

Little Axe Athletic Handbook



2026-2027

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Message from the Athletic Director.....	2
Disclaimer.....	3
Introduction.....	4
Note.....	4
How to be an All-Star Parent.....	5
Mission Statement.....	6
Philosophy.....	6
Athletic Department Philosophy.....	6
Philosophy and Parental Guidelines.....	7
Participation at Different Levels.....	7
Middle School Guidelines.....	7
Participation is a Privilege, Not a Right.....	8
Parental Involvement in Athletics.....	8
24 Hour Rule.....	9
Addressing a Complaint.....	10
School Eligibility.....	10
Academic Eligibility.....	11
Grading.....	11
Activity Drug Testing for High School Students.....	11
NCAA Requirements.....	12
Attendance at School.....	13
Athletic Code of Conduct.....	13

Student-Athlete Expectations.....	14
Hazing.....	14
Primary Sport Selection.....	16
Changing Sports	16
Carry-Over Sport.....	17
Quitting a Team.....	17
Dismissal from a Team.....	18
Lettering in Athletics.....	18
Letter/All-State Jackets.....	18
Student Insurance.....	19
Transportation.....	19
Dress Code.....	19
Student Pre-Season Responsibilities.....	19
Athletic Training Facilities.....	20
Equity.....	20
Addendum.....	21
Notice.....	21
Signature Page.....	22

A MESSAGE FROM THE ATHLETIC DIRECTOR

Welcome to the athletic program at Little Axe Schools. We are excited about your participation in one or more of our sports, and hope that you have a positive learning experience from your efforts.

The contents of this handbook are designed for you, the student and your parent(s). It answers many questions you may have regarding the operation of the district's athletic program. This handbook is not intended to be all-inclusive; however, its policies and procedures will be followed completely. Both you and your parent(s) must complete the Participation Contract at the back of this handbook and you must have a Physical Examination Certification form and Rank One completed and returned to your coach or the Athletic Director before you will be allowed to engage in practice or participation. Signing these forms indicates that you and your parent(s) have had an opportunity to familiarize yourselves with the contents of this handbook, and have had any questions regarding its contents answered for you.

Little Axe Schools will strive to continue providing its students with the best possible opportunities for a rewarding year.

Best of luck for a successful year.

Doug Farris

HS Athletic Director

Mike Bread

MS Athletic Director

INTRODUCTION

The policies set forth by the Oklahoma Secondary Schools Activity Association (OSSAA), of which Little Axe Schools is a dues-paying member, will be minimum standards applying to extra-curricular participation by our student athletes. The district has particular policies for our student-athletes that may exceed these minimum requirements. The district may not at any time establish eligibility standards that are less than the minimum requirements established in policy by the OSSAA and their board of directors.

NOTE

The competitive, extra-curricular activities offered by the district, whether athletic or academic in scope, or just participatory in nature, are governed in part or all by the policies established by the OSSAA, their board of directors and member schools, as well as by the policies established by the Little Axe Schools Board of Education. Governance by the OSSAA is warranted as the district is a dues-paying member, as are the majority of all schools, public, private and charter within the state of Oklahoma.

HOW TO BE AN ALL-STAR PARENT

How do you define an All-Star Parent? Very simply, an all-star parent is a good sport and a great fan. To become an all-star parent of a student, there are times when you must stop parenting. When your son or daughter changes into a uniform and becomes a student athlete, you also have to change – from a parent to a fan. Your job on the sidelines or in the stands is not to be a parent, but to be your child's greatest fan.

There's no trick here. You already know how to do this. Remember how you behaved when your baby was learning to walk? You were a fan and a supporter, weren't you? You applauded the "downs" as well as the "ups."

You never said things like, "What's taking you so long?" "How come the kid down the street is walking better than you?" or "Why do you keep making the same mistake over and over again?" You were the world's most appreciative audience.

Why should it be any different now that your child is an athlete? Your job is not to be the coach (unless you are the coach) or the expert. You are there so that you can share the thrill of victory and the agony of defeat – together.

In fact, your child needs your support more in defeat than in victory. Did you ever notice that strangers feel free to come out of the stands and congratulate the winners? But in defeat, sometimes an athlete's own teammates and coaches ignore him/her. As a parent, you have to be there to cushion setbacks with a positive "We'll get'em next time!"

The Three "B's" for All-Star Parenting:

1. Be there
2. Be positive
3. Be seated

BE THERE – You can never hope to be an all-star parent unless you show up at games. Regardless of the skill level of your child or the success of the team, go to the games. Be SUPPORTIVE. Don't be a fickle, fair-weather fan.

