness** - they are willing to yield to leaderships' authority, judgement, or decision.
- **Attentiveness** - they demonstrate interest in the words, actions, and feelings of someone else.
- **Supportiveness** - they help others in words and actions.
- **Contentment** - they are happy and satisfied with what they have.

In addition, each coach teaches and exemplifies the following characteristics:

- **Safety** - we always maintain the highest safety standards.
- **Character** - we focus on developing character traits in our athletes.
- **Skill Development** - we teach fundamental sport skills.
- **Participation** - we provide opportunity for maximum participation.
- **Mentoring Relationships** - we establish coaches as mentors to our athletes.
- **Competence** - we build competent teams.
- **Competition** - we build competitive teams
- **Peer Relationships** - we strengthen peer relationships.
- **Fun** - we make the athletic experience enjoyable for the athlete.

SWLA KNIGHTS STATEMENT OF FAITH

- We believe the Holy Bible, both Old and New Testaments, to be the inspired Word of God, without error, the complete revelation of His will for the salvation of man, and the Divine and final authority for all Christian faith and life.
- We believe in one infinite, triune God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
- We believe Jesus Christ is the true God and the true man, having been conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. Having lived sinlessly, He truly died and was resurrected in His own body for our atonement and resurrection.
- We believe that only through His death by shedding of His blood and His resurrection are we provided justification and salvation.
- We believe in the bodily resurrection of all mankind, of the believer to an everlasting dwelling with God, of the unbeliever to an everlasting, conscious hell without God.
- We believe that the ministry of the Holy Spirit is to glorify the Lord Jesus Christ, to convict men of sin, regenerate the believing sinner, indwell, guide, instruct, and empower the believer for Godly living and service.
- We believe in the imminent, bodily return of the Lord Jesus Christ.

SWLA Knights does not require our athletes or their families to sign the statement of faith. We do require that all who partner with SWLA Knights to be aware that we are a faith-based program and therefore will promote and further the kingdom of God in all we do. We do ask that you are supportive of that philosophy and make the overall experience at SWLA Knights positive for all families involved in our organization.

SWLA KNIGHTS EXPECTATIONS

SWLA Knights expects that:

- Athletes will demonstrate respect for opponents with the highest of standards of character and sportsmanship
- Athletes will display excellence and integrity in their schoolwork and that education will take precedence over athletic endeavors.
- Athletes will seek to win the right way - with honor, sportsmanship, and discipline.
- Athletes will believe in something bigger than themselves - TEAM - and will hold each other accountable.
- Athletes and their families will always conduct themselves with grace, humility, and high character.
- Athletes will realize that participation in athletics will prepare them to make a positive contribution to society in the years to come.
- Athletes and their families will understand that conflict will be managed constructively and in such a way that facilitates a positive outcome and reconciliation.
- Athletes and their families will understand that participation on a SWLA Knights team can be demanding and that it requires a substantial commitment throughout the season for the program to be successful.

ROLES

SWLA Knights Board of Directors

The Board of Directors are responsible for all policies, procedures, rules, and regulations related to SWLA Knights activities and operations.

SWLA Knights Athletic Director

The Athletic Director is responsible for administering the Athletics Program. The Administrator is expected to provide appropriate guidance and support to all Commissioners, Coaches, families, and athletes. This includes advising and communicating any changes in policies, procedures, rules, and regulations to the SWLA Knights Athletics program.

SWLA Knights Athletics Committee

At the Board's discretion, an Athletic Committee may be convened.

The Athletic Committee serves at the pleasure of the Board and will be composed of such Board Members and other advisors as are appointed each year. They are charged with providing oversight of the Athletics program, keeping the Board informed on athletic activities, operations and advising the board on such athletics related matters as the Board shall determine.

SWLA Knights Coaches

SWLA Knights Coaches are responsible for creating a fun, safe, and challenging environment in which athletes will receive a high level of instruction and competition. They always have the responsibility to model Christ-like behavior and attitude and will take very seriously the opportunity to mold young lives for Christ.

PARENT/GUARDIAN EXPECTATIONS

Parents/guardians are vital to the success of SWLA Knights athletics. We are so very appreciative of the assistance parents/guardians provide for their SWLA Knights athletes, whether it is driving them to practice or to an athletic event or sacrificing family time to accommodate athletic schedules. Because SWLA Knights is a non-profit organization, comprised of volunteers, we need the participation of ALL our families to make it a successful organization. Please expect to be involved in the sport and to assist as needed.

SWLA Knights parents/guardians are needed and expected to play a supporting role in this organization and are required to volunteer throughout the season:

- Scorekeeper/timeclock
- Team mom/dad
- Team photographer
- Fundraiser coordinator
- Admissions
- Concessions
- Setup/cleanup
- Needs according to the sport

Parents/guardians will need to sign the SWLA Knights Code of Conduct along with their athlete.

PARTICIPATION

Athletes may participate in SWLA Knights athletics provided they are currently being home schooled in accordance with the laws of the State of Louisiana and are not enrolled or in attendance full-time at a public or private school outside the home; additionally athletes must meet eligibility requirements as provided by The ACEL. "Full-time" is defined as attending 4 or more classes at a primary or secondary school level and allows for earning 6 or more credit hours on campus at a college, university, trade school, etc. No person who has graduated from high school (homeschool, public, or private), or who has received a high school diploma (homeschool, public, or private), or who has walked as a Senior at a SWLA Knights event the previous academic year may participate as an athlete in SWLA Knights athletics.

ELIGIBILITY

SWLA Knights athletics participates with multiple organizations based on sport and age group. SWLA Knights follows eligibility guidelines as set forth by THE ACEL (www.theacel.com), NCHC (www.nchclive.com), and/or CCAL (Calcasieu Catholic Athletic League), and therefore agrees that these are the eligibility guidelines to be followed:

- No player who has attained the age of 19 years old or older on or before the date of September 1st of the current academic year may participate.
- No player who has graduated from high school (homeschool, public, or private), has walked as a senior at a SWLA Knights event in a previous academic year, or has received a GED certificate may participate in SWLA Knights athletics.
- A player must be living with and under the care of a parent or legal guardian.
- A player is allowed 4 years of consecutive high school participation in SWLA Knights athletics.
- No high school student may participate on a middle school level team.
- No player who has attained the age of 15 on or before the date of September 1st of the current academic year may participate in CCAL middle school athletics.
- An age-eligible player is allowed 3 years of consecutive middle school participation in SWLA Knights Athletics.
- No pre-high school player may participate on a high school level team. An exception may be granted by the SWLA Knights board in certain sports, in certain circumstances as allowed by the organizations we participate with.
- The athlete and his/her family must be in "good standing" with the SWLA Knights.
- The athlete's birth certificate is provided and their grade level is declared by the parent/guardian.

SWLA ATHLETIC PROGRAM

Teams and levels may change each year due to provision: availability of coaches, players and league opportunities. This model shows current opportunities as of 2023. We may have different variations based on coaching and athlete interest:

GIRLS PROGRAMS	BOYS PROGRAMS
Basketball - V, JV, MS	Basketball - V, JV, MS
Cheer - V	Baseball - V
Cross Country - V, JV	Cross Country - V, JV
Soccer (co-ed) - V, JV	Football - V
Softball - V	Soccer (co-ed) - V, JV
Tennis - V, JV	Tennis - V, JV
Track & Field - V, JV	Track & Field - V, JV
Volleyball - V, JV, MS	Volleyball - V

V - Varsity JV - Junior Varsity MS - Middle School

PROGRAM LEVELS

Middle School - 11-, 12-, 13-, and age-eligible 14-year olds

The middle school athletics program is designed to offer athletes in grades 5th-8th the chance to participate in a more competitive experience, than either intramural or recreation programs offer, with the emphasis on developing skill and habits. It is important that players at this level learn the fundamentals correctly from the beginning. SWLA Knights believes that the level of success found at the high school level has a direct correlation to the skills that are developed through the middle school program. The middle school program in skill development will mirror the high school program in skill development to allow for continuity throughout the program. SWLA Knights believes that winning is a by-product of Colossians 3:23 "And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men," but winning games is not the typical priority or emphasis.

Typically 12 and under athletes will be placed on a younger level (7th grade) team based on their skill level. Typically, 13- and 14-year olds will be placed on an older level (8th grade) team. Athletes who are younger than 13-years old may be placed on this older level team, providing there is evidence of advanced levels of physical development and athletic skill.

Playing time is not a right, it is a privilege earned by attendance at practice and games, hard work, a good attitude, being a team player, skill level, etc. It is also affected by other reasonable requirements set by individual coaches.

SWLA Knights guidelines for middle school playing time are as follows:

- Players on younger level teams are expected to receive almost equal playing time. This occurs irrespective of the outcome of the game.
- Players on older level teams should expect to play in every game but it may not be equal. The outcome of the game does factor into the playing time.

Junior Varsity - 13-, 14-, and age-eligible 15-year olds

The Junior Varsity level is intended for those who display the potential of continued development into productive Varsity level performers. Sophomores occupy the majority of roster positions, though, freshmen may be included on the roster, depending on their skill level and if space is available. Developing Juniors may also play on JV provided they meet age eligibility requirements and their skills level is at the beginner or intermediate level and their participation is appropriate (e.g. a highly skilled junior should play on the varsity level team and not on the JV level team provided there is room on the varsity roster). Seniors are not allowed to play on a JV level team or in a JV competition without the written permission from the SWLA Athletic Director and with the acknowledgment and support of the coach of the opposing team, and the player must be age eligible.

There is an increased emphasis on physical conditioning, refinement of fundamental skills, elements, and strategies of team play. The JV team works toward achieving a balance between continued team and player development and striving for victory. The outcome of the contest becomes a consideration at this level but winning is still not the priority or the emphasis.

