

Los Altos High School Student Athlete/Parent Athletic Guide

- Los Altos High School sports website: [Los Altos Athletics](#)
- Santa Clara Athletic League- <http://www.scval.com/>
- Central Coast Section- <http://www.cifccs.org/>
- California Interscholastic Federation <http://www.cifstate.org/>
- [Center for Sports Parenting](#)
- National Federation of High School Sports learning courses. www.nfhslearn.com

Parents and athletes are encouraged to view two sportsmanship videos:

[Sportsmanship](#) (a free on-line video course)

[The Role of the Parent in Sports](#) (a free on-line video course)

- NCAA Eligibility Center- [College bound athletes](#)

The purpose of this guidebook is to assist the Parents/Guardians and the student athletes themselves of **Los Altos High School** a better understanding of high school sports. Participation in interscholastic athletics can be a fulfilling and positive life experience if everyone has a better understanding of the issues and concerns that surround the involvement in athletics.



Los Altos High School Sport Offerings:

FALL:

Cross Country- Boys & Girls: Frosh/Soph (boys) Junior Varsity, Varsity
Cheer: Junior Varsity, Varsity
Field Hockey: Junior Varsity, Varsity
Football: Frosh/Soph, Varsity
Girls Golf: Varsity
Tennis-Girls: Junior Varsity, Varsity
Volleyball-Girls: Junior Varsity, Varsity
Water Polo- Boys: Frosh/Soph, Varsity
Water Polo- Girls: Junior Varsity, Varsity

WINTER:

Basketball Boys: Freshman, Frosh/Soph, Varsity
Basketball Girls: Junior Varsity, Varsity
Soccer- Boys: Frosh/Soph, Varsity,
Soccer- Girls: Junior Varsity, Varsity
Wrestling-Boys & Girls Frosh/Soph, Varsity

SPRING:

Baseball: Frosh/Soph, Varsity
Badminton Boys & Girls: Junior Varsity, Varsity
Golf- Boys: Varsity
Gymnastics: Junior Varsity, Varsity
Boys Lacrosse: Varsity
Girls Lacrosse: Varsity
Softball: Junior Varsity, Varsity
Swimming & Diving-Boys: Frosh/Soph, Varsity
Swimming & Diving- Girls: Junior Varsity, Varsity
Boys Tennis: Junior Varsity, Varsity
Track- Boys & Girls Frosh/Soph, Varsity
Boys Volleyball: Frosh/Soph, Varsity

SPORTS WARNING STATEMENT:

Student athletes and parents should be aware that all sports have inherent dangers. Although rare, death or catastrophic injury can result from participation in interscholastic sports, and care should be taken by all concerned to minimize such dangers through the use of appropriate equipment, proper training methods and common sense. The NFHS encourages athletes and parents in all sports to discuss risks and risk minimization with coaches, school administrators and league/section officials.

PARTICIPATION IN LOS ALTOS ATHLETICS:

Every player must go onto athleticclearance.com and go through the registration process and acknowledge the forms and upload/turn in their physical document before being cleared.

Los Altos High School Athletic Department Rules for Participation

- All students must have medical insurance verified through the online registration process.
- Students must be **cleared** by the Athletic Director before participating in try-outs or practice.
- 9th Grade Athletes requesting an exemption from Physical Education must be enrolled in 7 classes (one of which is Physical Education) plus participate in a CCS/CIF Recognized Sport.
- All students must have a 2.00 GPA for all classes attempted at Los Altos High School to be eligible to participate in athletics. Student athletes are expected to acquire a well- rounded education as evidenced by A's, B's and C's on report cards. It is the responsibility of the athlete to complete all class assignments missed due to athletic absences from school and to do the best that they can in the classroom.
- Appearance and behavior will reflect maturity and respect for others at all times. Athletes will maintain high personal standards of hygiene ... remembering that good health is both a personal and team concern. Athletes will also do their best to promote interest in their sport(s) as well as other athletic teams ... and will work to generate interest and participation by setting a positive example.