BE POSITIVE – On the sidelines, if you can't say something positive, don't say anything at all. Nothing good comes from negative statements and nothing negative comes from positive ones. If you can't be positive, at least be silent.

BE SEATED – Even though it's good to be positive, it's also good not to overdo it. Don't stick out. Be an admirer, not a cheerleader. Athletes should not confuse your voice with the public address system.

Once you start to become a positive, acknowledging fan, an interesting thing may happen. Your child will want you at the games. When this happens, you will know that you are considered to be an important member of your child's personal all-star support team.

MISSION STATEMENT

The role of interscholastic athletics in Little Axe Schools is to provide an educational experience within the framework of competitive athletics. By focusing on educational outcomes and student learning, athletics provides avenues for physical, emotional, social, and intellectual growth.

The Athlete's Code of Conduct applies/adheres to a jurisdiction of 365 days, 24 hours, and 7 days per week, anywhere policy. The following will serve as a guide to the expectations that the district places on student-athletes of our community and school district.

PHILOSOPHY

We believe that a comprehensive and balanced athletics/activities program enhances the basic instructional program of the Little Axe School system.

The programs exist first and foremost for the value of the students. The program begins with fundamentals and provides progressive development with the purpose of preparing each student for a lifetime of participation. Emphasis in each program is on participation, cooperation, fair competition and skill progression.

Participation in an activities program is a privilege available to all students who meet eligibility requirements. Through a well-developed program, students learn emotional maturity, social competence, responsibility, and ability to deal with success and failure. Moreover, students are guided to reach their full potential, to learn good sportsmanship, leadership, cooperation, ethical behavior, and an appreciation for practice.

Persons who direct the program must meet professional and ethical standards fulfilling the needs of the students. The district is committed to obtaining the best possible staff, facilities, and equipment for each activities program.

Each program is committed to striving for excellence and reaching the highest level of achievement. There are many variables that affect the degree and achievement expected of students. Expectations must be kept in perspective with the main goals to provide a positive learning experience, high self-esteem and the development of each student's potential.

The goal of the district's activities program is to attain recognition as the very best for students, whether in the arena of head-to-head competition or on the stage of artistic acclaim.

ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT PHILOSOPHY

Participation in athletics at Little Axe Schools is an integral part of the overall education process. It is our belief that the lessons learned on the playing field are in many ways lessons of life. Athletics teach the following life lessons: the value of teamwork and working together to achieve a common goal, how to accept responsibility, the value of setting goals and then working hard to attain those goals. Moreover, athletics teaches how to be a good sport and recognize sportsmanship in your opponents and the importance of respecting authority and working cooperatively with others.

PHILOSOPHY AND PARENTAL GUIDELINES

The philosophy of the district's athletic program is grounded in the belief that hard work, discipline, dedication and sacrifice are the cornerstone of success in athletics and should be a lesson every student learns before leaving school. These cornerstones will provide the basis for future success in life. Participation in athletics provides an excellent forum where these valuable life lessons can be learned.

Besides athletic performance, our coaches, parents and various school staff are the backbone of any successful program. The purpose of this handbook is to provide all "players" and parents with essential information that will make their experience at Little Axe Schools a positive one. Moreover, it is also the goal of the athletic office to make all pertinent information available to the general public.

PARTICIPATION AT DIFFERENT LEVELS

1. The 9th grade level serves as a transition year during which the concepts of exploration and discovery give way to the development of the cornerstones for success. Fundamentals of the sport are emphasized along with a commitment to the sport.
2. At the junior varsity level the athlete needs to discover what it takes to be a successful athlete at Little Axe Schools. Dedication, desire, and willingness to sacrifice for the good of the team are just three of many character traits that begin to be emphasized.
3. The varsity level is the culmination of the athletic experience. Emphasis at this level is on the use of the fundamentals of the sport, dedication, desire, hard work, and sacrifice to be successful. Success is used not to indicate win/loss records but to measure the quality of the effort and performance. How the team measures up to potential and goals are used to determine success.

MIDDLE SCHOOL GUIDELINES

At the middle school, students are expected to participate in a sport during the fall, winter and spring (3 sports) unless an alternative option is provided (strength & conditioning). The district believes that students need to be able to explore athletics at the age where they are learning about themselves and their abilities. Participation in athletics allows students to discover abilities that were untapped and can give them focus in the classroom. We attempt to give students the opportunity to develop their skills in a sport by maximizing both practice and game time. Hard work, sacrifice, and desire are the keys to success in sports and in life. These components of success are encouraged and developed in our athletic programs.