JV players play JV games. Any player may “need” to be called up to Varsity level of play temporarily or for the remainder of the season in order to keep the Varsity team/experience whole. SWLA Knights does prioritize the season for seniors and varsity team if required. This decision is made by the coaches of the teams and is considered part of what is best for the team with the support of the Athletic Director.

Playing time is not a right; it is a privilege earned by attendance at practices and games, hard work, a good attitude, being a team player, skill level, etc. It is also affected by other reasonable requirements set by individual coaches.

SWLA Knights guidelines for Junior Varsity play time are as follows:

- Players should expect to play in most games, but that playing time likely will not be equal.

Varsity - 18 and under (but not younger than 12, and 7th grade)

Varsity competition is the highest level of competition. The goal is to be competitive. The varsity team is a culmination of the JV and Middle School programs moving up through the program. Normally, seniors and juniors make up the majority of rosters. Occasionally, sophomore athletes and at times freshman athletes may be selected to be on the team providing there is evidence of advanced levels of physical development, athletic skill, and appropriate social and emotional development or when sub varsity teams do not exist. More emphasis is placed on winning and competing at the highest level. Varsity team participation will always take precedence over all sub varsity teams. However, the coaches will collaborate equally in their decision-making when it comes to tournament teams. From season to season the number of athletes participating may not allow for a full varsity team and a full JV team. As the season develops, injuries, illness and other unforeseen changes in circumstances may cause SWLA Knights to choose to have a single team in place of two teams. In this situation, the choice will be to have a Varsity team and honor the last remaining year of eligibility of the senior(s) in the program.

Playing time is not a right; it is a privilege earned by attendance at practices and games, hard work, a good attitude, being a team player, skill level, etc. It is also affected by other requirements set by individual coaches.

SWLA Knights guidelines for Varsity play time are as follows:

- Playing time is not guaranteed at this level.

HOMESCHOOL COMPETITIONS AND TOURNAMENTS

In some sports there are exclusive homeschool competitions where only homeschool organizations are participating. In these competitions the teams formed are based upon age such as 18 and under, 16 and under, 14 and under, etc. For these specific homeschool competitions, SWLA Knights will follow the rules set forth by the hosting organization. Many times, at these competitions the terms “Varsity” and “Junior Varsity” are not the appropriate description of the teams as they are replaced with terms such as the 18 and under team or the 16 and under team.

SWLA KNIGHTS SKILL ASSESSMENTS

It is the desire of SWLA Knights to see many homeschool athletes involved in athletics each season. Provided SWLA Knights has a coach for every level, there will be a place for most athletes that wish to participate. Skills assessments and team selections will be handled by the coaches and Athletic Director. It is the desire of SWLA Knights for every athlete to have a place in the athletic program.

Skill Assessments dates and times will be announced on our Facebook page as quickly as possible. These assessments are usually held the week prior to the first official week of practice. Every athlete is evaluated in a fair and impartial manner. Coaches and the Athletic Director (or independent evaluators) will be evaluating skill level, athleticism, physical conditioning, positional play, trainability, punctuality, and various other attributes.

Athletes should not attend skill assessments for a sport unless they are willing and able to make the emotional, physical, financial and time commitments necessary.

Special Note:

Placing each athlete at the level they can contribute physically and gain positive feelings for their efforts is important to SWLA Knights. We believe in the people we have chosen to be coaches and trust their ability to evaluate and select athletes for teams. Parents/guardians must understand and agree that SWLA Knights is a program and as such, the needs of the program will be looked at first. It is up to leadership and coaches to place players where they will suit the needs of the program. While SWLA Knights respects the authority of parents/guardians regarding their athletes, placement of players will be at the sole discretion of the Athletic Director and coaches of each sport.

QUITTING A SPORT

SWLA Knights feels that once an athlete is chosen for a team and has made a commitment (registration and payment) to that team that commitment should be honored through to the end of the season. Character is not built by quitting nor does it teach our athletes to persevere through adversity. If the desire to quit is due to injuries or academic ineligibility, SWLA Knights, desire that the athlete still see themselves as part of the team.

It is understood that there will be times that an athlete and/or his family make the decision to leave a sport

during the season, although it is highly discouraged. Whatever the reason may be, an athlete must follow the procedures listed below:

- An injured player is expected to attend all practices and games if they are physically able.
- An athlete and their parent/guardian, who are considering quitting a team, must schedule a face to face meeting with the coach and Athletic Director to seek a solution.
- It is highly recommended that a conference be scheduled with the parents/guardian, the athlete, and the SWLA Board prior to the final decision of a player to quit.
- Should the final decision be made to quit, the athlete and his/her family are responsible for the immediate return of all SWLA Knights equipment and/or uniforms - clean and undamaged. Any equipment or uniforms not returned or that may be damaged must be paid to SWLA Knights at the replacement costs.
- A player that quits a team may not attend skills assessments for another team that same season, unless permission is gained from both coaches and the Athletic Director.
- The Athletic Director and SWLA Board will decide any exceptions to these policies. Exceptions do not include personality clashes, insufficient playing time, or a change of heart. In order to be considered an exception, the situation must be serious and must have unusual consequences for the persons involved.

There will be a one-week grace period, at the start of the season, that an athlete can use to decide that a certain sport is not for them.

PARENT/GUARDIAN MEETING

Shortly after teams have been selected, the coach of each sport will hold a meeting for parents/guardians. The purpose of these meetings is the distribution and explanation of team policies, the collections of necessary paperwork; discussion of team goals and expectations, etc. Attendance is mandatory for these meetings by at least one parent/guardian and the athlete. If a meeting is not held due to extenuating circumstances, coaches are expected to provide a sport specific handout (electronic form is acceptable) with all pertinent information to each participating family.

FEES AND REGISTRATION

- All Knights players applications are on our website. A fully completed players app must be submitted to SWLA Knights prior to participation in each sport. Each athlete must have a completed players app completed for each sport in which they are registering.
- Player fees are due by the second week of practice. The fees for each sport are based on how many players are on the team at the start of the season. Field/Facility rental, tournament fees and the cost of officials are all calculated and distributed evenly among the team based on those numbers. For that reason, fees will differ for each sport as well as by level - a varsity level sport will have higher fees than a middle school level sport.
 - Note: All fees and monies are paid directly to SWLA Knights and not to coaches, or other leaders. SWLA Knights is a 501c3 organization and is audited for federal tax-exempt purposes and must maintain appropriate bookkeeping and accounting of all player fees and monies associated with each sport.
- If needed a family may contact the SWLA Knights Athletic Director or SWLA Board to make payment plan arrangements. A down payment will be required. Those requesting payment plans MUST contact the Athletic Director BEFORE registering. All player fees must be paid in full prior to

the first competition of the season. Athletes may not participate in a sport for which they have not paid their player fees or made payment arrangements.

- Once practices have begun, after the first week of participation, no player fees may be refunded. The SWLA Board may approve a refund in whole or part based on a case by case basis. Families that are requesting a refund in whole or in part must present that request in writing to the SWLA Board email address swlaknights@swla-hac.com.

ATTENDANCE

A team can only effectively function when all participants are present. An athlete who misses practices not only hurts themselves but their team. Players have an obligation to their team and coach. This obligation includes consistent attendance at practices and competitions/games. Athletes and their families are provided a schedule of both practices and competitions/games. It is recommended that athletes and their families use those schedules to plan accordingly and follow the SWLA Knights Stack Team App for their sport.

Emergency situations do arise (doctor's appointments, illness, death of a family member, etc.) that will make it impossible for the athlete to make practice or an athletic competition. Absences should be few and far between.

Athletes should make every effort to notify the coach at least 24 hours prior to the day of the missed practice or competition. Repeated absences and/or unexcused absences can result in decreased playing time.

Excused Absences

- Personal illness or accident - either the parents/guardians or the athlete must call, text or email the coach 24 hours before the scheduled activity to notify of absence. Failure to do so will result in an unexcused absence.
- Doctor or dentist appointments. When possible, appointments should be scheduled so that they will not conflict with athletic activities.
- Funeral or death in family
- Weddings in immediate family
- Pre-approved church activities
- Special, unavoidable circumstances approved by the coach.

Parents/guardians should be prompt in picking up their athlete when the practice or game is over. Failure to comply with this procedure may result in a disciplinary action.

INTERACTIONS

We believe that it is possible to have healthy social interaction and mature Christian relationships. For the protection of our families, our Christian fellowship, and our testimony within the community, it is vital that we always exercise ourselves with godliness and adhere to moral purity.

SWLA Knights is not a forum for dating. Therefore, we ask that in all SWLA Knights activities, the behavior between singles be above approach by avoiding the appearance of improper behavior or action.

Flirtations and suggestive communications are discouraged. The SWLA Board reserves the right to make the determination of what interaction is not considered satisfactory.

It is strongly suggested that while being a part of the SWLA Knights athletic program the athletes do not have/entertain significant others while participating in SWLA Knights related activities such as practices, games, travel, meals, etc. This is not to say they cannot attend a game, a practice or a team building event but that the athletes focus needs to be on the game, the practice, or the team building and not on the significant other. Each family approaches this subject and territory differently. Feel free to choose the path that is best for your athlete and family.

Ephesians 4: 29-32, Psalm 133:1-3

DISCIPLINE

By virtue of participating in SWLA Knights athletics, athletes and their families voluntarily accept the following codes of conduct as stated by SWLA Knights. All participants are expected and encouraged to exercise personal self-discipline, restraint, and genuine kindness toward others.

COACH CODE OF CONDUCT

Coaching is a privilege. It carries with it an obligation for each individual coach to uphold and promote the stated goals and objectives. Any conduct considered unethical or a conflict of interest shall be subject to discipline by the SWLA Board.