SPORTSMANSHIP:

- **AWARDS RECOGNITION:** Are organized by the SALT Club on campus. This is held 3x a year at the conclusion of each season of sport.
- All students, parents and team followers must abide by the CIF, CCS, SCVAL and Los Altos High School Sportsmanship policies. Failure to do so will result in game suspension. A second offense will result in dismissal from the team. In the case of adults or team followers, attendance of games or matches will be denied.
- Conduct on and off campus will always reflect the true spirit of sportsmanship. As a visible representative of Los Altos, athletes are to conduct themselves in a socially acceptable manner.
- Any player ejected for fighting shall be required to complete the NFHS online sportsmanship course (NFHSlern.org). The athlete, is not allowed to participate in the next game, is also not eligible to participate until they complete the course, which is free. A certificate should be printed when the course is completed.

INJURIES:

- All injuries sustained by athlete, coaches, officials or anyone else associated with a district athletic activity should be reported to the Athletic Trainer and AD. If you receive medical care as a result of your injury/injuries, you must get a signed release from the doctor stating when you are able to return to athletic participation.
- **ALL** suspected concussions require a return-to-play note from a health care provider and Athletic Trainer.

TRANSPORTATION:

- All athletes shall travel to and from athletic events *only* in transportation provided by or approved by the school. Students who are transported to or from an athletic event other than by school-approved transportation without first obtaining prior permission by coach and administration will not participate in that event and not be eligible to compete in the next

game/match/meet.

- Drivers Form must be on file for Parents to be able to drive student athletes.

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE:

- In order to participate in athletic contest or practice, an athlete must have attended a minimum of four (4) regular class periods of the school day (or Friday for a Saturday competition).
- The principal or vice principal may waive this rule based on the reasoning of the absence and may require verification of the absence (such as a doctor's note).
- Cutting on game day WILL NOT be tolerated; an athlete who has cut classes will not be allowed to participate in competition.
- A school field trip is considered school attendance.

EARLY RELEASES:

- Students and parents should be aware that there is a good chance that students will miss all or part of their classes during the day when they have to travel for competitions. This could happen five or more times during a season.
- Students have the responsibility to contact *their* teacher in advance to coordinate make up work regardless of subject area.

LOCKER ROOMS:

- Athletes are expected to use the locker rooms appropriately for changing ONLY.
- Athletes are responsible for the security of their belongings by always locking them in the locker. DO NOT BRING VALUABLES INTO THE LOCKER ROOMS.
- Athletes should behave appropriately with language and demeanor. THEFT WILL NOT BE TOLERATED.
- No pictures or videos may be taken inside a locker room. Violations will result in school/team discipline.
- All equipment and bags shall be locked up in the team rooms and kept maintained.

PARTICIPATION LIMITATIONS, CHANGING SPORTS, LEAVING THE TEAM, AND LETTERING

- Withdrawing from a team as a student's own choice shall result in a loss of eligibility to practice or play for another sport until the end of the team's competitive season. The administration may agree to waive this restriction under certain conditions.
- Athletes are prohibited from participating in more than one interscholastic athletic activity during any given season.
- To be eligible for the school letter, athletes must meet sport prerequisites and MUST complete the sports season in good standing with the team/squad and coaching staff.
- Athletes who quit are responsible for turning in any school issued uniform and equipment before being eligible to participate in future sport programs. A fine will be issued to the athlete for the cost of the uniform and equipment they have in possession.

FEES: Transportation Fee (\$100) pays for the buses and vans. ASB (\$30) pays for the CIF, CCS, SCVAL, and Officials fees.

