

**Little Miami Schools  
Athletic Department**



**2024-25 Student-Athlete/Parent Handbook**

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**TITLE IX: DISCRIMINATION PROHIBITED** – No person in the Little Miami Local School District, shall, on the ground of race, color, creed, age, sex, national origin, disability, or handicap, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity, all as in accordance with and as limited by the provisions of applicable law.

**Title IX coordinator: Pam Coates**

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# I. INTRODUCTION

The Little Miami School District Athletic Code is established under the authority of the Board of Education. The purpose of the Athletic Code is to establish standards of academic performance and behavior for students, parents and fans involved in interscholastic athletic programs and the penalties for failure to meet the standards. It is a privilege to participate in extracurricular activities within the Little Miami School District.

The Little Miami School District athletic program is subject to compliance with these standards and that of our governing bodies (approved affiliations), which includes, but is not limited to the Ohio High School Athletic Association (OHSAA) and the Eastern Cincinnati Conference (ECC). The standards of this code meet or exceed the standards of the OHSAA Reference: "Handbook of the Ohio High School Athletic Association for Junior High/Middle Schools and Senior High Schools."

Any traditional or nontraditional student enrolled or residing in the Little Miami School District (Grades 7-12) who meets compliance and eligibility requirements for participation in athletic activities may try out for any interscholastic sport. All student-athletes in grades 7-12 are held to the policies and procedures of this athletic handbook, in conjunction with the student handbooks of LMHS and LMMS.

Athletes are defined as:

- Those students who are trying out for an interscholastic team by reporting to practice.
- Members of any athletic team.
- Team managers.
- Cheerleaders

The athlete is subject to all provisions of the code on which the date written verification that the code will be followed is signed and turned in to the proper administration office (per Final Forms). **The athlete is subject to the code at all times and places whether school is in session or not for 12 calendar months from the date of signature.**

The athlete and their parents shall be informed of the Athletic Code prior to participation in LMSD athletic programs. No athlete shall be allowed to participate unless an athletic code is signed by both the athlete and parent/guardian on Final Forms. Consequences to violations of policies contained in this document are cumulative throughout the athlete's career.

The athletic department offers the following activities:

## High School Men's Activities

Academic      Lacrosse  
Baseball      Soccer  
Basketball      Swimming/Dive  
Bowling      Tennis  
Cross Country      Track and Field  
Football      Wrestling  
Golf

## Middle School Boy's Activities

Basketball  
Cross Country  
Football  
Wrestling  
Track and Field

## High School Women's Activities

Academic      Soccer  
Basketball      Softball  
Bowling      Swimming/Dive  
Cheerleading      Tennis  
Cross Country      Track and Field  
Golf      Volleyball  
Lacrosse

## Middle School Girl's Activities

Basketball  
Cheerleading  
Cross Country  
Track and Field  
Volleyball

## II. Message to Parents of Student-Athletes

This handbook is presented to you because your student-athlete has indicated a desire to participate in interscholastic athletics, and you have expressed your willingness to permit their participation. It is our belief that participation in athletic activities will provide opportunities and experiences to assist the student-athlete in personal growth.

The Little Miami School District is proud of the wide variety of opportunities for athletic participation. These opportunities are believed to be a critical part of a student's total development as they assist in the building of positive character and leadership traits.

It is the department's objective to maintain a properly controlled, and well-organized sports program that is both sound in purpose while also providing each student-athlete the platform to expand and grow their personal skillset. The hope is that each Little Miami Panther participant develops a well-rounded personal foundation that is both marketable and desirable to others as they move forward beyond their prep academic and athletic career.

Likewise, it is felt that as the student-athlete and as the parent, you have committed yourself to certain responsibilities and obligations. It is the athletic department's intent through this handbook to acquaint you with policies that are necessary for an organized program of athletics.

Matt Louis  
Athletic Director

## III. Little Miami Schools Athletic Philosophy and Structure

**Executive Summary:** The Little Miami athletic department is installing a strategic plan that is a subordinate representation of the district's mission. This plan is a collaborative product representing the body of work of a cross section of stakeholders across the district and community.

The athletic department will remain focused on supporting the installation of the Little Miami Modernization Movement. The goals and objectives of the districts strategic plan will drive our campaign to modernize how we educate our student-athletes through extracurricular activities. The strategic plan contains performance metrics including yearly targets to ensure frequent evaluation for our impact on student achievement.