Responsibilities to Players:

- The coach shall never place the value of winning over the safety and welfare of the athletes
- Coaches shall instruct athletes to play within the written rules of the game and within the spirit of the game at all times
- Coaches shall not seek unfair advantage by teaching deliberate unsportsmanlike behavior to athletes
- Coaches shall not tolerate inappropriate behavior from athletes regardless of the situation
- Coaches shall direct athletes to seek proper medical attention for injuries and to follow the physician's instructions regarding treatment and recovery.
- Coaches will commit the time necessary to build, instruct and encourage individual and team skills.
- Coaches will not verbally demean or abuse players, including cursing or name calling.

Responsibilities to SWLA Knights:

- Adherence to all SWLA Knights rules, policies and guidelines.
- Communicate with the Treasurer regarding all pre-cost items.
- Committed to following the SWLA Knights Conflict and Resolution process.

Responsibilities to the Rules of the Game:

- Coaches shall be thoroughly acquainted with and demonstrate working knowledge of the Rules of the Game
- Coaches are responsible to assure that their athletes understand the intent as well as the application of the Rules.
- Coaches are responsible for their athlete's actions on the field/court and must not permit them to perform with intent of causing injury to opposing athletes.
- The coach must constantly strive to teach good sportsmanship behavior

Responsibility to Officials:

- Officials must have the support of the coaches, athletes and spectators. Coaches must always refrain from criticizing the officials in the presence of athletes or spectators.
- Professional respect, before, during, and after the game must be mutual. There must be no demeaning dialogue or gestures between official, coach, or athlete.
- Coaches must not incite athletes or spectators or attempt to disrupt the flow of the game.

Responsibility to Public Relations:

- Coaches have the responsibility to promote SWLA Knights athletics to the public. Comments and critiques of governing bodies, teams, coaches, athletes, or parents/guardians must be positive and constructive.
- Coaches have the responsibility to assist their players in conducting themselves properly when in public, when representing their team and SWLA Knights.
- Coaches' appearance should be professional during the games.

Other Responsibilities

- Clearly communicate with athletes, parents/guardians, coaches, officials, and SWLA Knights leadership.
- The behavior of coaches must be accountable to the highest level of integrity; honoring Jesus Christ individually and corporately, in all association with athletes, parents/guardians, and SWLA Knights leadership.
- While the concept of rivalry is embraced, it cannot take precedence over exemplary professional conduct.
- It is unacceptable to have any verbal altercation with an official, opposing coach/team, or spectator before, during, or after the game.
- Coaches should coordinate with each other to ensure that at least one coach is present until the last athlete has been picked up.

ATHLETE CODE OF CONDUCT

The actions of athletes are a direct reflection of themselves, their parents/guardians, their team, and their community. An athlete's involvement in SWLA Knights athletics, provides opportunities and experiences that are important to the development of a well-rounded athlete. Because participation in SWLA Knights athletics is a privilege, a high standard of conduct will be expected both on and off the field or court.

Athletes shall follow this code and avoid any actions which may lead to an unfavorable view of the athlete, their teammates, coaches, family, SWLA Knights, or the community. Any alleged violations will be subject to review by the coaches, Athletic Director, and SWLA Board and may result in subsequent action. This listing is not intended to be all-inclusive, as SWLA Knights reserves the right to make final determination of what conduct is considered unsatisfactory.

- Bullying (physical, emotional, or electronic), hazing, or harassment
- Disorderly or destructive actions
- Unsportsmanlike conduct
- Profanity, vulgarity, obscenity, offensive speech, slander and/or gestures
- Any posting or communication via social networks or media outlets (Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat, Instagram, TikTok, blogs, etc.) which advocates the violation of any SWLA Knights policy and/or team policy would be considered unacceptable and inappropriate

- Dishonesty in any form, including lying, theft, or cheating
- Gambling
- Defiance of authority including flagrant disrespect, disobedience, and/or rebellious or disrespectful attitude.
- The possession and/or distribution of literature, pictures, posters, or recordings presenting an indecent or immoral activity or ungodly belief or philosophy. This includes distribution of sexually suggestive material via cell phones, cameras, computers, or “sexting” of any kind. The definition of sexting is the sending, receiving, or forwarding of sexually explicit or suggestive messages, photos, images, or videos via cell phone, computer or other digital or electronic devices.
- Sale, possession, and/or use of tobacco (this includes electronic cigarettes and vapor products), alcohol or illegal drugs (including prescription drugs not prescribed to the athlete), marijuana, or other controlled substances or the implied use thereof.
- Attending or hosting a party that involves alcohol, illegal drugs, marijuana, or other controlled substances. It is the obligation of the athlete to immediately leave the premises once they learn a gathering or party involves alcohol, drugs, etc.
- The use of, possession of, or the distribution of anabolic/androgenic steroids or other performance enhancing substances.
- Immoral conduct, immodesty and conduct implying immorality.
- Use or possession of weapons and/or dangerous items at any athletic event including guns, knives, explosive devices, etc.
- Any violations of the law

PARENT/GUARDIAN CODE OF CONDUCT

It is imperative that you understand the important role you play as a parent/guardian of a SWLA Knight athlete. You and your athlete represent your family and our program.

Parents/Guardians shall follow this code and avoid any actions which may lead to an unfavorable view of themselves, coaches, family, SWLA Knights athletics, or the community. Any alleged violations will be subject to review by the coaches, Athletic Director, and SWLA Board and may result in subsequent action. This listing is not intended to be all-inclusive, as SWLA Knights Board reserves the right to make the final determination of what conduct is considered unsatisfactory.

As the parent/guardian of a SWLA Knights athlete, I agree with the following:

- **Be positive and encouraging.** Uplift your athlete, coaches, team, and SWLA Board.
- **Teach your athletes to abide by the rules of the game in letter and spirit.** Tactics promoting unfairness will not be tolerated. Ensure that your athlete is being homeschooled in accordance with the laws of the State of Louisiana, and the rules of the associated organizations we participate in.
- **Develop good relationships with your athlete and their teammates.** Your athlete has been placed on this team for a purpose. Use this opportunity to minister to and encourage others. You never know who is hurting and needs your show of love in their life.
- **Develop good relationships with other parents/guardians.** You need their support as much as they need yours!
- **Develop good relationships with the coaches.** Get to know them. Communicate with them with an open heart and mind. Set appointments to meet with them rather than approaching them before or after games or practices. Be open, honest and use respectful words. Inform the coach and/or Athletic Director if your athlete does not maintain a satisfactory academic level.

- **Help your athlete develop unity within their team.** Teach them to respect the seriousness of their commitment by making sure they attend all practices, meetings, games, and team building opportunities.
- **Do not use profanity, questionable slang or “trash talk”.** Anything that can be construed as negative or insulting must be avoided.
- **Never criticize coaches or officials.** Officials and coaches represent authority and obedience to their authority it not predicated on whether one agrees with it or not. If you “bad mouth” your athlete’s coaches or officials, you cannot expect them to play for or respect these individuals.
- **Never be involved in negative cheering.** Booing officials or opponents or getting into negative chants sets a bad example for your athlete and is counter to all we say and believe at SWLA Knights athletics. Examples might include chanting “Air Ball” when the other team misses a shot or screaming while an opponent is on the free throw line.
- **Never speak negatively around athletes or other parents/guardians about:**
 - ◆ **SWLA Knights Athletics:** a negative atmosphere is contagious. Instead, create a positive atmosphere of gratitude.
 - ◆ **Other athletes or parents/guardians:** speak to parents/guardians only about you and your athlete(s). Speak to athletes only in an encouraging manner.
 - ◆ **Your athlete’s teammates:** this only allows your athlete to make excuses for their own performance. Do not offer excuses for your athlete if they are not playing. Encourage them to do their best and to keep striving for worthwhile goals.
- **Always resolve differences with coaches privately.** Call to make an appointment to speak with the coach privately, honoring the “24 Hour Rule” and following the Mathew 18 principle. Think about what you will say and what is motivating your discussion.
- **Maintain class and character.** Your actions reflect upon you, your family, and SWLA Knights athletics. You set the example for your athlete. Refrain from the use of tobacco products, alcoholic beverages, and illegal drugs before and during all SWLA Knights activities.
- **Be an example and guard.** Set the standard high for behavior and appearance. Do not be afraid to speak in love to those whose behavior might undermine SWLA Knights activities.
- **Always dress appropriately.** Modest attire that does not attract attention to you and away from your athlete should be worn.
- **Be modest in victory and gracious in defeat.** Both parents/guardians and spectators need to be strong in this area. Smile and shake hands with visitors before and after games regardless of the outcome.
- **Recognize the success of your opponent.** Compliment good play of athletes from the opposing team. Congratulate their coaches on a well-coached game.
- **Insist that your athlete follow instructions.** Coaches depend upon a player’s ability to follow orders immediately and without question. Questions may be raised at an appropriate time such as at practice or after games when there is a time for explanation. This builds respect for authority and trust between athletes and coaches.
- **Work with the officials...do not work the officials.** Badgering officials works against our team and comes at the price of our testimony and ability to influence others. There is never a time at any contest where a parent/guardian is afforded an opportunity to say anything to an official other than, “Thank you.” Without these men and women and their willingness to officiate, there would be no game.
- **Remain in the stands.** Never attempt to approach the field, court, bench, press box, score table or officials before, during or after a game. Socially visiting with coaches briefly after the game is encouraged. Game officials are off-limits.
- **THIS IS A GAME! Have fun, touch lives, and grow yourself!** You can be a positive influence, like no

one else may be able to, in the lives of your athletes and their peers. Enjoy this time in their lives and help them to enjoy it as well. Games, plays and officials will all be forgotten, but your behavior and attitude will stay with your athlete forever.

- **WAIT FOR THE ARRIVAL OF AT LEAST ONE COACH.** We ask that parents and guardians remain present with their child until at least one coach has arrived at the practice location.

DISCIPLINARY MEASURES FOR ATHLETES AND PARENTS/GUARDIANS

It is the goal of SWLA Knights to work in conjunction with parents/guardians within the process of discipline, guide in the restoration of relationships with those the offense is against, use relational influence to produce growth, correction and right choices, and finally do so in the context that seeks the best interest of both parties involved and the program as a whole.