TRY-OUTS:

- High school sports are competitive. Try-outs may be conducted for a team. **Selection to participate on a team does not guarantee playing time during competition.**
- All decisions for selection on a team or playing time are the responsibility of the team coach in consultation with the head coach for that sport.
- All students, including freshmen, are permitted to try out for any sport provided they are academically and residentially eligible and have a physical exam on file.
- **If a student is currently playing on a team when try-outs for the next season's sports begin, that student may try-out AFTER his/her current season is over.**

PRACTICES:

- All athletes are expected to attend ALL scheduled practices. Practices are 2 hours a day and may be held on Saturdays and Holidays. Student athletes are asked to make appointments and schedule vacations around practices and game commitments.
- Parent/guardian or athlete will inform the attendance office and their coach IN ADVANCE if excused absences or tardiness must occur. Athletes understand that if they **cannot practice, they cannot play**. Tardiness and/or unexcused absences from practice will result in disciplinary action by the coach, which can result in dismissal from the team.
- Detentions and/or suspensions assigned by the LAHS faculty or administration will result in missed practice, game day suspensions and/or dismissal from the team.
- All students will respect and take proper care of all school equipment and facilities.
- Practices are closed to all persons not on the team. A parent or guardian wishing to attend practice MUST have prior approval of the Head Coach.

PLAYING TIME:

NOT all players get the same playing time. The coach must decide which players put the team in the best position for success. Thus, playing time is determined by the discretion of the coach. Part of a players' maturation process includes putting one's personal desires aside for the betterment of the program.

ISSUING AND COLLECTION OF UNIFORMS AND EQUIPMENT:

- Each student is responsible for the proper care and safekeeping of all equipment issued.
- Lockers must be secured before and after practices or competitions. Please follow the care instruction for all garments.
- All Uniforms and equipment will be returned to the coach at the end of the season.
- Athletes are financially responsible for all equipment and supplies issued and that they are returned, in good repair, within **one week** following the end of the season. Failure to return or pay for articles not returned will result in suspension from further participation in the interscholastic sports program until returned or paid.
- Athletes will wear game uniform only at the times and locations authorized by the coach.

COACHES:

- Coaches are to be treated with the same respect given to any other professional. Coaches put in many hours for very little financial compensation. It is important that any conversations at home regarding the coaches and/or their decisions be put in a positive tone. We cannot

expect students to treat a coach with respect if the parents do not.

OFFICIALS:

- Officials should be treated with respect during and after contest, even if there is a disagreement with their calls. **Any physical confrontation of an official by an athlete may be considered an assault. The athlete may lose athletic eligibility for their entire high school career under CIF Bylaw 211.**
- Any physical confrontation of an official by a spectator may be considered an assault. The police may be contacted

TEAM PARENTS:

- Coaches appreciate when one or more parents volunteer to assist with the team chores, such as arranging transportation, organizing equipment, senior night, arranging team dinners, helping to get volunteers for booster fundraising, concessions etc.

SOCIAL MEDIA AND NETWORKING:

- Athletes and parent are expected to use social networking sites in a positive, sportsmanlike manner reflecting the values of their team, their school and the MVLASD. Assume nothing posted on social media will be private.
- Inappropriate posts relating to athletics-including but not limited to trash talking, taunting, profanity, hazing, harassment, or bullying- may be subject to team and/or school discipline.
- It is against CIF rules to use social media to engage and or influence any student not at your school to enroll at your school for athletic purposes.
- Only appropriate pictures should be posted, always with the permission of the subjects in the photograph. Social media is not a place to solve team problems

BOOSTERS CLUB:

- The athletic department is fortunate to have a very supportive athletic booster club. They hold multiple fundraisers throughout the year to assist in grant requests from the sports teams. Parents are encouraged to join athletic boosters at one of the various levels. Student-athletes and parents are asked to volunteer at the athletic boosters fundraiser.

STUDENT ATHLETE LEADERSHIP TEAM:

- The council is comprised of student athletes who meet each week during lunch, to discuss and put together the awards recognition, fundraisers, raise awareness of other sports activities, social media, and develop leadership skills among captains..