6TH GRADE ATHLETICS

Due to the 2022-23 school year being an “implementation” year for 6th grade athletics at the middle school (MS), this section has been included for informational and clarification purposes. Most any question can be answered within the original “Student-Parent Athletic Handbook” but this section contains additional information **specific to 6th grade athletics**.

6th graders were incorporated into MS athletics during the 2022-23 school year. Our 6th grade athletic program is strictly considered a developmental and participation phase of athletics. As such, there is no guarantee of 6th graders competing at OSSAA sanctioned events. Although possible, this will be determined by the head coaches within their respective sport (example: MS basketball head coach will notify any 6th grader that is expected to play up). **NO PLAYER IS GUARANTEED PLAYING TIME IN A COMPETITION.**

The intent is for all 6th grade students enrolled in athletics to have the opportunity to become familiar with the athletic environment, meetings, practices, expectations, get to know coaches and players, while learning and improving skill sets (**see Athletic Code of Conduct, pg 13 and Student-Athlete Expectations, pg 14**)

6th grade has been added to our class schedule across the board at the middle school.

Students enrolled in MS athletics are **REQUIRED** to participate in 3 sports for the year (1 fall sport, 1 winter sport and 1 spring sport). This includes, when we are able to provide supervision, any strength and conditioning classes. There are cases that allow athletes to participate in more than one sport at the same time (**see Primary Sport Selection, pg 16**).

Our priorities for 6th graders in athletics include:

- 1) Student-athlete safety (physical and supervision)
- 2) Academic stability and eligibility
- 3) Behavioral expectations
- 4) Skill improvement

Safety - All precautions will be in place to keep student-athletes safe at all times.

- MS Football - If selected, 6th graders will only be allowed to play in 6/7th grade games only.
- All other sports - If selected, 6th graders will be allowed to play in contests with 6/7/8th graders only

Academic stability - see **School Eligibility, pg 10 and Academic Eligibility, pg 11**

Behavioral expectations - see **Attendance at School & Athletic Code of Conduct, pg 13 and Student-Athlete Expectations & Hazing, pg 14**

Skill improvement - improving overall athleticism and athletic skills

Scheduling of 6th grade athletic competitions will be difficult as there aren't many "like schools" with complete 6th grade athletic programs. We will make every attempt to schedule 6th grade competitions when the opportunities arise. This could include exhibition games/contests that are available sporadically (example: during MS basketball games, we could schedule a participation exhibition game before 7/8th grade scheduled games)

Any student enrolled in athletics will be required to participate in the "Activity Drug Testing for MS and HS Students" (see **Activity Drug Testing for HS Students, pg 11**)

MIDDLE SCHOOL SUMMER PRIDE EXPECTATIONS

Middle school student-athletes will follow the high school expectations. It is understood that middle school students are not able to drive, do participate on summer athletic teams and have challenges that high school students do not. These limitations will be taken into consideration. Middle school student-athletes are highly encouraged to attend all summer pride events. Also, there will be times where absences are accepted, ex.) Attending sports camps, playing summer ball, passing league, etc... Summer Pride will be 6th-12th grade only. The goal for middle school student-athletes is to attend no less than 70% of the summer pride events scheduled.

HIGH SCHOOL SUMMER PRIDE EXPECTATIONS

Little Axe High School student athletes must attend 70% of Summer Pride in order for them to be deemed eligible for athletics during the school year. There will be times where absences are accepted, ex.) Attending sports camps, playing summer ball, passing league, etc... Summer Pride will be 6th-12th grade only. This eligibility requirement must be met prior to participation and is deemed completed by the coach.

PARTICIPATION IS A PRIVILEGE, NOT A RIGHT

The district does not owe anyone the right to participate in athletics; it is a privilege to have the opportunity to participate. We maintain strict standards in academics and behavior, as well as emphasizing dedication, desire, and sacrificing personal goals for team goals for our athletics. We believe the foundation for success in life is found in these attributes.

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN ATHLETICS

1. Sportsmanship: Treat others as you would want to be treated and exhibit the qualities of fairness, courtesy and grace in winning and defeat. This is not about doing those things which reinforce the concept of educational athletics. Cheer for your team, respect the opponents and officials, and make all involved feel like guests in your home.
2. Goals for sportsmanship include:
 - A. Developing a sense of dignity under all circumstances.
 - B. Respecting the rules of the game.
 - C. Respecting the officials who administer the rules.
 - D. Respecting opponents.
 - E. Acknowledging opponent's efforts to do their best.
 - F. Refraining from disrespectful behavior.

Your actions and reaction to situations can have a significant impact not only on your child but a program. Your responsibility to your child and the school needs to reflect careful consideration of the possible consequences of your action.