### **Overarching Strategic Focus Areas and Goals (Philosophy):**

- Intellectual Development
- Other-Centered Development
- Social Development
- Physical Development
- Skill Development

### **Athletic Department Operational Focus Areas (Structure):**

- Structure
- Philosophy
- Budget & Finance
- Compliance
- Facilities
- Fundraising & Boosters
- Human Resources & Coaching Staff

- Marketing
- Sports Information
- Sport Operations

**Athletic Department Mission Statement:** The Complete Student-Athlete. The Athletic Department is committed to providing each student-athlete with the best resources to their highest potential in the following five areas: Intellectual Development, Other-Centered Development, Social Development, Physical Development, and Skill Development.

**Athletic Vision Statement:** The Athletic Department will be a championship caliber department that is known throughout the Conference, Region, the State of Ohio, and the United States for molding the Complete Student-Athlete who reach exemplary levels of success academically, athletically, and professionally.

**Intellectual Development:** Success does not happen overnight and requires hard work. It involves a team approach, including our coaching staff, academic support staff, and you the student-athlete. Intellectual development is a two-fold process. First, it involves our interaction with you as a student-athlete. I have a responsibility to know how you are doing as a student. Second, are you the student-athlete, utilizing all the possible resources available to you to succeed academically.

**Other-Centered Development:** We believe in the importance of helping you develop spiritually and understand the importance of giving back to the community. You will have the opportunity to be ‘other-centered’. Things can’t always be about you, being ‘other-centered’ allows you a path in life, whether it be through community involvement or through volunteerism. We will work hard to ensure that you are thinking beyond your individual compartment, and more about how you can become involved in the bigger picture.

**Social Development:** You serve as a representative of the School District and its Department of Athletics. You will be held to a higher level of accountability and responsibility both within the campus environment and in the community. It is extremely important that you realize that you understand that you are different. Because of that, you will carry yourself in a manner that reflects positively on the community and our program. You are going to be challenged to make good decisions every day while you grow up here. We will hold each of you accountable for your actions, that is called growing up and maturing socially.

**Physical Development:** An athlete can only perform as well as their own body will allow. We will work to help teach you how to get the optimal performance from your body and perform in peak physical condition each time you walk on the field/court. In today’s game, it is not about how much weight you can put on the bar. Today’s game has to do with taking care of your body. Nutrition, health, and wellness are things that give teams an edge to be successful. It is our goal to provide you the best strength and conditioning development program. This pillar will have year-round structure to prevent injuries from happening and finding the plan that best suits your personal plan for getting optimal performance from your body.

**Skill Development:** The role of The Department not only encompasses coaching, but also being a teachers and role models. Our main objective and the foundation for your skill development lies totally in communication. We will use all the experiences that we have gained as a players and coaches to communicate in the most effective manner in your development. We shall work each day to ensure we are all on the same page within the player-coach relationship. Your development on the field, in the playbook, and in film study, will dictate the direction that this program is headed.

Little Miami requires a partnership with parents/guardians/fans to support this development of our student-athletes and to further the message of good character. Please see the Parent/Guardian/Fan Code of Conduct (p. 15) for an explanation on how this can be achieved.

## **Objectives:**

**Cultivate High Academic Expectations:** Improved leadership by student-athletes in academics. We will set the pace academically by leading the general student population in graduation rates, and over a three-year period outperforming the general student population in grade point average (100% Eligibility/Graduation, 100% College/Career Placement).

**All-Sports Trophy:** The Athletic Department will set the bar in the league by striving to win the ECC All-Sports Trophy each school year.

**Championships:** The Athletic Department will strive to produce a league champion in every varsity team sport within a three-year period. The Department will strive produce a district champion in every team sport within an eight-year period. The Department will strive to produce a state champion in four team sports within a ten-year period.

**Togetherness:** Our student-athletes, coaches, and staff will respect and honor the privilege of competing. All participants recognize that our goals cannot be achieved without engaging the in family and community.

## **IV. Code of Conduct**

The Little Miami School District Athletic Department believes that interscholastic competition involving member schools of the Ohio High School Athletic Association should be governed by the basic principles of good sportsmanship.