Disciplinary measures may include fines, compensation for damages, work assignments, probation, suspension, and/or dismissal. Work assignments and probation may be levied by the coach, suspensions must be approved by the Athletic Director, fines and dismissals must be approved by the SWLA board in accordance with our by-laws.

- Work assignments are to be completed exactly as requested within a specified time limit.
- Probation may involve loss of privileges and exclusions from sports activities.
- Compensation for damages will not exceed the cost to repair or replace property damaged by the individual and may include any unexpected expense that may be incurred.
- Suspension is a removal from the roster with an option to reapply after a specified period. This normally requires an individual to leave the facility immediately and they may not participate (practices, games, or tournaments) with the team until permission is granted to return.
- Dismissal is the last resort and means permanent removal from the program. A dismissed individual may not be present in any facilities or at any functions related to SWLA Knights activities without the written permission of the Athletic Director and the SWLA Board.

INCIDENT REPORT

When an individual violates policies or rules, a parent/guardian, coach, or anyone involved may submit an incident report. The incident report is used as documentation for disciplinary measures that may need to be carried out by the administration. Incident reports must be filled out and turned into the SWLA Board.

BEHAVIOR AT SWLA KNIGHTS ATHLETIC EVENTS

For the sake of our young people, it is important that we all rise above the typical competitive sports atmosphere that tends to stir up and encourage negative responses toward opponents. Let us all put aside these negative responses and encourage one another in love; may our desire be to build up EVERY Person. This applies to the players and coaching staff as well as spectators.

The following apply to all athletic events:

- While at any SWLA Knights event, athletes must remain in the designated areas for that event.
- When cheering for a SWLA Knight team, only cheer FOR the Knights. There is NEVER any reason to cheer against the other team.
- Ridicule, manipulative intimidation (e.g. making noises during an opponent's free throws),

boastful chanting, jeering, booing, and belittling, angry or hurtful gestures are not admirable and are therefore prohibited.

- Athletes participating in SWLA Knights athletics should never start or contribute in any way to a fight on or off the field or court. No SWLA Knight player should ever leave the bench during a fight.
- Banners, posters, signs, etc. containing positive, encouraging, and supportive messages are allowed. Negative or insulting messages in any form are never allowed.
- Never abuse or misuse the facilities of another organization. Remember SWLA Knights is a guest.

DRESS CODE AND UNIFORMS

The following dress code applies to all athletes, when representing SWLA Knights.

- **Always dress appropriately.** Modest attire that does not attract attention to you and away from your team should be worn when not on the court/field.
- Extreme hairstyles - this includes mohawks, shaved heads, hair dyed an unnatural color. Hair length for boys should be above the shoulders. The intent of this rule is to encourage an appearance of team unity and to discourage individual attention-getting.
- Tattoos or other permanent or temporary body markings must not be visible.
- Body-piercing jewelry of any kind.

This dress code is not exhaustive and due to variety in clothing styles, the SWLA Knights Board reserves the right to make final determination of what dress is considered unsatisfactory. At all times, our dress should be neat and modest.

Uniforms are the property of SWLA Knights, not the players, unless the coach has athletes purchase their own uniforms. The uniforms are to be worn at games and games-related activities only, not at practice, at home, etc. The only exception to this rule is at the Coach's discretion while supporting other sports' at Senior Night. Each team member is responsible for the proper care of their game uniform. If a player damages or loses a uniform, that player must pay for a replacement.

- Whenever the uniform is worn, it must be worn in its entirety.
- No undergarment of any kind may be visible at any time.
- Clothing worn during practice times must be as modest as the game uniform
- Uniforms are to be worn as the manufacturer intended them.

It is the responsibility of the athlete to return all SWLA issued equipment to their coach or athletic director at the end of their season. All team uniforms and equipment are to be returned to the coach immediately after the last practice, contest or scheduled meeting by the coach. Athletes should never give their SWLA issued equipment or uniform to any one else to return for them. The coach is responsible for keeping an accurate record of SWLA issued inventory and if there are any items not returned at the end of the season, the athlete will be considered "not in good standing". Athletes are not permitted to keep their uniforms at the end of a season, unless their sport requires each athlete to purchase their own uniform. Athletic uniforms are costly to replace in small quantities. In addition, many of our uniforms are custom made, and cannot be matched. All parents are asked to support our inventory policies, and make every effort to see to it that their child's uniform is returned to the coach immediately after the season concludes. Please be advised that it is more beneficial to have the inventory item returned than to have the item paid for. Family cooperation is essential. Please make all attempts to locate and return all SWLA issued athletic inventory at the end of the season. Athletes who are "not in good standing" will not be issued any other SWLA uniform for another sport season

until they clear their “not in good standing status” with the coach or athletic director. If the uniform is lost, or ruined, the athlete will be held responsible. The athletes will also not be eligible to receive any athletic awards until the missing items of inventory have been returned or paid for.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION AND COMMUNICATION

Parenting and coaching can both be difficult vocations. By keeping lines of communications open between parents/guardians and coaches, many potential problems may be avoided. This begins with clear communication from the coaching staff to the parents/guardians and athletes. The following guidelines are in place to help resolve conflicts, if they occur, in an appropriate manner that upholds the dignity of athletes, parents/guardians, and coaches. One of the goals of SWLA Knights is to instill in our athletes a sense of ownership and responsibility for their actions. Therefore, it is important that athletes learn necessary communication skills and how to resolve conflicts.

A. Athletes and parent/guardians should expect the following communication from coaches.

1. Coaching philosophy and goals
2. Team requirements
3. Individual coaching rules and consequences
4. Location and times of all practices and contests

B. Coaches should expect the following communications from parents/ guardians and athletes:

1. Concern expressed directly to the coach. Athletes should make this first step.
2. Notification of scheduling conflicts (practice or games) well in advance.
3. Concerns about philosophy/expectations BEFORE commitment is made to team.
4. Positive role-modeling at contests and practices.

C. Appropriate concerns to discuss with coaches:

1. Treatment of athletes, mentally and physically
2. Ways to help athletes improve
3. Concerns about an athlete’s behavior
4. College options and recruiting

D. Concerns not appropriate to discuss with coaches:

1. Team strategy
2. Playing time
3. Play calling
4. Other athletes

SWLA Knights understands it is difficult to accept when an athlete is not participating or playing as much as a parent/guardian had hoped. We trust our coaches to make decisions and believe that they will always make decisions that are best for the program.

The Matthew 18 Principle

Matthew 18: 15-17 states - *“Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou has gained a brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be un-*

to thee as an heathen man and a publican.”

SWLA Knights strongly believe in this principle. There is a five-step process we ask athletes and their families to follow:

Step 1: One of the greatest opportunities for athletes is learning skills for effective and Biblical conflict resolution. When a concern arises, athletes are encouraged to speak with their coach directly. When a coach and athlete can find mutually agreeable solutions it can be very satisfying.

Step 2: If the athlete and the coach could not come to a mutually agreeable solution or are unable to resolve the issue together, then the parents/guardians may contact the coach. If the parent/guardian has an issue or concern, the parent/guardian should contact the coach at an appropriate time for both parties. An upset parent/guardian should abide by the 24-hour rule.

24-Hour Rule - Do not confront a coach immediately before or after a contest or practice. Wait a full twenty-four hours before making contact of any sort (including emails or text messages). Because meetings of this nature rarely promote resolution, the “24 Hour Rule” will always be in effect. This not only allows for reflection, but for emotions to settle so rational, facts-oriented discussions can take place.

Under no circumstances should a parent/guardian approach a coach or another parent/guardian in a harsh manner.

Step 3: If the discussion between the coach and parent/ guardians does not resolve the issue then the matter may be brought before the Athletic Director. The athlete, parents/guardians, and coach should all be present at this meeting. This step shall be accomplished in writing preceding the in-person meeting with the Athletic Director.

Step 4: If the Athletic Director is not able to provide a satisfactory solution, the issue or concern will be brought before a Grievance Committee who will meet with all parties involved. This step shall be accomplished in writing preceding the in-person meeting with the Grievance Committee. If this meeting does not bring resolution, the parents/guardians should fill out an incident report.

Step 5: The final step in the process is to bring the matter before the SWLA Board if all other steps have been followed. This step shall be accomplished in writing preceding the in-person meeting with the SWLA Board.

All aspects of an issue should be kept confidential. Even in disagreements, your athlete must understand that parent/guardians and coaches are a team and want what is best for the athlete.

SWLA Knights will always prefer to find common ground and reconcile issues as we believe that we as adults model community, forgiveness and peaceful resolution to our children and those lessons are more valuable than any skill in any sport.

Unfortunately, even after many attempts to seek counsel and reconcile concerns, times have and will occur where a family might determine that quitting the SWLA Knights organization is their preferred option. Though SWLA Knights never desire the outcome to be so, sometimes that departure does not occur on “good terms”.

SWLA Knights will consider reconciliation with a family (parents/guardians) that have previously quit SWLA Knights assuming there is authentic intentions and a clear sense of awareness and responsibilities for the challenges that caused the original departure of the family from SWLA Knights. There are specific and pre-determined steps that a family needs to take in order to seek reconciliation with the SWLA Knights organization. Both SWLA Knights leadership and the family must pursue and achieve genuine forgiveness and reconciliation prior to the family rejoining the SWLA Knights organization and regaining “good standing” within our organization. In extreme or extenuating circumstances, it could involve a probation period and could also preclude eligibility for leadership roles until such time as trust is returned between SWLA Knights leadership and the family.