3. Parents and officials:
 - A. We do not hire poor officials.
 - B. All people can have a bad day – we all make mistakes.
 - C. Officials do what they do because they love to be involved with sports and kids.
 - D. When something happens that you disagree with, remember:
 - The official has a better view than you.

- Take a deep breath and sit back before opening your mouth to say something which may embarrass you, your child and the school.

E. Officials do not win or lose games; mistakes or a lack thereof, win or lose games.

4. Positive athletic parenting; emphasize the following:

- A. Play the sport for the enjoyment of the experience.
- B. Do not make the focus scholarships for college.
- C. Encourage participation in as many sports as your child wants to play.
- D. Specialization has led to decreased enjoyment, burnout, and dropout. Issues related to these phenomena include: From an earlier age, parents are making a commitment of finances and time invested, lessons, travel, etc. for the child's development in a sport. This often leads to undue pressure to play well and expectations of earning a scholarship

5. Guidelines for you and your child:

- A. Be realistic about your child's ability.
- B. Be a positive motivator.
- C. Don't be envious of other athlete's ability or skill.
- D. The coach sees all the athletes at practice everyday in competitive drills, etc. They know the abilities at this stage of development, no how good someone was in the past.
- E. Emphasize commitment to the program.
- F. Never sacrifice academics for athletics.
- G. Be a good role model for your child.
- H. Encourage good decision making.
- I. Encourage your child to be a leader. All team members have leadership responsibilities.
- J. Do not degrade the coach or their staff – all of us make mistakes, including coaches.

24-HOUR RULE

Do NOT approach coaches during or after practice or team competition. To meet with a coach, please schedule an appointment first by contacting the coach via phone or email. This rule applies to parent-coach interactions. If something is bothering you about your child's status on a team, etc., give yourself "24-hours" before you contact the coach. ***Never contact a coach immediately following a contest.*** The time away from the situation will give you a chance to search for a perspective that may give you a new way to look at the circumstances. Discussions with the coach will be much more meaningful with two calm adults sharing their thoughts about someone they both are trying to help reach adulthood. If necessary, further contact/discussion can be made to the athletic director.

Parents and supporters of district athletic programs must realize that any interference with a game or participants of the game (athletes, coaches and officials) may result in disciplinary action taken by the district and the OSSAA. Such actions may be taken against the athlete, our teams, and parent-spectators. Acceptable and appropriate sportsmanship is a fundamental component of our athletic programs and we will help ensure that our athletes and parents always exhibit such exemplary conduct.

ADDRESSING A COMPLAINT

Concerns will be of two varieties; first, one raised by your child, the second will be questions you as a parent have. To deal with the first variety, the best course of action is to see if your child can deal with the concern. It is a part of what happens in athletics, encouraging the child to deal with challenges they face. Your child should discuss the issue with the coach. For the second variety, you should contact the coach with questions you have; don't ask the child to seek answers on your behalf. Your child may not see the situation in the same light as you and you are the one with the question. The coach deals with your child daily and can best relate information to you about questions you raise. Once you have conferred with the coach and the situation has not been resolved, contact the athletic director to arrange a meeting. You may always appeal or address your concerns to the next administrative level (principal, superintendent) if need be. The chain of command is as follows:

PARENT→COACH→AD→PRINCIPAL→SUPERINTENDENT→BOARD
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SCHOOL ELIGIBILITY

Participation in competitive athletics at Little Axe Middle School and High School is a privilege and an honor. The rules of the OSSAA are administered and enforced by the district. You must qualify for participation under these rules. Little Axe students must comply with the following:

1. Any student who reaches his/her nineteenth birthday before September 1 will not be eligible for athletic competition. Any student who reaches his/her sixteenth birthday before September 1 will not be eligible if enrolled in the ninth grade or below. Any student who reaches his/her fifteenth birthday before September 1 will not be eligible for the eighth grade or below. Any student who reaches his/her fourteenth birthday before September 1st will not be eligible for the seventh grade or below.
2. Not have competed for more than four seasons in the sport selected.
3. Have been enrolled in high school not more than seven semesters beyond eighth grade.
4. Play only with teams representing the school.
5. Not be a professional.
6. Must have passed five (5) courses that count towards graduation taken during the previous semester.
7. Students in grades 9 through 12 who transfer from another middle school/high school must meet the requirements established by the OSSAA.

ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY

Little Axe Schools is a member of the Oklahoma Secondary Schools Activities Association (OSSAA) and is required to abide by that association's rules and eligibility standards for participation in various activities. Schools may have additional standards if they desire. The district requires that all students must have passed all subjects taken at the end of each quarter and semester to be eligible.