1. Respect should be demonstrated for an athletic opponent and for their school at all times. Visiting schools should respect the property and dignity of their host school and its athletic teams.
2. Respect should be demonstrated for the officials at all times.
3. Knowledge of and a proper respect for the current rules of the contest should guide the behavior of all participants. Rules are essential for a fair contest.
4. All participants should strive to maintain self-control at all times.
5. All participants should learn to recognize and appreciate skill in performance regardless of affiliation. Recognition of the good performance of an opponent is a demonstration of generosity and good will that is encouraged in all member schools.
6. Nothing should be taken onto a field or court without approval from coaches and/or administration.

**Athletes:** Because athletes are admired and respected, they exert a great deal of influence over the actions and behavior of the spectators. It is important that players:

- Treat opponents with the respect that is due them as guests and as fellow athletes.
- Exercise self-control always, accepting the judgment of the officials as just that, the best judgment they could make given what they know and see.
- Accept both victory and defeat with humbleness and compassion. Congratulate opponents in sincere manner following either victory or defeat.
- The American Flag and LM Spirt Flags will be used to represent Little Miami at extracurricular events.

Athletes should avoid the following inappropriate behaviors:

- Use of profanity.
- Ejection from contests.
- Berating officials or fellow athletes.
- Inciting spectators and/or other athletes to inappropriate behavior.
- Leaving the bench area when not competing or becoming involved in any type of altercation.

It should be noted that coaches and athletes ejected from interscholastic athletic contests will be accountable to the disciplinary procedure in the bylaws of the Ohio High School Athletic Association as printed in the Association's handbook. Further action beyond this may be invoked by the school administration.

**Cheerleaders:** Cheerleaders are representatives of the student body. By setting a good example, the cheerleaders can influence and control the actions of the student spectators. They should:

- Establish standards of desirable behavior in keeping with the fundamentals of good sportsmanship for the cheerleaders and student spectators.
- Use positive cheers to encourage their own team without demeaning their opponents. Use discretion in deciding when to cheer and which cheers to use.
- Never attempt to distract opposing players or in any way interfere with their performance. Serve as hosts for visiting cheerleaders.

**Spectators:** Partisan spectators by their behaviors and reactions determine to a significant extent the reputation for sportsmanship of their school. Spectators should keep in mind that athletes are friendly rivals as members of opposing interscholastic teams. Spectators should be reminded too, that the contest should be between the teams and athletes engaged in the competition and not between their supporters. It is important that all spectators:

- Know and demonstrate the fundamentals of good sportsmanship.
- Respect, cooperate, and respond enthusiastically to the cheerleaders, coaches, and athletes of all teams.
- Censure fellow spectators whose behavior is inappropriate.
- Be positive toward players and coaches regardless of the outcome of the contest.
- Respect the judgment and the professionalism of the officials and coaches.

Spectators should avoid the following inappropriate behaviors:

- Verbal/physical abuse of contest officials
- Berating athletes, coaches, officials, or other spectators with chants, signs, or cheers.
- Interruption of contests by throwing objects, entering the area of competition, or becoming involved in disruptive behavior.

We believe that each participant should be committed to upholding the ideals of good sportsmanship put forth in this document. In this spirit, it should be understood, appropriate disciplinary action will be taken when incidents of inappropriate behavior occur.

**Any parent, guardian, or fan deemed to be conducting him/herself in an improper manner at any game or practice will be asked to leave the sports facility. Repeat violations may cause a multiple game suspension, or the season forfeiture of the privilege of attending all games.**

**USE, SALES OR POSSESSION OF ALCOHOL, TOBACCO PRODUCTS, OR ILLEGAL DRUGS IS PROHIBITED.**

It is the belief of the Little Miami School District and its Athletic Department that there is no such thing as responsible use of controlled substances/mood-altering chemicals, alcohol, tobacco, or vape pens by any high school student. Any use of controlled substances/mood-altering drugs, alcohol, tobacco or vape pens by student athletes will not be tolerated.

Beginning with the date that the athlete and parent(s) sign the Code of Conduct Pledge, the policies will be in effect for the athlete for one calendar year. There is no “off season” as far as adherence to the Drug/Alcohol/Tobacco Policy is concerned. Violations of which will lead to a denial of participation and/or removal from the Little Miami School District athletic program.

Cumulative accountability throughout the athlete’s interscholastic career will run from grades nine through twelve. For example, a violation during the ninth grade followed by a violation during eleventh grade will constitute a second offense.

A student athlete is prohibited from possessing, using, concealing, or displaying signs of having used drugs/look alike drugs, alcohol, tobacco, and/or vape pens.