TRAVEL POLICIES

Athletic competition is local, state, and national. Therefore, it may involve some travel away from home. In the event that an athlete’s parents/guardians are unable to accompany them on a scheduled trip out of town, it is required that the parents/guardians provide an adult sponsor to take their place. The parents/guardians are responsible for briefing the sponsor on SWLA Knights policies, ensuring that the sponsor will continue the commitment already indicated by the parents/guardians and athlete. It is the responsibility of the parents/guardians and the designated sponsor to settle issues such as transportation, expenses, medical releases, etc. A written sponsor form must be on file with the coaches.

See appendix for the complete Child Safety & Youth Protection Policy.

MEDICAL POLICIES

Participation in athletics involves a certain degree of risk for injury. Such physical injury can occur in any type of sports activity and can vary in nature. Athletic injuries can run from minor injuries, such as bruises and scrapes, to more serious injuries such as fractures, dislocations, concussions, paralysis and even death.

It is required that all SWLA Knights athletes have a current sports physical. These physicals are valid for one year and parents/guardians must provide a copy to each sport for participation.

All injuries sustained by an athlete are to be reported to their coach immediately. This is the responsibility of the athlete and/or parent/guardians. The coach will immediately report all injuries to the SWLA Athletic Director & SWLA Board.

Athletes with illness/injury sustained in an athletic event that require a visit to the doctor, hospital, or primary care facility **must receive written clearance by attending physician/facility in order to return to participate** in SWLA Knights athletic activities. Athletes should, when necessary, seek care from their family physician or specialist.

Athletes must always ensure they are healthy prior to participating in a practice, contest, or team event. This action helps the team stay healthy and helps the athlete return to health quickly. Anyone with a fever of 100.9 degrees F or above or other indications of being contagious should stay home until their health is better.

FUNDRAISING

SWLA Knights is a 501c3 organization and as such must abide by tax laws and regulations consistent with tax-exempt status. Any person or group wishing to run a fundraiser associated with SWLA Knights must complete a Fundraising Guidelines and Request form and return it to the SWLA Board for approval. No fundraiser activity may begin until the form is approved and returned to you.

See Appendix for the complete fundraising policies.

AWARDS

General Requirements for all Awards;

To be eligible for an athletic award, an athlete must complete the season, although the coach may make exceptions (pending approval by the SWLA Board) in unusual cases. The athlete must be a good representative of SWLA and team and abide by all the rules and regulations outlined in this Athletic Handbook.

CLOSING THOUGHTS

May we all encourage one another to not only receive the Lord Jesus Christ as our Savior but also to walk in the Spirit, growing up in Christ who is the Head, living out Christ in all aspects of leadership, self-discipline, individual responsibility, personal integrity, and good citizenship.

May we with our whole heart actively seek to be filled with the Lord, developing, and maintaining an appetite for God's word, diligent to keep the oneness of the Spirit.

May we be one with the Lord to such an extent that we bring into obedience to Christ our dress, appearance, thought life, conversation, attitudes, habits, and relationships, glorifying in the Lord and not ourselves.

May we walk in humility before God and with one another, submitting to authority and being subject to one another.

APPENDIX

CHILD SAFETY & YOUTH PROTECTION POLICY

“Say NO, then GO and TELL”

Sometimes even people that we trust do things that are wrong and can intend to misuse our trust and hurt us. Any act that threatens to harm another’s physical, mental, emotional, or spiritual health is wrong. Unfortunately, there are some adults or even other youth who sexually abuse children. SWLA Knights is dedicated to equipping our leadership (Coaches and volunteer adult support) to guide young men and women to honor God, act with integrity, serve others, and experience a healthy and safe environment through a program of education and the establishment of procedures and policies focused on the prevention of emotional, physical, spiritual and sexual abuse. All members – both adults and youth – hold the KEYS (“Knowledge of Establishing Youth Safety”) to protecting and safeguarding our youth. These Keys include the following:

A. Volunteer Leader screening to be “Registered” as a supervisory Adult with SWLA Knights, including:

- Volunteer applications, including reference checks and agreement to this policy
- Agreement with the SWLA Knights Statement of Faith and Values
- Successfully passing Criminal Background Check before approval of adult volunteer leaders
- Additional Criminal Background Check every three years.

B. Know the Environment to Keep Youth Safe:

- Being aware of other events and individuals who might have access to the area
- Previewing facilities before events and evaluating the safety of the location
- Knowing who will be in attendance
- Education about protecting the health and safety of youth
- Being vigilant for signs of child neglect, physical abuse, emotional abuse, and child sexual abuse – including sexual abuse or inappropriate sexual conduct by other youth
- Abusers cannot be easily identified and are typically trusted by children and their families

NOBODY IS ABOVE THE RULES – ALL SUSPICIOUS BEHAVIOR OR VIOLATIONS OF POLICIES MUST BE REPORTED

C. Mandatory Reporting and documentation of incidents and/or allegations:

- Regardless of whether you observe it or hear it second hand, SWLA Knights requires you to report to law enforcement and/or child protective services, any good-faith suspicion or reasonable belief that any child is or has been physically, sexually or emotionally abused or neglected, has been (whether in person, online or through communication devices) exposed to sexual exploitation, child pornography, solicitation or enticement, or obscene material.
- It is also mandatory to report to SWLA Knights any violations of SWLA Knights Policies. Use the Incident Report form located online at <https://form.jotform.com/241667310857057>. Report what you have seen or heard immediately and document.

Any sexual contact with a youth – regardless of who the other person is – is wrong and should be reported. The following guidelines can help to reduce the possibility of that happening:

ALL MEMBERS ARE TO ADHERE TO THE SWLA Knights GUIDELINES AND POLICIES.

1. Immoral conduct, including physical violence, insults, drugs, alcohol, sexual conduct, inappropriate language, theft, and deceit are inconsistent with SWLA Knights values and policies.
2. Everyone should respect youths’ privacy – especially when it comes to toilets, showering, and sleep-

ing arrangements.

3. Separate accommodations, showers, dressing/changing areas and restrooms for adults and youth are required.
4. It is never acceptable for an adult to be on or in the same bed.
5. No interaction between adults and youth in a bedroom or a bathroom except in limited situations required due to health and safety concerns, in which case the no one-on-one rule must still be followed.
6. While youth will be in close proximity with one another during these times, additional safety procedures apply even youth-to-youth.
7. Any sexual activity or overtures are strictly prohibited.
8. A minimum of two (“registered”) SWLA Knights adult leaders must be present for each activity
 - Of the two required leaders, those 18-20 years of age may count for one of the two-deep leadership positions required in the Youth/Leader Ratios and for satisfying the two-deep leadership requirement.
 - The second leader must be age 21 or above except overnight activities where the second leader must be age 25 or above.
9. A youth should never be alone with only one adult (unless it is his/her parent/guardian)
 - This includes electronic communications such as texting and on-line communications
 - This includes transportation to and from SWLA Knights activities. If a SWLA Knights coach is transporting their own athlete, then they may also transport athletes that are not related to them, provided there is a permission form, from the parent/guardian, filed with the SWLA Board, without the need of another adult. Note, this does not extend to coaches without their athlete in the vehicle or to coaches without athletes in the program. A coach who wishes to transport one or more athletes that are not their own without their own athlete along will need a second adult in the vehicle.
 - This includes overnight stays in hotel rooms or other overnight accommodations. Youth shall not stay in a room with one adult unless that adult is his/her parent/guardian.
 - Youth shall not be in hotel rooms or other overnight accommodations by themselves. At least 2 adults (“registered”) must be a part of the room accommodations.
 - Stay in areas designated for the activities and keep doors open
10. Adults and youth are not to have “secrets,” nor are adults to provide “special treatment,” gifts or “forbidden items” (e.g., tobacco, alcohol or allowing risky behavior) to youth
11. There should be no secret activities, meetings, or clubs
12. Appropriate clothing should always be worn – especially for swimming, tennis, and cheer activities
13. Hazing, bullying, physical hitting, and/or corporal punishment (even if intended as discipline) are strictly prohibited
14. Youth leadership should always be monitored by adult leaders
15. No inappropriate physical contact
 - No “rough-housing,” butt-slapping, massages, or inappropriate hugs
 - No touching of children in the genital, breast, or buttocks areas
 - Children may not sit on the lap of an adult other than their parent/guardian
 - Children should never be touched against their will unless they are in clear danger
 - Cameras, cell phones and other electronics should never be used inappropriately or in any way that can violate someone’s privacy or cause them any harm.

Youth are instructed that if anyone fails to follow these guidelines, they should report them to their leaders and to their parents/guardians. It is the right thing to do and can help to protect them and others from harm.

Likewise, adult leaders are to report any violations of the guidelines directly to SWLA Knights. All adults are required to support and help youth adhere to the coaching and instruction they are given in the SWLA Knights Program.

Your mind, your body and your soul are three things over which you have certain rights that other people cannot take away. A doctor may need to examine you in a very personal and private way, but if it makes you feel uncomfortable tell your parents/guardians or ask one of them to be with you during the examination.

People may say things to you about ideas with which you do not agree. If people go beyond what you think or have been taught is reasonable, or if they ask you to see, read or do things that make you feel uncomfortable—whether it’s a physical act or a spiritual one—you have the right to refuse it, and that is precisely what you should do.

If they offer you alcohol, illegal drugs, or ask you to help them steal something, or they touch you or ask you to touch them in inappropriate ways, go find someone you trust and tell them. Tell them more than once if you must or tell other trusted adults. If you cannot get through to them, find someone else until you are believed.

How do you know if something is wrong? One of the best things to do is to look for God’s direction. It is that gut feeling based on reason, love, and developing your conscience by studying moral issues and the Bible’s teaching on them. The more you develop your conscience, the easier it will be to know what the right thing to do is.

Adults should know better than to ask young people to perform sexual acts, disobey the law, or violate their religious principles. It is never your fault if someone asks you to do something wrong, even if they say it is.

“Say NO, then GO, and TELL.”