If a student is not passing all subjects enrolled in at the end of a week, they will be placed on probation for the next one week period. If a student is still failing one or more classes at the end of their probationary one week period, they will be ineligible to participate during the next one week period. The ineligibility period will begin on Monday and end on Sunday.

A student who has lost eligibility under this provision must be passing all subjects in order to remain eligible. A student regains eligibility with the first class of the new one week period (Monday through Sunday).

A passing "grade" means work of such character that credit would be entered on the records were the semester to close at that time.

GRADING

The grading of off-season participation does not apply toward a student's GPA. Earning credits in athletics does apply toward the completion of graduation requirements. The student-athlete must successfully complete ALL requirements for the entire semester to receive credit. The off-season program is an integral part of competitive athletics. The student-athlete must meet the requirements set forth by the off-season coach as a part of the process to earn credits. Off-season grading will be an A-F scale.

ACTIVITY DRUG TESTING FOR MS/HS STUDENTS

The Little Axe Board of Education in an effort to protect the health and safety of its extracurricular students from illegal drug use and abuse, thereby setting an example for all other students of the Little Axe Public School District, have adopted a policy for drug testing of activity students. Random testing will take place up to 3 times per year.

The purpose of this policy is five-fold:

1. To educate students of the serious physical, mental and emotional harm caused by illegal drug use.
2. To alert students with possible substance abuse problems to potential harms that drug use poses for their physical, mental and emotional well-being and offer them the privilege of competition as an incentive to stop using such substances.
3. Ensure that students adhere to a training program that bars the intake of illegal drugs.
4. To prevent injury, illness and harm for students that may arise as a result from illegal drug use.
5. To offer student practices, competition, and school activities free from the effects of illegal drug use.

Participation in school sponsored extracurricular activities at the Little Axe School District is a privilege. Activity students carry a responsibility to themselves, their fellow students, their parents and their school to set the highest possible examples of conduct, which includes avoiding the use or possession of illegal drugs. Drug use of any kind is incompatible with participation in extracurricular activities on behalf of the Little Axe School District.

NCAA REQUIREMENTS

Before an athlete can play a sport or receive an athletic grant-in-aid at a Division I or II school, he/she must meet specific academic criteria as set forth by the NCAA. A student must have at least a 2.3 GPA FOR D1 AND 2.2 for D2 (based on a 4.0 scale) in 13 core courses. Students must take specific courses in order to meet NCAA eligibility requirements. These include a certain number of college preparatory English, sciences, social sciences and math courses, with at least one year of algebra and one year of geometry. Because the NCAA has such specific requirements, and because these requirements can be confusing, it is very important that athletes meet with guidance counselors in the 8th or 9th grade to obtain information on all of the NCAA requirements. At this time, athletes also need to make sure that their four-year plans include courses that will satisfy NCAA requirements.

Athletes should take the ACT and SAT no later than the spring of the junior year in order to have time to retake them if necessary. In order to initiate the eligibility process, athletes also need to complete an NCAA clearing house student release form. This form should be submitted after completion of the junior year. Forms and information are available in the high school counselor's office.

ATTENDANCE AT SCHOOL

A student must be in attendance a minimum of 4 hours the day of a game or practice if he/she is to participate. If a game is played on Saturday, he/she must be in attendance the school day before the contest. A student may gain permission to participate if excused prior to the absence. If students have been assigned to serve out of school suspension, they will be allowed to participate after the suspension is completed.

If a student is absent from practice, they may or may not be required to do a make-up practice. This will be at the discretion of the coach.

ATHLETIC CODE OF CONDUCT

1. The Little Axe student athlete must respect the purpose of our school by being a good citizen/student. Student's behavior must be acceptable 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. This includes civil/criminal infractions as reported by law enforcement agencies across the state and/or nation.
2. Coaches retain the privilege of insisting on proper grooming and dress of each team member.
3. Any athlete involved in any activity that would reflect unfavorably on the school shall be subject to disciplinary action. This could mean suspension from athletic contests or removed from the team.
4. Gambling, profanity, hazing, and obscene language will be unacceptable at all times.

5. Athletes are expected to conduct themselves in an appropriate manner at all school activities.

6. Mood altering chemicals: The district's athletic department views the use of tobacco, alcohol, steroids, image enhancing drugs, and any other illegal drugs as a significant health problem resulting in negative effects on behavior, learning and the total development of each individual which affects extracurricular participation and the development of related skills. Students involved in this type of behavior will be subject to disciplinary action. This is not intended to apply to the use of prescribed medications under a doctor's supervision when those medications are used in the prescribed manner.