WHY KIDS PARTICIPATE IN SPORTS

TOP REASONS WHY KIDS PLAY SPORTS

1. Having fun
2. Improving skills
3. Develop fitness/exercise
4. Being with my friends
5. Experiencing thrills and excitement
6. Being on a team
7. Opportunities for person accomplishment
8. Staying in shape
9. Doing something I'm good at
10. Winning

TOP REASONS WHY KIDS QUIT SPORTS

1. Not having fun
2. Too much pressure from Parents/Peers
3. Too much emphasis on winning
4. Concerns about coaching
5. Not getting enough playing time

Ewing & Seefeldt, 1996

What Parents Can Do

Before the Game

- Tell your child you are proud of him or her regardless of how well he or she plays.
- Make a commitment to honor the game no matter what others may do.

During the Game

- Cheer good plays by both teams.
- Mention good calls by the officials to others.
- Encourage others to honor the game.
- Remember to have fun! Enjoy the day.

After the Game

- Ask your child open-ended questions:
 - “What was the most enjoyable part of the game for you? Least enjoyable?”
 - “Do you feel you gave it your best effort?”
 - “How did you respond to any mistakes you made?”
 - “Did you bounce back?”
 - “What did you learn from the game?”
- Tell your child again that you are proud of him or her! (Especially if the game didn't go well)
- Thank officials for doing a difficult job.
- Thank the coaches for their effort.

What If

- The official makes a “bad” call against your team? *Respect and Honor the Game—be silent!*
- Another spectator on your team begins to berate the official? *Ask them to Respect and Honor the Game. Remind them that officials are human and make mistakes.*
- our child does not get to play/participate in the game? *Review the reasons why kids play sport..*

Sportsmanship Conduct at Games

The following is unacceptable at ALL CCS/CIF high school contests:

1. Berating an opponent's school or mascot;
 2. Berating opposing players;
 3. Obscene cheers or gestures;
 4. Negative signs;
 5. Artificial noise-makers;
 6. Complaining about officials' calls (either verbally or by gestures);
 7. Actions by a school and/or team that are intended to embarrass or humiliate their opponent and/or show a lack of respect for their opponent or the integrity of the sport.
 8. "Body-painting" that either would or would not necessitate the removal, or partial removal, of what a reasonable person would consider to be normal clothing (this prohibition does not include "face-painting").
 9. Removal, or partial removal, of what a reasonable person would consider to be normal clothing: The changing of clothes that exposes undergarments or bare skin, not appropriate to the sport, in the view of spectators and general public before, during, or after the contest is not acceptable. Exception: Any removal of clothing due to an injury incurred during the contest.
 10. Laser pointers
- **Fan attendance is not a right, but a privilege. Site management/supervision has the right to remove any individual for not adhering to the CCS and school rule policies.**

What We Believe About High School Sports

“Pursuing Victory with Honor”

At its best, athletic competition can hold intrinsic values for our society. It is a symbol of a great ideal: pursuing victory with honor. The love of sports is deeply embedded in our national consciousness. The values of millions of participants and spectators are directly and dramatically influenced by the values conveyed by organized sports. In the belief that the impact of sports can and should enhance the character and uplift the ethics of the state, we have established a framework of principles and a common language of values that should be adopted and practiced widely.

On November 5, 1999 nearly 50 interscholastic sports and educational leaders representing California's 1,292 high schools voted unanimously to adopt and endorse “Pursuing Victory With Honor” as operating beliefs and principles of the California Interscholastic Federation (CIF). “Pursuing Victory With Honor” is the result of a conference convened May 12-14, 1999 in Scottsdale Arizona by the Josephson Institute of Ethics, CHARACTER COUNTS! Coalition and the United States Olympic Committee. Listed below are just a few of the principles. For the complete list go to: www.cifstate.org

The essential elements of character building and ethics in CIF sports are embodied in the concept of sportsmanship and six core principles: **trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring and good citizenship**. The highest potential of sports is achieved when competition reflects these "six pillars of character."

To foster the development of good character, school sports programs must be conducted in a manner that enhances the academic, emotional, social, physical and ethical development of student athletes and teaches them positive life skills that will help them become personally successful and socially responsible.