SPONSORSHIP AGREEMENT FORM

If an athlete, 18 or under, is not accompanied by a parent/guardian to an athletic tournament, it is required that the parent/guardian provide an adult sponsor to take their place. This sponsor then takes on the responsibility of the parent/guardian. The following Sponsorship Agreement Form must be signed and returned to the coach of your student-athlete's team and a copy should be given to the sponsor.

I understand that the Sponsor will be held accountable for the actions of the student-athlete in their care 24 hours a day.

Please Print:

Athlete Name: _____ Coach/Team Name: _____

Sponsor Name: _____ Sponsor Age: _____

Cell Phone _____ Hotel Phone: _____ Room # _____

Parent Signature: _____ Phone: _____ Date: _____

Minor Signature: _____ Phone: _____ Date: _____

Sponsor Signature: _____ Phone: _____ Date: _____

I, the parent/guardian, do give my athlete's sponsor _____

permission to consent to medical care on my behalf of my minor athlete _____

Emergency contact information:

Contact Name: _____ Phone: _____

Family Doctor: _____ Phone: _____

Known Drug Allergies: _____

Known Food Allergies: _____

Other vital information such as Diabetic, Epileptic etc.: _____

Give a completed copy of this waiver to both your coach and the student-athlete's sponsor

PARENT PERMISSION AND RELEASE OF LIABILITY

Parental Consent:

(I) By allowing my child, a Minor, to Participate with the SWLA Knights. (We), the parents/guardians do hereby consent to said minor participating in SWLA Knights Athletic Events.

Authorization of Consent to Treatment of Minor:

(I) (We), the parents/guardians of a minor do hereby authorize **SWLA Knights**, hereinafter "Agent", for and on behalf of our child to consent to any x-ray examination, anesthetic, medical or surgical diagnosis or treatment, and hospital care which is deemed advisable by, and is to be rendered under the general or specific supervision of any physician and surgeon licensed under the provision of the Medical Practice Act, whether such diagnosis or treatment is rendered at the office of said physician or at a hospital, during all times that the Minor is in the presence of said Agent.

It is understood that this authorization is given in advance of any specific diagnosis, treatment, or hospital care being required, but is given to provide authority and power on the part of our aforesaid agent(s) to give specific consent to any and all such diagnosis, treatment, or hospital care which the aforementioned physician in the exercise of his best judgment may deem advisable.

HIPAA Release Authority. My agent shall be treated as I would be with respect to my rights regarding the use and disclosure of my child's individually identifiable health information or other medical records. This release authority applies to any information governed by the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA), 42 U.S.C. 1320d and 45 CFR 160 through 164. I authorize any physician, health care professional, dentist, health plan, hospital, clinic, laboratory, pharmacy, or other covered health care provider, any insurance company, and the Medical Information Bureau, Inc. or other health care clearinghouse that has provided treatment or services to my child, or that has paid for or is seeking payment from me for such services, to give, disclose and release to my agent, without restriction, all of my child's individually identifiable health information and medical records regarding any past, present or future medical or mental health condition, including all information relating to the diagnosis of HIV/AIDS, sexually transmitted diseases, mental illness, and drug or alcohol abuse. The authority given my agent shall supersede any other agreement that I may have made with my child's health care providers to restrict access to or disclosure of my child's individually identifiable health information.

This authorization shall remain effective until terminated in writing.

(We) the parents/guardians shall indemnify, hold free and harmless, assume liability for, and defend **SWLA Knights**, its agents, servants, employees, officers, directors, practice facility, and organization from any and all liability for personal injury or property damage and costs and expenses including but not limited to, attorney's fees, reasonable investigative and discovery costs, court costs, and all other sums for any claim or action founded thereon, arising or alleged to have arisen out of my child's use of the real or personal property belonging to or used by Agent while Minor is in the presence of Agent.

FUNDRAISING AT SWLA KNIGHTS

The following information on fundraising is for the use of the SWLA Knights Organization, Clubs, Sports Teams, and others involved with SWLA Knights. SWLA Knights is a 501c3 non-profit organization, and as such has governmental regulations on organizational fundraisers.

Clarification – Donations and Fundraisers are not one in the same and must be tracked and documented differently by the SWLA Board. If you encounter someone wishing to donate during your fundraiser, they may do so by check paid to the order of SWLAHAC. There are regulations on tracking donations and if gifts or services were received what the balance of the donation would be, so make sure to contact the SWLA Board so they can handle that paperwork. swlaknights@swla-hac.com .

SWLA Knights as an organization may have two major fundraisers to sustain the operations of our organization. These may be a golf tournament, gala, banquet, capital campaign or other large event. The profits would go straight to the needs of SWLA Knights and cannot profit a person or individuals. All funds will be deposited through SWLA Knights and reported to the IRS. Each type of fundraiser has its own guidelines. If a product is sold, tax must be collected from the purchaser and reported to the State Comptroller's Office. The SWLA Knights Administrative Team are responsible for organizational fundraisers with approval from the SWLA Knights Board of Directors.

Athletics Teams may run fundraisers for specific needs such as new uniforms, facility improvements, tournament travel cost, for equipment or to subsidize the budget for that sport. All moneys are deposited with SWLA Knights and may be used for the expense or purpose given. Purchased items and expenses must be tracked with receipts. The SWLA Knights is not responsible for any aspect of the fundraiser except for tracking the deposited funds.

EXAMPLE - A Volleyball team may desire to run a fundraiser for new nets, poles, or other equipment. Items purchased through fundraising remain at SWLA Knights. An individual team member may not run a personal fundraiser at SWLA Knights or in SWLA Knights name. Babysitting, washing windows or other creative ways to earn money are good ways that an athlete might raise funds to offset their own individual registration or travel expenses. Individuals earning money for themselves are not responsible to report or track those through SWLA Knights. **The Coach and Team Parent are responsible for Sports Fundraisers with approval from the SWLA Board.**

Fundraising Questions - Before you do anything, think through, and discuss the following questions with your fundraising team.

1. What is the purpose or need for your fundraiser?
2. Do you have a fundraiser team and leader that are willing to handle details?
3. How much money do you need to raise?
4. Have you looked at the sample list of fundraisers?
5. Is everyone in agreement to participate? If not, are those individuals willing to chip in the expected amount that each athlete would raise?
6. Discuss the "What ifs" what if we don't raise the money, what if someone doesn't get their product, what if we have a hot check, what if someone wants a refund, etc.
7. What would be the start and stop dates? (These may be determined by the fundraiser selected.)

Fundraising Selection – Choose a fundraiser that suits your needs and the athletes participating. There are scores of fundraisers to choose from, not all are profitable. Please do not select a fundraiser that yields less than 50%. It is not worth the time of your athletes and the effort needed to accomplish your goals. We also

discourage fundraising aimed only at team families or your small circle of SWLA Knights families. You should select a fundraiser that will appeal to outside family and friends. Clothing apparel with the SWLA Knights names or logos are not permitted, except as outlined specifically by the SWLA Board and through the approved vendors. Once a fundraiser is selected, get the idea approved by your Coach and submit the idea to the SWLA Board for the initial go ahead for planning.

Fundraising Scope – A detailed fundraising scope or plan should be submitted to the SWLA Board to determine if everything has been covered and is ready for implementation without breaking any governmental or SWLA Knights rules.

This document should include:

- Fundraiser title (EXAMPLE - Cookie Dough Fundraiser) including company name, email, representative contact number, etc.
- Who will be participating (EXAMPLE - JV soccer team) including the name of the team parent/guardian in charge and contact number?
- Start and stop dates. Including deadlines for orders, advertising, and product pick up etc.
- Sample letter to parents/guardians – Three letters should be drafted. See parent/guardian letter section below

When the above items are submitted the SWLA Board will approve or send questions back for submission.

Parent/Guardian Letters Tips and Samples for Fundraisers

Keeping parents/guardians informed about your fundraising activities is a must. The most effective way to communicate the specifics of a fundraiser (mission statement, selling dates, pick up dates, product details, etc.) is through a fundraising parent/guardian's letter.

You cannot trust children to properly convey this information. Many times, kids don't even tell their parents/guardians about fundraisers. So direct communication between the organizer and the parents/guardians is essential.

A good fundraising strategy is having 3 direct correspondences regarding the fundraiser. You may also get your information out via email, GroupMe or by phone. You will have to make a determination on what works best for your group, but we feel that the below 3 steps are essential:

1. **Intro letter on the upcoming fundraiser.** This should include the mission statement on why you are raising funds. A detailed explanation of the types of fundraiser you will be doing also helps. This is sent out a few weeks before the fundraiser begins and following discussions during the idea stage of planning.
2. **Kick off letter.** This letter will have all of the details and instructions of the fundraiser. The exact selling dates, selling of each participant's money collection procedure, fundraising safety precautions, etc. It is important to list the contact information of the fundraising organizers because your parents/guardians will have questions. This should be sent out no later than the week before the fundraiser begins.
3. **Pick up letter.** This should give detailed instructions on when the products should be picked up and how it should be distributed. This letter should be sent out once the selling period of the fundraiser is complete, or as needed to meet fundraising deadlines.

In all of your fundraising parent/guardian letters, be as direct as possible. Get to the point and give as many specific details as you can. If the letters are too vague, you'll be inundated with phone calls from confused parents/guardians.

Below are a few sample parent/guardians' letters, but keep in mind these are very basic. Each group has their own style and ideas on what should be included. So, we've kept these as simple as possible.

Sample Parent/Guardian Letter #1

Dear Parents/Guardians,

This is the time of year when we all pitch in to run our "Annual Soccer Fundraiser". The money we raise this year is going toward purchasing equipment and new nets. Every penny...every dollar...we raise is important and will go to benefit the children...!

This year we will be selling cookie dough from School-Fundraisers.com. The cookie dough is delicious...and makes a great idea for all your get-togethers, parties and especially play dates for the kids...buy an extra tub to take to the grandparent's.

The official start date is "January 18th" and the official completion date is "February 4th". Please keep all order forms in the collection envelope provided. Please make all checks out to SWLAHAC.