7. Regardless of the quantity, a student-athlete shall not use, consume, be in the possession of, buy, sell, or give away alcohol, tobacco, or any other controlled substance (including steroids or image enhancing drugs).
8. Athletes must adhere to the district's Student-Athlete Expectations. Repeated violations of the student-athlete Code of Conduct may result in the student-athlete losing the privilege to participate in interscholastic sports for Little Axe Schools.

STUDENT-ATHLETE EXPECTATIONS

The following expectations will be placed on all student-athletes.

1. Follow all training rules, school rules, and regulations.
2. Exhibit good sportsmanship towards the opponents, officials, teammates, and fans.
3. Work to excel in the classroom.
4. Put team goals ahead of personal goals.
5. Be a role model for all students before, during, and after school.
6. Have **PRIDE** in yourself, your team, your school, and care for your facility.
7. Respect, but never fear the opponent.
8. Work harder than the competition, both in and out of season.
9. Be on time and prepared for practice, meetings, and games.
10. Accept the results, learn from your mistakes, and focus on the goal.
11. Each student-athlete must strive toward the development of good sportsmanship, citizenship and leadership at all times. Student-athletes represent both school and community and enjoy a special status.
12. Once a student becomes a member of any team in grades 9-12, he/she will thereafter be considered a student-athlete. All student-athletes are expected to follow all rules, policies, and regulations.
13. Any student-athlete suspended from school for any reason will be suspended from all athletic practices and contests during that suspension.

14. If a student that is under suspension does not complete the season in which the suspension is to be completed, then the suspension will carry over to the next season/sport.
15. Student-athletes must attend school/class a minimum of 4 hours the day of a scheduled contest in order to participate in the athletic activity.
16. A student-athlete ejected from an athletic contest shall be suspended from participating in the next scheduled athletic contest, at a minimum.

HAZING

The district's athletic department supports only those activities that are constructive, educational, inspirational, and that contribute to the intellectual and personal development of student-athletes. Little Axe School's athletics unequivocally opposes any situation created intentionally to produce mental or physical discomfort, embarrassment, harassment, or ridicule.

The district interprets hazing as any act whether physical, mental, emotional, or psychological, that subjects another person, voluntarily or involuntarily, to anything that may abuse, mistreat, degrade, humiliate, harass, or intimidate him/her or which may in any fashion compromise his/her inherent dignity as a person. In addition, any requirements by a member that compels another member to participate in any activity that is against middle/high school policy or state/federal law will be defined as hazing.

Actions and activities that are prohibited include, but are not limited to the following:

1. Any type of initiation or other activity where there is an expectation of individuals joining a particular team to participate in behavior designed to humiliate, degrade, or abuse them regardless of the person's willingness to participate.
2. Forcing, requiring, or pressuring an individual to consume alcohol or any other substance.
3. Forcing, requiring, or pressuring an individual to shave any part of their body, including the hair on their head.
4. Any requirement or pressure placed on an individual to participate in any activity that is illegal, perverse, and publicly indecent, contrary to his/her genuine morals and/or beliefs, e.g., public profanity, indecent or lewd conduct or sexual gestures in public.
5. Requiring the eating of anything an individual would refuse to eat otherwise.
6. Any activity or action that creates a risk to the health, safety, or property of the middle/high school or any member of its community.

7. Forcing or requiring calisthenics, such as push-ups, set-ups, and excessive running from another student athlete.
8. Assigning or endorsing “pranks” such as stealing or harassment of another organization.
9. Awakening or disturbing individuals during normal sleeping hours.
10. Expecting or pressuring individuals to participate in an activity in which full membership is not willing to participate.
11. Physical abuse of any kind.
12. Forcing, encouraging, or pressuring someone to wear in public, apparel that is conspicuous and not within the norm of what is considered to be in good taste.
13. Nudity at any time or forced reading of pornographic material.
14. Paddling, beating, or otherwise permitting a member to hit other members.
15. Having substances such as eggs, mud, paint, honey, etc. thrown at, poured on, or otherwise applied to the body of a member.
16. Morally degrading/humiliating games or other activities that make a member the object of amusement, ridicule, or intimidation.
17. Submitting a member to cruel and unusual psychological conditions.

Consequences for hazing may include, but are not limited to, team/activity suspensions or removal, school suspension (for up to one calendar year), and/or legal prosecution.

PRIMARY SPORT SELECTION

Students who choose to participate in two sports during the same season must get permission from the coaches of each respective sport, the AD and their parents. Consequently, permission and recognition of the primary sport must occur simultaneously in writing and each commitment must be consistent with the rules and regulations of the OSSAA.