### **Drug/Look Alike Drug and Alcohol Policy:**

**First Offense:** The penalty will be an immediate denial of participation from all athletic activities for the duration of the current school year. However, the penalty may be commuted to a 20% \*<sup>1</sup> denial of participation of scheduled contests for that sport, if the student (a) fulfills the requirements (a minimum of 3 hours) as established by the Athletic Department, and (b) submits evidence to the coach or athletic director that an assessment has been made or scheduled with a Drug/Alcohol/Tobacco Center that has been approved by the Athletic Department. The student must complete all the requirements of the intervention program; failure to do so will result in immediate denial of participation from all athletic activities for the duration of the school year.

If a Drug/Look Alike Drug/Alcohol Abuse Policy violation occurs after completion of the athlete’s sporting season, but during the effective calendar year of policy coverage, the athlete must fulfill all facets of the program of reinstatement before his/her next sporting season. If it is a first offense, the athlete will be denied participation for 20% of the next season’s interscholastic contests.

Student athletes under the denial of participation penalty for an “out of season” violation will be permitted to try out for an interscholastic team. If the student makes the team, the 20% denial of participation penalty will be enforced once the regular competition season begins.

If the athlete is a multi-sport athlete and the first offense occurs with less than 20% of the regular season contests remaining, the outstanding percentage of the contest penalty will be carried over to the next season of participation.

If the athlete chooses to try out for another sport in an attempt to satisfy the denial of participation percentage, the athlete must successfully complete the season by definition of the OHSAA official start and end dates.

If the violation occurs near the end of the sport season a student athlete may be prohibited from attending the awards program for their sport. This decision will be left to the discretion of the athletic director.

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<sup>1</sup> \*In calculating the 20% denial, all decimals will be rounded up. For example, a student who violates in volleyball (22 games scheduled) would be  $22 \times .20 = 4.4$ , which rounds up to 5 games denied. Also, penalties will carry over into the next sports season until the 20% denial is completed.



Students under denial of participation for Drug/Look Alike Drug/Alcohol Policy violations may practice and travel with the team but not dress for any interscholastic contests.

**Second Offense:** The second offense penalty will be enforced regardless of the time interval between the first and second offense. If a second violation occurs the penalty will be an immediate denial of participation from all athletic activities for one calendar year. However, the penalty may be commuted to 80 school days (which may carry over into the next school year) and a 20%\* denial of participation of scheduled contests in the next sport that the student athlete participates, if the student (a) fulfills the requirements (a minimum of 3 hours) as established by the Athletic Department, and (b) submits evidence to the coach or athletic director that an assessment has been made or scheduled with the Drug/Alcohol/Tobacco Center that has been approved by the Athletic Department. The student must complete all the requirements of the intervention program; failure to do so will result in immediate denial of participation from all athletic activities for one calendar year.

Second offenses may be any combination of drug, alcohol, or tobacco abuse violations. For example: one alcohol violation plus one tobacco violation equals a second offense and the consequences as defined under policy guidelines.

If the second offense occurs after the end of the athlete's season but prior to the awards program, the athlete will be denied participation in the awards program and will not receive interscholastic awards.

**Third Offense:** If a third incident occurs during the student's high school career, the penalty will be an immediate denial of participation from all athletic activities for one calendar year.

### **Tobacco and Vape Pen Usage/Possession**

It is the belief of the Little Miami School District and its Athletic Department that there is no such thing as responsible use of controlled substances/mood-altering chemicals, alcohol, tobacco, or vape pens by any high school student. Any use of controlled substances/mood-altering drugs, alcohol, tobacco or vape pens by student athletes will not be tolerated.

Beginning with the date that the athlete and parent(s) sign the Code of Conduct Pledge, the policies will be in effect for the athlete for one calendar year. There is no "off season" as far as adherence to the Drug/Alcohol/Tobacco Policy is concerned. Violations of which will lead to a denial of participation and/or removal from the Little Miami School District athletic program.

Cumulative accountability throughout the athlete's interscholastic career will run from grades nine through twelve. For example, a violation during the ninth grade followed by a violation during eleventh grade will constitute a second offense.

A student athlete is prohibited from possessing, using, concealing, or displaying signs of having used drugs/look alike drugs, alcohol, tobacco, and/or vape pens.