Participation in school sports programs is a privilege, not a right. To earn that privilege, student athletes must abide by the rules and they must conduct themselves, on and off the field, as positive role models who exemplify good character.

Everyone involved in CIF competition - parents, spectators, associated student body leaders and all auxiliary groups - has a duty to honor the traditions of the sport and to treat other participants with respect. Coaches have a special responsibility to model respectful behavior and the duty to demand that their athlete's refrain from disrespectful conduct including verbal abuse of opponents and officials, profane or belligerent trash-talking, taunting, and inappropriate celebrations.

The profession of coaching is a profession of teaching. In addition to teaching the mental and physical dimensions of their sport, coaches, through words and example, must also strive to build the character of their athletes by teaching them to be trustworthy, respectful, responsible, fair, caring and good citizens.

What Parents Can Expect From Their School

Communications you should expect from your child's coach:

1. Philosophy of the coach
2. Expectations the coach has for your child
3. Location and times of all practices and games
4. Team requirements, i.e. practices, special equipment, out of season training
5. Procedures to follow should your child be injured during participation
6. Discipline that may result in the denial of your child's participation

Communications that coaches expect from parents:

1. Concerns expressed directly to the coach
2. Specific concerns with regard to a coaches philosophy and /or expectations
3. Notification of any illness or injury or missed practices

Appropriate concerns to discuss with the coaches:

4. Treatment of your child, mentally and physically
5. Ways to help your child improve
6. Concerns about your child's behavior

Issues not appropriate to discuss with the coach:

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

There are often situations that may require a conference between the coach and the parents. The student athlete will be invited and involved in these meetings. To resolve the problem, we must have everyone's help and involvement. These meetings are encouraged.

If there is a problem:

1. Have your son/daughter talk to the coach, one-on-one (it's part of growing up).

If this does not resolve the problem, the parents should:

1. Call the school and request a returned call or a face-to-face meeting with the coach.
2. Coaches will make time available in their day to meet with students and parents.

Parents MUST not:

1. Confront the coach before or after practice
2. Confront the coach before or after a game

Coaches are teachers. A parent would not walk into a classroom during class time and yell at the teacher about a poor grade, so please do not confront the coach in public setting. There are proper ways to communicate and have your concerns addressed. Practices and games are highly emotional times for everyone involved, players, coaches and parents. Meetings and concerns do not get resolved during emotional times.

ATHLETIC CHAIN OF COMMAND:

Parents should first consult with their child if there is an issue before contacting the coach.

Athlete should have a conversation with the Coach in an appropriate manner regarding the issue.

Step 1. Athlete --- Head Coach

Step 2. Athlete/Parent/Head Coach

Step 3. Athlete/Parent/Head Coach Athletic Director

Step 4. Athlete/Parent/Head Coach Athletic Director, Vice Principal

Step 5. Athlete/Parent/Head Coach, Athletic Director, Principal

Step 6. Athlete/Parent/Head Coach, Athletic Director, Principal, Superintendent

ATHLETIC AWARDS

Participation Certificate- Completes season of sport – Certificate

Block Letter- Completes a season of Varsity Sport (Can purchase their letterman jacket)- Block

Most Improved Player- Plaque

Most Valuable Player-Plaque

Coaches Award- Plaque

9-12 Athlete of the Year (MALE/FEMALE)- Plaque

9-12 Scholar Athlete of the Year (MALE/FEMALE)- Plaque

SENIOR AWARDS

Athlete of the Year (MALE/FEMALE)- Recipient receives a plaque and name on the banner in the gym.

Scholar Athlete of the Year (MALE/FEMALE)- Plaque and \$500.00 Scholarship Money



**GETTING THE BEST OUT OF THE SEASON PARENT/ATHLETE
TO HELP MY SON/DAUGHTER GET THE MOST OUT OF SPORTS**

Three things I'm going to do this season.....

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____

THREE THINGS AS AN ATHLETE TO GET THE MOST OUT OF SPORTS

Three things I'm going to do this season....