Never allow young children to solicit orders alone or door to door. They should always be in the company of a responsible adult.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT

Sample Parent/Guardian Letter #2

Dear Parents/Guardians:

The SWLA Knights Soccer Team will be conducting a Cookie Dough Fundraiser from January 18th-February 4th. The money raised will be used for equipment and new nets.

Please help your child or young friend with our campaign. Please sell to friends, family, neighbors, church friends and people at work. We would like each child to try and sell at least 12 items. Our profit goal is \$2,000.

Please read the following on how to fill out the order form.

1. Collect money at the time of taking order. Collect NO sales tax.
2. Make checks for the full amount due for your child's goal payable to SWLAHAC.
3. Please tally the item columns and the money column. This needs to be done.
4. Make sure the money collected adds up to the cost of the items sold.
5. All orders, money and checks are due on February 4th.
6. Advise your child not to sell to strangers and to be careful.

We appreciate your help in making this fundraiser a success. If you would rather not participate in the sales aspect of this fundraiser you may opt out and donate the profit goal for your child. We appreciate your participation.

Best Regards,

Sample Parent/Guardian Letter #3 (Parent/Guardian Pick-up Letter)

Dear Parent/Guardian,

It's time to pick up your fundraising order. The cookie dough fundraiser that our group participated in recently is soon coming to a close. Only one step left and all of this hard work will pay off. Here are the specific details

Date: February 17th

Time: 3 – 5 PM

Location: Soccer field

Please be prepared to pick up the products that you have ordered. You will need to pass these products out to the people who have ordered within 24 hours.

We want to thank everyone who has made this fundraiser a success and I know that all of us will reap the benefits.

Thank you,

SWLA KNIGHTS FUNDRAISING SUBMISSION FORM

Please submit this form to the SWLA Board for approval (swlaknights@swla-hac.com). No Fundraising may begin before written approval is issued.

Fundraiser Team Leader: _____ Phone Number: _____

Email: _____ Date Submitted: _____

Who is fundraising: (Team): _____

Proposed fundraising event: _____

Description: (website, sell gift cards, carwash, etc.) _____

Designated purpose: (uniforms, travel, etc.) _____

Target customers: _____

Location: _____

Proposed fundraiser dates:

Start: _____ End: _____

Proposed estimated income: \$ _____ Proposed estimated expenses: \$ _____

Proposed estimated profit: \$ _____

Actual income: \$ _____ Actual expenses: \$ _____

Actual profit: \$ _____

Date funds deposited in to SWLA Account (by Team Leader): _____

Amount deposited in to SWLA Account (by Team Leader): \$ _____

SWLA KNIGHTS Team/Sport Sponsorship Seeking Policy

1. **Introduction:** SWLA Knights recognizes the importance of securing sponsorships to support our team/sporting activities. This policy outlines the procedures and guidelines for seeking sponsorships to ensure transparency, consistency, and ethical practices in our sponsorship initiatives.
2. **Eligibility:** To seek sponsorship on behalf of SWLA Knights, individuals must meet the following criteria:
 - Be a designated representative of the team/organization with the authority to seek sponsorships.
 - Demonstrate a commitment to uphold the values and principles of SWLA Knights.
 - Comply with all applicable laws, regulations, and policies governing sponsorship activities.
3. **Sponsorship Proposal:**
 - Individuals seeking sponsorship must prepare a comprehensive proposal outlining the team/ organization's background, objectives, and the specific need for sponsorship.
 - The proposal should clearly articulate the benefits to potential sponsors and how their support will contribute to the team's success.
4. **Budget and Utilization of Funds:**
 - A detailed budget must accompany the sponsorship proposal, specifying how the funds will be utilized.
 - Funds should be allocated in a transparent and accountable manner, aligned with the team's goals and objectives.
5. **Sponsorship Agreement:**
 - Once a potential sponsor expresses interest, a formal sponsorship agreement will be drafted.
 - The agreement should clearly outline the terms and conditions, including sponsorship amount, duration, recognition, and any other mutual expectations.
6. **Ethical Considerations:**
 - Individuals seeking sponsorship should maintain the highest ethical standards during the solicitation process.
 - Avoid any misrepresentation or false claims about the team/organization and its activities.
7. **Recognition and Promotional Opportunities:**
 - Sponsors should be appropriately recognized in accordance with the terms of the sponsorship agreement.
 - Seek opportunities to provide sponsors with visibility at team events, on practice/warm-up uniforms, and in promotional materials.
8. **Communication Protocol:**
 - All communication with potential sponsors should be professional and aligned with the team/ organization's messaging.
 - Keep sponsors informed about the team's progress, achievements, and activities.
9. **Financial Reporting:**
 - Maintain accurate financial records related to sponsorship funds, including income, expenses, and any impact on the team's financial position.

- Provide sponsors with periodic financial reports upon request.
- 10. Compliance:**
- Comply with any legal or regulatory requirements related to seeking and accepting sponsorships.
- 11. Documentation:**
- Maintain thorough documentation of all sponsorship agreements, communications, and financial transactions for record-keeping and auditing purposes.
- 12. Review and Approval:**
- Seek approval from the designated authority within the team/organization before finalizing any sponsorship agreement.
- 13. Contact Information:** For inquiries or to seek approval for sponsorship initiatives, please contact: SWLA Board at swlaknights@swla-hac.com
- 14. Amendments:** SWLA Knights reserves the right to amend this policy as necessary. Any changes will be communicated to relevant parties.

This policy is subject to review and update as needed.

SWLA KNIGHTS ATHLETICS CONCUSSION GUIDELINES

Concussions become dangerous when they go unreported or are improperly treated. Due to ignorance or a desire to play, student-athletes may decide that they do not have a concussion or that it is not a big deal. This could be **life threatening**. **SWLA Knights is committed to ensuring that any participant who is suspected of having received a concussion will be removed from play and be seen by a physician before returning to play.** Parents/guardians and student-athletes need to help with this commitment. Please carefully review the following concussion information with your student-athlete.

A concussion is a mild traumatic brain injury (MTBI) that alters the way the brain works. Effects are usually temporary. Although concussions typically are caused by a blow to the head, they can also occur when the head and upper body are violently shaken. These injuries can cause a loss of consciousness, but **MOST concussions do NOT**. As a result, some have concussions and don't realize it. Concussions are most often caused by contact with another player, the ground, or a piece of equipment or object. The brain needs time and rest to heal properly. Most concussive traumatic brain injuries are mild, and people usually recover fully.

Signs and symptoms of a concussion:

These may be subtle and may not be immediately apparent. They can last for days, weeks or longer.

Signs and symptoms of a concussion observed may include:

- | | | |
|---|----------------------------------|----------------------------|
| ~ Appears dazed or stunned | ~ Is confused | ~ Forgets play |
| ~ Loses consciousness | ~ Moves clumsily | ~ Answers questions slowly |
| ~ Can't recall events before/after injury | ~ Is unsure of score or opponent | ~ Behavior changes |

Symptoms reported by athlete:

- | | | |
|----------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------|
| ~ Headache | ~ Dizziness or "seeing stars" | ~ Balance Problems |
| ~ Confusion | ~ Feel as if in a fog | ~ Nausea or vomiting |
| ~ Blurred or double vision | ~ Memory problems | ~ Concentration problems |
| ~ Feeling sluggish | ~ Sensitivity to light/noise | ~ Fatigue |

When to see a doctor:

See a doctor within 1 to 2 days if: Your athlete experiences a head injury and you suspect a possible concussion, even if emergency care wasn't required. If worrisome signs develop later, seek emergency care.

Seek emergency care for a student-athlete who experiences a head injury and symptoms such as: Repeated vomiting, loss of consciousness lasting longer than 30 seconds, headache that gets worse over time, changes in physical coordination, such as stumbling or clumsiness, confusion or disorientation, difficulty recognizing people or places, slurred speech, seizures, pupils that are bigger than normal (dilated pupils) or pupils of unequal sizes, lasting or recurrent dizziness, obvious difficulty with mental function or physical coordination, symptoms that worsen over time.

When the student-athlete can return to play:

No one should return to play while signs or symptoms of a concussion are present. Experts recommend that an athlete with a suspected concussion not return to play until they have been medically evaluated by a health care professional trained in evaluating and managing concussions. Experts also recommend that child and adolescent student-athletes with a concussion not return to play on the same day as the injury. Any return to play criteria established by doctors should be carefully followed. This is usually gradual, occurring over several days once the athlete is symptom free.

SUDDEN CARDIAC ARREST INFORMATION SHEET

What is Sudden Cardiac Arrest?

Sudden Cardiac Arrest (SCA) is the sudden onset of an abnormal and lethal heart rhythm, causing the heart to stop pumping adequately. When this happens, blood stops flowing to the brain and other vital organs, and, if left untreated, can quickly result in death.

How common is Sudden Cardiac Arrest?

While SCA in student-athletes is rare, it is the leading medical cause of death in young student-athletes. The chance of SCA occurring to any individual student-athlete is estimated to be about one in 80,000 to 100,000 per year.

What causes Sudden Cardiac Arrest in student-athletes?

SCA is caused by several structural and electrical conditions of the heart. These conditions predispose an individual to have an abnormal heart rhythm. SCA is more likely during exercise or physical activity, placing student-athletes with undiagnosed heart conditions at greater risk. Some of these conditions are listed below:

- Inherited conditions present at birth of the heart muscle (passed on from family): Hypertrophic Cardiomyopathy (HCM), Arrhythmogenic Right Ventricular Cardiomyopathy (ARVC), and Marfan Syndrome
- Inherited conditions present at birth of the electrical system: Long QT Syndrome (LQTS), Catecholaminergic
- Polymorphic Ventricular Tachycardia, and Brugada Syndrome (BrS)
- Non-Inherited conditions (not passed on from the family, but still present at birth): Coronary artery abnormalities, Aortic valve abnormalities, Non-compaction Cardiomyopathy, and Wolff-Parkinson-White Syndrome (occurs from an extra conducting fiber in the heart's electrical system)
- Conditions do not present at birth but acquired later in life: Commotio Cordis (occurs from a direct blow to the chest), Myocarditis (infection or inflammation of the heart), and Recreational/Performance Drug Use
- Idiopathic: Sometimes the underlying cause of Sudden Cardiac Arrest is unknown, even after autopsy.