**First Offense:** The student-athlete cannot participate in the next scheduled contest of the current sport season. If the season concludes prior to the completion of the obligation, the period of ineligibility will be met in the next sport season that the student-athlete participates in.

**Second Offense:** The student-athlete cannot participate in the next scheduled 20% of contests of the current sport season. If the season concludes prior to the completion of the obligation, the period of ineligibility will be met in the next sport season that the student-athlete participates in.

**Third Offense:** The student-athlete is immediately removed and denied participation from all athletic activities for one calendar year. However, the penalty may be commuted to 80 school days (which may carry over to the next school year) if the student (a) fulfills the requirements (minimum of three hours) as established by the Athletic Department, and (b) submits evidence to the athletic director that an assessment has been made or scheduled with the Drug/Alcohol/Tobacco Center that has been approved by the Athletic Department. The student-athlete must complete all the requirements of the intervention program; failure to do so will result in immediate denial of participation from all athletic activities for one calendar year.

**Fourth Offense:** The penalty will be immediate denial of participation from all athletic activities for one calendar year.

**Self-Referrals:** An athlete, who feels that he or she has a substance abuse problem, may personally report this circumstance to the athletic director, coach or a member of the school teaching staff. The athlete must submit to a professional assessment and undergo three substance abuse counseling sessions but may continue to participate in athletics. All self-referral information will remain confidential. If the assessment indicates treatment, the athlete must follow through with the program to remain on the team. Parent(s) may also make referrals on their own student athletes. Procedurally, parent referrals will be treated as self-referrals.

A self-referral or a parent referral cannot be made to circumvent an active investigation into a Drug/Alcohol/Tobacco Policy violation. One “self-referral” is permitted during an athlete’s interscholastic career at Little Miami. A “self-referral” counts as the first substance abuse violation. A second subsequent violation of the Drug/Alcohol/Tobacco Policy will result in a denial of participation for one calendar year.

Self-referrals cannot be made when there has been evidence of police intervention surrounding a violation of the Drug/Alcohol/Tobacco Policy.

**Infractions:** An infraction must be observed by a teacher, coach, chaperone, school administrator, school board member or any member of a law enforcement agency. A statement of admission by the student athlete or his/her parents will be considered an infraction.

Financial responsibility for all professional assessment and counseling sessions lies with the parent(s) of the student athlete.

Positions of leadership (i.e., captain) are forfeited by violation of the Drug/Alcohol/Tobacco policy.

It is the student athlete’s responsibility to communicate with the athletic director concerning all aspects related to the completion of the reinstatement criteria.

### **Selling of Alcohol or Controlled Substances**

**First Offense:** A Student athlete will be denied the privilege of participating in the interscholastic program and practices for one calendar year from the date of the infraction.

**Second Offense:** A second offense involving the sale of alcohol or controlled substances will result in a permanent denial of participation in Little Miami’s athletic program.

## **V. Procedures for Registering a Concern**

As your child becomes involved in the programs at Little Miami Schools, our hope is that they will experience some of the most rewarding moments of their life. As parents, when your child becomes

involved in an athletic program, you have a right to understand what expectations are placed on you and your child. This begins with clear communication from the coach of your child's team to both you and your child.

Communication you and your child should expect from your child's coach.

- Philosophy of the coaching staff.
- Behavioral expectations the coach has for your child as well as all members on the squad.
- Location and time for all practices and contests scheduled.
- Team requirements (i.e., fees, special equipment, off-season conditioning).
- Discipline which results in the denial of your child's participation.

Communication coaches expect from athletes and parents.

- Concern expressed directly to the coach.
- Notification of schedule conflicts well in advance.
- Specific concerns regarding a coach's philosophy and/or expectations.

It is important to understand that there may also be times when things do not go the way you or your child may wish. **At these times, the athlete should approach the coach first to express his/her concerns.** Part of the education in athletics is being able to address concerns with the appropriate people. If a satisfactory understanding is not reached between the coach and student, then the parent may intervene on the student's behalf.

Appropriate concerns to discuss with coaches.

- The treatment of your child, mentally and physically.
- Ways to help your child improve.
- Concerns about your child's behavior.

Issues not appropriate to discuss with coaches.

- Playing time
- Team strategy
- Play calling
- Other athletes

### **Steps for Registering a Concern:**

#### **A. Step No. 1 - Direct Conversation:**

If a parent (complainant) has a disagreement or misunderstanding with a coach, the complainant should address the concern to the specific coach directly involved with the circumstances surrounding the concern. The coach will meet with the parent as soon as possible, but in no case longer than five calendar days after the coach has been notified of the concern (subject to change by mutual agreement).