CHANGING SPORTS

From the time a team plays its first scheduled contest, a student cannot quit or be dismissed from the team and join another team until such time as the first team's season is over (this includes off-season teams). The student may receive a failing (59%) grade for the sport.

Exceptions to this rule may be permitted under the following conditions:

1. If the athlete has a doctor's statement recommending that he/she drop the first sport for medical reasons and permitting participation in the second sport.
2. If both coaches involved, and the athletic director agrees that a mid-season change would be beneficial to the athlete without being unfair to the individual members of either team.

Before an athlete is cleared to participate in another sport, he/she must return all equipment and pay for lost or damaged equipment.

An athlete must not change classes or stop reporting to a sport until notified that the change has officially been made through the athletic director, counselor, and principal.

CARRY-OVER SPORT

The following guidelines are to be followed when dealing with students who are completing one sport while another is beginning:

1. Concluding sport has priority.
2. Appropriate restrictions in beginning sport may be requested by the concluding sports coach for the dual-sport students.

These guidelines are NOT intended to put the student in the middle of any controversy. All students that may be involved in two sports should be identified PRIOR to the start of the beginning season, and parameters set at that time to ensure that students and parents are clear on the expectations and commitment expected of the student.

QUITTING A TEAM

When a player decides to quit a team, every effort should be made by the coach to prevent any harassment by players or coaches.

Coaches should take the following steps:

1. It is understood that when a student comes out for a particular sport, he/she intends to remain in that sport for the duration of that sport's season.
2. A "grace period" is incorporated into each season for the purpose of giving a participant a chance to find out if he/she would want to participate in that particular sport. The "grace period" runs from the time of the first practice of a sport until the first game of that sport or for a minimum period of one week from the start of the first practice. During this

period, a participant may decide to go into another sport or off-season program without jeopardizing his eligibility in any sport.

3. Once a “grace period” is over, it is assumed that the individual wants to participate in and will remain in that sport for the duration of the season.
4. If a participant quits a sport and/or for disciplinary reasons is removed from the team after the “grace period”, an effort will be made to place said participant into a regular classroom, study hall, or off-season until that particular sport is concluded. A participant in this situation is ineligible for participation in another sport until such time as the sport in which he/she quit or was removed from is over.
5. If a participant quits or is removed from a sport and is not planning on participating in another sport for the remainder of the year, then every effort will be made to place the individual(s) into another class for the remainder of the school year. It must be understood that the time of the year will have a bearing on whether an individual can be placed in another class.
6. Any student quitting a team and/or transferring to the off-season program with no intention of participating in other team activities may receive a grade of failing (59%) for the semester grading period.
7. Any student quitting a team may or may not be able to participate the following year.

DISMISSAL FROM A TEAM

Steps to be taken before a participant involved in sports activities can be dismissed from a team:

1. Coach will conference with student(s).
2. Coach will meet with the student’s parent(s)

Any coach contemplating dismissal of a student from a team must meet with the Athletic Director prior to this decision being finalized.

An athlete who is dismissed from a team will not be allowed to go to another team until the athletic director has given approval. The student may receive a failing (59%) grade for that sport.

LETTERING IN ATHLETICS

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

1. An athlete who has participated in previous years may be lettered in citizenship, attitude, desired work ethic, loyalty, and attendance, even though he/she does not meet the specific requirements set forth for the sport.
2. The student must participate in the sport for the full season.
3. The student must maintain good sportsmanship and citizenship.
4. The student must attend all practices unless cleared with the coach.
5. Any situation not covered above will be left to the discretion of the coaching staff.

LETTER/ALL-STATE JACKETS

Any student meeting the above listed requirements for lettering is eligible to purchase an Athletic Letter Jacket. The jackets are ordered at regularly scheduled sessions in the athletic director's office.

The athletic department will purchase All-State Jackets for any athlete named to an All-State team and eligible to have said jackets(s).

STUDENT INSURANCE

The Little Axe School District is not responsible for medical expenses resulting from injuries incurred during the normal course of participating in activities.

The parent is ultimately responsible for ensuring that the student is covered.

TRANSPORTATION

Each student-athlete is expected to travel with their team to and from athletic events. They are to travel by the means provided for or arranged by the district.

In the event it is necessary for a student-athlete to use other transportation, permission must be secured in accordance with the following:

1. It is the parent's responsibility to give a written request to the Head Coach or AD for approval. If approved, a copy is made for record in the athletic director's office.