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. I am very concerned about my child's coach, but I fear that a conversation with the coach will lead to retaliation and resentment. What should I do?

If your child was having problems in their math or science class, would you call the school and ask to schedule an appointment with the teacher to find out what you as parents can do to assist your child? If your child continued to have pain in their teeth long after visiting the dentist, would you schedule a follow-up visit? The answers are obvious, YES. Your concerns regarding retaliation should not enter your mind. Of course, much will depend on your manner of inquiry. Like most people, coaches will get defensive when attacked so the best method is to schedule a face-to-face meeting with the coach and include your child at the meeting, just like a meeting with their math teacher. Make sure you are seeking answers to questions that will ultimately enhance your child's sports experience and what you, as a parent, can do to assist in that effort.

2. Why do school administrators protect incompetent coaches?

Much of the answer is in defining the term incompetent and the age-old adage, "in the eye of the beholder." Often when you hear individuals in the stands yelling "fire the bum" or "the coach doesn't know what their doing" it really means that their child is not getting enough playing time or the fan's ego is hurt. There are incompetent coaches just as there are incompetents in other professions. However, school administrators, based on the educational philosophy of the school and the mission of educational athletics to promote the positive values of the school, evaluate coaches yearly. Retention of coaches should be based upon their ability to assist and improve their student's character development and lifelong learning skills. Winning contests is just the icing on the cake.

3. When my child played youth sports everyone got to play. Now that my child has made the high school team, it seems she doesn't get much playing time. Should I encourage my child to seek other interests?

You are assuming that your child's role on the team has not been rewarding. Kids play for a variety of reasons and everyone including parents have a desire for more playing time and a higher profile on the team. Not everyone can be the star on a team, yet the most successful teams are ones where all members contribute, be it in practice or the games. Kids learn great life-long skills about commitment, dedication, teamwork, effort, accountability and never giving up while participating in high school sports. These are the character traits we all want our children to learn.

4. How can I ensure that my child is getting a qualified coach?

In 1998 the State CIF instituted a nationally recognized program "Coaching Principles" that teaches coaches how to be better at their profession. Over 11,000 coaches in California have been certified in the past few years in this class that covers sports philosophy (Pursuing Victory with Honor), physiology (how to deal with students and adults), nutrition, team management, risk management and basic CIF rules and regulations.

5. Our high school team has not won very many games, shouldn't the coach let the younger kids play and gain experience?

It will depend on the philosophy of the coach making the decision. When teams are struggling to win, everyone has suggestions. The coach must balance the desire to play the best players while keeping an eye on the future. It is not an easy decision, but ultimately, it is the coach's decision who gets to play.

6. Is one particular coaching "style" more effective?

About the time that you argue that one style is more effective, a host of exceptions comes to mind. There is no one way to coach. We generalize that there are the three basic coaching styles as taught in the CIF "Coaching Principles" classes; command, submissive and cooperative. We strongly advocate a combination of all three. A command style coach might be viewed as a "my way or the highway" type of personality, yet when it comes to the health and safety of the students, the coach must be assertive as to expectations. There are times when

*the best lessons kids learn are when we let them fail and they have to recover. Studies have shown that kids and teams excel best when the team has some say in the goals and decisions for the team. However, again, ultimately **the coach is the adult** and has the duty to ensure that the kids grow and mature under their leadership. Good coaches use a multitude of tools and styles to accomplish that goal.*

Why is officiating so poor at our high school games? I wouldn't yell so much if the officials were better.

An unfortunate attitude in our society these days is to "place the blame" and the official becomes an easy target or villain. We hope that you will recognize officials the same as we do players, coaches and teams...some are good and some are not so good. It is difficult finding people who are willing to become game officials as the potential for abuse far outweighs the pay. High school sports officials receive very low pay (this is not the NBA) and most officials do it for the love of the sport. Officials, just like coaches and teachers, are constantly being evaluated and rated for competency, but they are human and do make mistakes. But, as the student in the videotape said, "Give them a break, they are right most of the time." Be a Fan, not a Fanatic!