**Please do not attempt to confront a coach before or after a contest or practice. These can be emotional times for both the parent and the coach. Meetings of this nature do not promote resolution.**

If your concern is with a sub-varsity coach, start with the source. The next level of communication than would be with the varsity coach for the sport/program.

#### **B. Step No. 2 - Fact and Possible Resolution:**

If the complainant or the coach is not satisfied with the outcome of Step No. 1, or the complainant or coach is unwilling to meet independent of an administrator, a meeting with the coach and/or athletic director and complainant will be arranged at a mutually convenient time, but in no case

more than five calendar days after the meeting in Step No. 1. This step is to be informal and verbal. No further action will be taken beyond Step No. 2 unless the complainant submits in writing a signed and dated statement of facts giving rise to this concern, the name of the coach involved and the remedy sought.

**C. Step No. 3 - Formal Process:**

If a complainant's concern is not satisfactorily resolved at either the first or second-level, the complainant should then refer this concern to the principal in writing. At that time, another meeting will be arranged at the convenience of the complainant and coach directly concerned, but in no case more than ten calendar days (subject to change by mutual agreement). The coach has the right to be at all meetings with or without a representative as he/she so determines.

**D. Dispositions:**

Dispositions at Step 3 will be sent in writing to all parties within ten calendar days of the meeting with reasons stated.

**E. Decision:**

The decision of the principal is considered final. Students will be further informed that participation in interscholastic sports is a privilege and not a right, and that they may be prohibited from all or part of their participation in such activities by authorized school personnel without further notice, hearing and/or appeal rights.

Whenever a complaint is made directly to the Board as a whole, a Board member as an individual, the Superintendent, Principal, or other administrator, it will be referred to the appropriate building administrator. A coach who is the object of a complaint will be informed promptly.

## **VI. Requirements for Participation**

As a student-athlete enrolled in Little Miami Schools, you are not eligible to participate in any sport until the following items have been completed. Also, these items must be maintained during the calendar year regardless of the sport season for continued participation.

- OHSAA Pre-participation Physical Evaluation Form: *Download and print form from Final Forms and have physician complete and submit to coach or Athletic office.*

**Complete the athlete and parent/guardian's registration through Final Forms (must be separate email addresses).**

Once the registration is complete for both the athlete and parent/guardian, both must review, complete, and electronically sign all forms listed on Final Forms. The forms are originally highlighted in red, they become yellow when one party has signed, and green when both parties have signed.

## **VII. Academic Eligibility Requirements**

### **Little Miami High School Academic Eligibility Requirements**

To be academically eligible to participate in interscholastic athletics at Little Miami High School, all student-athletes are required to meet academic standards. If a student is to be eligible to participate in athletics including cheerleading during any nine-week grading period, he/she must have:

- Attended school the preceding nine weeks

- Met the operational standards of the Ohio High School Athletic Association (OHSAA) for academic eligibility
- Met the standards set forth by the Board

Board standards are as follows:

- Students are ineligible if they have not met the adopted OHSAA eligibility standards.
- Quarterly Preparticipation GPA Standard: As a condition for the privilege of participating in interscholastic extracurricular activities, a student must have maintained a minimum grade point average of a 1.0 on a 4.0 scale.

All high school student-athletes must meet the O.H.S.A.A. academic requirement, which states that the athlete is required to have passed the equivalent of five credits toward graduation the preceding grading period to participate the following grading period. Physical Education (PE I), Physical Education II (PE II), Fitness & Conditioning, Yoga and Mindfulness, and Kinesiology do not count as one of the five credits.

Any change in O.H.S.A.A. eligibility status for a student-athlete becomes effective on the start of the fifth school day after the end of the grading period.

A student enrolled in the first grading period after advancement from the eighth grade must have passed a minimum of four of all subjects carried the preceding grading period in which the student was enrolled.

All fall athletes will qualify academically by their grade performance in the last nine-week grading period of the preceding school year. Athletes cannot re-establish athletic eligibility by taking coursework in summer school.