2. The coach will only release the student athlete to a parent after receiving the release note.
3. The coach will verify the identity of the parent(s). If the coach is not sure, the coach will ask for some sort of picture identification (driver's license, etc.).

DRESS CODE

Appearance, expression, and actions always influence people's impression of athletes, the team, and the school. Once a student becomes a member of a team, he/she has made a choice to uphold certain standards expected of athletes representing Little Axe Schools. Therefore, team members will follow school dress code policy when traveling with the team. Coaches may also institute stricter dress code guidelines for each sport.

STUDENT PRE-SEASON RESPONSIBILITIES

All students participating in activities will be expected to have all pre-season responsibilities taken care of prior to the start of practice for that activity. All paperwork should be turned in to the Athletic Office before the start of the season. The student will not be allowed to practice or compete until all such paperwork is cleared and on file. This includes all necessary signatures.

The following must be completed and on file before the first practice:

1. Physicals completed, forms submitted.
2. Rank one done online.

ATHLETIC TRAINING FACILITIES

1. TRAINING ROOM – ***NOT A MEETING PLACE.*** Only those athletes who are there for a specific reason are allowed to enter.
2. Athletes are not allowed to get training room supplies or keep them in their lockers or equipment bags.
3. Athletes are responsible for making sure both the locker room and facility are clean after practices and contests, both home and away.
4. Athletes are not allowed in the Coaches' Office unless given permission.
5. ***NO ONE IS ALLOWED IN THE GYM OR WEIGHT ROOM UNLESS A COACH OR STAFF MEMBER IS PRESENT.***
6. Athletes should not bring large sums of money or electronic devices to school and they should lock their lockers during practices and games. It is an unfortunate fact that theft does occur. Precautions should be taken at all times.

EQUITY

True equity is based not on the letter of the law, but instead, on the spirit of the philosophy. The best way to think of equity is that participants, whether male or female all deserve the same treatment. Our customers are “kids”, and the fact that they are male or female should make no difference in the type of programs we provide them.

All staff members in the activities program are expected to be well acquainted with the expectations of OSSAA, Little Axe, and Title IX. The district is committed to adhering to the spirit, as well as the letter of the law in regards to gender equity. To do so is in the best interest of “kids” as well as the “right” thing to do.

In addition to specific equity requirements in athletics, all activity staff members are expected to be knowledgeable of and sensitive to all forms of discrimination, bias and harassment that may occur on the basis of sex, race, nationality, or other factors.

The district affirms that no person shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from, be denied the benefit of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity. Students or employees with questions or complaints concerning the provisions of Title IX may contact the principal or superintendent.

ADDENDUM

WARNING: By signing and accepting this document, the student-athlete and parent are advised that participation in interscholastic practice and competition is dangerous! Furthermore, it is understood that no amount of protective equipment will eliminate potential injury. Even under the safest and most secure conditions, some athletic activity can result in serious – even fatal – injury.

In football, no helmet can prevent serious head or neck injuries that a player might receive while participating in practice or games. A football player should not use his/her helmet to butt, ram, or spear an opposing player. These actions violate football rules and can result in severe head or neck injuries, including paralysis or death to the athlete, as well as possible injury to the opponent. Moreover, physical contact in football (and other athletics) may result in concussion – brain injury that no helmet can prevent.

Symptoms of a concussion includes: loss of consciousness or memory; dizziness, headaches, nausea and confusion. If a student- athlete exhibits such symptoms, he or she should immediately stop playing and report these conditions to the coach, athletic trainer, and his/her parents. The student-athlete must not return to a game or practice until all symptoms are eliminated, and the individual has received medical clearance. Ignoring this warning may lead to another and more serious or fatal injury. **REMEMBER: Anyone electing to compete in the district's athletic programs does so with the clear understanding of the risk of injury.**

Additional questions about such risk should be directed to the coach or athletic director prior to participation in practice or competition.

STUDENT-ATHLETE/PARENT(S) HANDBOOK

STUDENT-ATHLETE

I, (student's name) _____, have read and/or have been directed to the handbook link on the athletic website, and/or have participated in the athletic handbook orientation. I understand its content and agree to follow it during my participation in athletics for the academic year.

STUDENT SIGNATURE

DATE

PARENT(S)

We, the parent(s) of _____, have read and/or have been directed to the handbook link on the athletic website, and/or have participated in the athletic handbook orientation and understand the contents of the Little Axe Schools Athletic Handbook.

Parent(s) Signature

Date

**PLEASE SIGN AND RETURN TO THE HEAD COACH OR
ATHLETIC OFFICE NO LATER THAN SEPTEMBER 1ST.**