What are the warning signs that Sudden Cardiac Arrest may occur?

- Fainting, passing out, or seizure - especially during or right after exercise
- Chest pain or discomfort - especially with exercise
- Excessive Shortness of breath - with exercise
- Racing heart or irregular heartbeat - with no apparent reason
- Dizziness or lightheadedness - especially with exercise
- Unusual Fatigue/Weakness - with exercise
- Fainting - from emotional excitement, emotional distress, or being startled
- Family history of sudden cardiac arrest prior to the age of 50

While a heart condition may have no warning signs, in more than a third of sudden cardiac deaths, there

were warning signs that were not reported to an adult or taken seriously. If any of the above warning signs are present, a cardiac evaluation by a qualified health care provider such as a physician, physician assistant, or advanced practice nurse is recommended. If the health care provider has concerns, a referral to a pediatric cardiologist is recommended.

What are the risks of practicing or playing after experiencing SCA warning signs?

Ignoring such signs and continuing to play could be catastrophic and result in sudden cardiac death. Taking these warning symptoms seriously and seeking timely appropriate medical care can prevent serious and possibly fatal consequences.

When is an athlete required to be removed from play?

Any student-athlete who collapses or faints while participating in an athletic activity is required by law to be removed by the coach from participation at that time.

What is required for a student-athlete to return to play?

Any student-athlete who is removed or prevented from participating in an athletic activity is not allowed to return to participation until evaluated and cleared for return to participation in writing by a qualified health care provider such as a physician, physician assistant, or advanced practice nurse is recommended. If the health care provider has concerns, a referral to a pediatric cardiologist is recommended.

What are the current recommendations for screening athletes?

A complete annual sports preparticipation examination based on recommendations from the American Heart Association (AHA), American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) and American College of Cardiology (ACC) is the cornerstone of screening for preventable causes of SCA. Each year student-athletes in Texas are required to have a Sports Preparticipation Physical Examination based on these recommendations completed by a health care provider such as a physician, physician's assistant, or advanced nurse practitioner and filed with the student athlete's school prior to beginning practice. The Sports Preparticipation Examination includes a personal and family health history to screen for risk factors or warning signs of SCA and measurement of blood pressure and a careful listening to the heart, especially for murmurs and rhythm abnormalities.

Noninvasive testing such as an electrocardiogram (ECG) or echocardiogram (ECHO) may be utilized by your health care provider if the sports pre-participation examination reveals an indication for these tests. Screening using an ECG and/or and ECHO is available to student athletes as an option from their personal health care provider, but is not mandatory, and is generally not routinely recommended by either the AHA, AAP or ACC.

What is the treatment for Sudden Cardiac Arrest?

- ◆ RECOGNIZE Sudden Cardiac Arrest
 - Collapsed and unresponsive
 - Abnormal breathing
 - Seizure-like activity
- ◆ CALL 9-1-1
 - Call for help and for an AED

- ◆ CPR
 - Begin chest compressions
 - Push hard/fast (100/min)
- ◆ AED
 - Use an AED as soon as possible
- ◆ CONTINUE CARE
 - Continue CPR and AED until EMS arrives

All schools and teams should be prepared to respond to a cardiac emergency. Young athletes who suffer SCA are collapsed and unresponsive and may appear to have brief seizure-like activity or abnormal breathing (gaspings). Time is critical and an immediate response is vital. An AED should be placed in a location that is readily accessible. AEDs are safe, portable devices that read and analyze the heart rhythm and provide an electric shock (if necessary) to restart a normal heart rhythm.

Remember, to save a life: recognize SCA, call 9-1-1, begin CPR and use an AED as soon as possible!

I have received and read the Sudden Cardiac Arrest Information Sheet for Athletes and Parents/Guardians. I understand the warning signs and seriousness of sudden cardiac arrest (SCA) related to participation in athletic programs and the need for immediate evaluation for any suspected condition.

ACEL MEDICAL HISTORY EVALUATION

PART I: INFORMATION *(To be filled out by parent or guardian only)*

Name: _____ Grade: _____ School: _____

Sex: M / F Age: _____ Date of Birth: _____ Home Telephone #: _____ Sports: _____

Social Security Number: _____ Address: _____ City: _____ Zip: _____

Parent's Name: _____ Parent's Employer: _____ Work Telephone #: _____

Insurance Company: _____ Policy #: _____ Family Doctor: _____

PART II: MEDICAL HISTORY *(To be filled out by parent or guardian)*

Has or Does this athlete

Circle & please explain all "yes" answers below

- | | | |
|--|-----|----|
| 1. Have a medical problem or injury since his/her last evaluation? | YES | NO |
| Ever not been allowed to participate in sports for a medical reason? | YES | NO |
| 2. Ever been hospitalized? | YES | NO |
| Ever had surgery? | YES | NO |
| Have any missing organs? <i>(eye, kidney, testicle, etc.)</i> | YES | NO |
| 3. Presently take any medication? | YES | NO |
| 4. Have any allergies to medicine or insect bites? | YES | NO |
| 5. Passed out during or after exercise? | YES | NO |
| Been dizzy or passed out during or after exercise? | YES | NO |
| Have chest pain during or after exercise? | YES | NO |
| Tire more quickly than his/her friends during exercise? | YES | NO |
| Have high blood pressure? | YES | NO |
| Been told he/she has a heart murmur? | YES | NO |
| Have racing of the heart or skipped heartbeats? | YES | NO |
| Have a family member that died of heart problems or sudden death before age 50? | YES | NO |
| 6. Have any skin problems? | YES | NO |
| 7. Ever had a head or neck injury? | YES | NO |
| Ever been knocked out or unconscious? | YES | NO |
| Ever had a seizure? | YES | NO |
| Ever had a stinger, burner or pinched nerve? | YES | NO |
| 8. Ever had heat cramps? | YES | NO |
| Ever been dizzy or passed out in the heat? | YES | NO |
| 9. Have trouble with breathing or coughing during or after activity? | YES | NO |
| 10. Use any special equipment? <i>(pads, braces, neck rolls, eye guards, kidney belt, etc.)</i> | YES | NO |
| 11. Have any problems with vision? | YES | NO |
| Wear glasses or contacts? | YES | NO |
| 12. Ever sprained/strained, dislocated, fractured or had repeated swelling of any bones or joints? | YES | NO |

13. Have any medical problems listed below? *(Please check off)*
- | | | | |
|--|--|---------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> High Blood Pressure | <input type="checkbox"/> Rheumatic Fever | <input type="checkbox"/> Diabetes | <input type="checkbox"/> Hepatitis |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mononucleosis | <input type="checkbox"/> Abnormal Bleeding | <input type="checkbox"/> Tuberculosis | <input type="checkbox"/> Asthma |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sickle Cell Disease/Trait | <input type="checkbox"/> Other <i>(list)</i> _____ | | |

14. List dates for last: Tetanus Shot: _____ Measles Immunization: _____

15. Female athletes, list dates for: First menstrual period: _____ Last menstrual period: _____

Longest time between periods last year: _____

Please explain all "yes" answers from above: _____

PART III: SIGNATURES

(You must answer these questions and sign for your child to be examined)

1. The information on the reverse is current and correct to the best of my knowledge YES NO
2. I give my permission for my child to be examined for school-related activities YES NO
3. If, in the judgment of a school representative, the named student athlete needs care or treatment as a result of an injury or sickness, I do hereby request, consent and authorize for such care as may be deemed necessary..... YES NO
4. I recognize the evaluation to be done on my child is a standard pre-participation screening examination, and that no in-depth testing, x-rays, lab work, or cardiac testing will be performed YES NO
5. I understand that if the medical status of my child changes in any significant manner after his/her physical examination, I will notify his/her principal of the change immediately YES NO
6. I give my permission for the athletic trainer to release information concerning my child's injuries to the head coach/athletic director/principal of his/her school..... YES NO

Signature of Parent/Guardian:  _____ Date: _____

Signature of Student Athlete:  _____ Date: _____

PART IV: PHYSICAL *(To be filled out by a licensed physician /licensed nurse practitioner in collaboration with doctor or a licensed physician's assistant under the supervision of a licensed physician.)*

SYSTEM	Height		Weight		Blood Pressure		Pulse		COMMENTS
	RIGHT	LEFT	RIGHT	LEFT	RIGHT	LEFT	BEATS	PER MINUTE	
Heart									
Lung									
Other									
Abdominal									
Genitalia									
Neck									
Shoulder									
Elbow									
Wrist									
Hand									
Back									
Knee									
Ankle									
Foot									
Eye	Right	Left	Right	Left	Corrected?	YES	NO		

CLEARANCE: _____ A. Cleared
 _____ B. Cleared after further evaluation/treatment
 _____ C. Not cleared for: _____ Collision _____ Contact _____ Non-contact

RECOMMENDATIONS: _____

NAME OF MD/NURSE PRACTITIONER: _____ **DATE:** _____

ADDRESS: _____ **TELEPHONE:** _____



Association of Christian Educators of Louisiana Grade Report

I certify that my child, meets the grade eligibility requirements of a 2.0 GPA as set forth by ACEL rule 14.1.5. My child also meets the ACEL homeschool requirement of 51% of class time in the home setting taking the classes listed below, including Bible.

Student:

Grade:

Subject	1 st Quarter	2 nd Quarter	3 rd Quarter	4 th Quarter
G.P.A.				

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date