**Incomplete or "I" grade mark(s) found on a student-athletes grade card in a preparticipation athletic eligibility audit (Hardship/Incomplete)**

When the Athletic Department conducts a preparticipation athletic eligibility audit for an upcoming season/quarter, and they find a grade mark deemed an "incomplete" or "I" issued to a student in a preceding quarter by a given instructor, the following information refers to guidance for managing this situation:

- Incompletes cannot count towards assisting a student in meeting the (5) five credit standard, but that an application for an exception can be made to the OHSAA if an incomplete is given for listed reasons: Calamity Day(s), family tragedy, illness or accident as verified by a physician. This application is listed on the OHSAA website and needs to be filed and approved to reinstate a student-athlete for upcoming athletic participation when this situation persists.

**Class Credit Weight to Consider When Registering for Classes**

Below are classes at Little Miami High School which do not count towards the athletic eligibility equation.

No Credit:

- Physical Education (PE I), Physical Education II (PE II), Fitness & Conditioning, Yoga and Mindfulness, and Kinesiology.

Double-Weight Credit:

- Digital Media Arts I (DM I), Digital Media Arts II (DM II), Senior Internship, and Work-Based Learning.

Nontraditional Students:

- Whether the student is home-schooled; is attending a Community, STEM or non-public school as a non-enrolled student; taking an online credit recovery course; is attending the Career Center, is enrolled in College Credit Plus; is taking Credit flex courses; or any of the other myriad

options for students, the school administrator (athletic director) must receive a written accounting of the grades received or evidence of passing the requisite five one credit courses or the equivalent when the grading period of the member school at which the student is seeking eligibility ends for both OHSAA and LMSD compliance. The LMSD Board of Education approved District Academic Calendar will be the guideline for these yearly dates.

### **Little Miami Middle School Academic Eligibility Requirements**

To be academically eligible to compete in interscholastic athletics at LMMS, all LMMS student-athletes must meet the O.H.S.A.A. academic requirements, which state:

- A student enrolling in the seventh grade for the first time will be eligible for the first grading period regardless of previous academic achievement. Thereafter, to be eligible, a student in grade 7 or 8 must be currently enrolled in school the immediately preceding grading period and received passing grades during that grading period in a minimum of four of those subjects in which the student received grades.
- Consequence: If the student fails to meet the O.H.S.A.A. academic requirement of passing a minimum of four of the subjects in which they were enrolled, the student will be ruled ineligible to compete in interscholastic athletics for the duration of the next grading period. (O.H.S.A.A. Policy)

All fall athletes will qualify academically by their grade performance in the last nine-week grading period of the preceding school year. Athletes cannot re-establish athletic eligibility by taking coursework in summer school.

## **VIII. Financial Obligations**

Pay-to-participate fees must be paid at the pre-season participation meeting, either by credit card on Final Forms prior to the meeting or by check made out to: Little Miami Schools and submitted to athletic department or coach.

One hundred percent of the pay-to-participate fee will be collected at this time unless a payment plan is in place with the athletic department prior to the start of the season.

Should you feel that your family has met the Little Miami Family Cap you must complete the form on Final Forms and turn it into the Athletic office PRIOR to the sport season for review. The Athletic office will let you know if anything is owed.

Parents and students are advised that payment does not automatically ensure playing/participation time. Playing time will always be up to the discretion of the coach.

### **Guidelines and Procedures for Refunding of Fees**

The following guidelines and procedures for refunding/reimbursing fees will be utilized to administer the "Pay to Participate" program:

#### **Athlete Quits/Dismissed**

- No refund will be issued if a student quits an activity.
- No refund will be given if a student is dismissed from an activity.

#### **Eligibility**

- Refunds will only be issued if a student is deemed academically ineligible prior to the first scrimmage of the season

#### **Injury**

- 100% of the pay to participate fee will be returned if a student incurs a season ending injury prior to the start of scheduled contests.

## IX. Equipment and Uniform Responsibilities

As an athlete participating in interscholastic athletics at Little Miami, you have the following responsibilities concerning school issued uniform and equipment items:

- Equipment issued to a student athlete is to be worn only at scheduled games or practice sessions involving that sport. Game jerseys or parts of the uniform may be worn at school or school functions at the direction of the coach.
- It is extremely important that your equipment provides you with the protection for which it was designed. It is your responsibility to periodically examine your equipment for damage. Damaged equipment must be repaired before you compete or practice. Bring all your equipment problems immediately to the attention of your coach for resolution.
- Your equipment and uniform are issued to you alone. You are responsible for the security of these items. Equipment or uniform items that are lost or stolen are your financial responsibility. Athletes will be placed on the student fine list and report cards withheld until restitution is made to the athletic department.
- At the end of the sport season, equipment issued to a student athlete must be turned in or paid for if destroyed, lost, or stolen. The student athlete must pay the total replacement cost for the destroyed, lost, or stolen item(s).
- Care should be exercised when laundering uniforms. Read manufacturer's label for washing instructions. At the completion of your season, please launder all school issued practice and game uniforms prior to off-season storage.
- Any athlete who has NOT returned to school issued equipment or uniforms will not receive their athletic awards until this is completed.
- Athletes will NOT be permitted to begin another sport season (the official practice start date) until all school issued equipment and uniforms are returned. In addition, an athlete will not be able to begin another sport season if restitution has not been made for any lost or damaged equipment. This can be accomplished by paying for the lost or damaged equipment or establishing and sticking to a payment plan for the equipment with the athletic office.

## X. Other Athletic Department Policies

**McKinney-Vento Act:** Under the McKinney-Vento Act, every local educational agency is required to designate a liaison for homeless children and youth. The local educational agency liaison coordinates services to ensure that homeless children and youths enroll in school and have the opportunity to succeed academically.

Homeless Local Liaison: Marla Timmerman ([mtimmerman@msdoh.org](mailto:mtimmerman@msdoh.org)) 513-899-2264  
Foster Care Local Liaison: Marla Timmerman ([mtimmerman@msdoh.org](mailto:mtimmerman@msdoh.org)) 513-899-2264

### Travel

All athletic participants or those associated with the activities are required to ride transportation provided by the school district to and from all contests or events. The only exceptions are for an emergency or special circumstance when written permission is received by the coach in advance from the parent/guardian in person, for the student to be released to their legal guardian. No student is permitted to drive unless there are extenuating circumstances. The athletic participant is expected to exemplify good manners while traveling with the group. This includes all bus conduct in accordance with state codes of transportation. Exceptions to this policy must have the approval of the principal or designee. Violations of this rule may result in loss of playing time for the athlete.

### **Overnight and Out of State Travel**

All school sponsored athletic travel which is outside of the State of Ohio (exemptions can be determined by administration if the travel is to a “bordering state” and within compliance of the OHSAA), or an overnight trip, will require Board of Education approval. With that, Board approved coaches and/or staff leading the trip must complete the “Field Trip Guide: Specialty Events and Tournaments, Overnight and Out-of-State Trips Guide, along with the “Proposal for Overnight Student Trips (Administrative Approval Form)” and return them to administration for review and nomination to the Board of Education for approval within the framework of the policy and prior to trip execution.

### **Student conduct on District Managed Transportation**

The following regulations pertain to student conduct on District managed transportation and are intended to ensure the safety and welfare of the students, the driver and other drivers on the road and to ensure safety and proper maintenance of school vehicles.

#### **Students will:**

- be careful in approaching bus stops, walk on the left facing oncoming traffic, be sure that the road is clear both ways before crossing the highway and wait in a location clear of traffic
- arrive at the bus stop before the bus is scheduled to arrive in order to permit the bus to follow the time schedule
- wait in an area clear of traffic and refrain from exhibiting behavior at the bus stop that threatens life, limb or property of any individual
- sit in assigned seats (drivers have the right to assign a student to a seat);
- go directly to their assigned seat without disturbing or crowding other students and remain seated while the vehicle is moving;  
observe classroom conduct, or the bus conduct established by administrators and transportation personnel and obey the driver promptly and respectfully;
- keep the vehicle clean and free of trip hazards);
- refrain from eating and drinking on the bus except as required for medical reasons or as permitted by the District for non-routine trips when supervised by an appropriate chaperone, school administrator or school personnel;
- refrain from using profane language and from loud talking or laughing (unnecessary confusion diverts the driver’s attention and might result in a serious accident);
- remain seated keeping aisles and exits clear, keep head, arms and hands inside the vehicle at all times and not throw or pass objects on, from or into the vehicle;
- be courteous to fellow students and to the driver;
- treat equipment as one would treat valuable furniture in their home (damage to the school vehicle is strictly forbidden);
- refrain from using nicotine products on the vehicle or possessing alcohol or drugs on the vehicle except as prescription medications may be required for a student and carry on the vehicle only items that can be held in their laps or can otherwise be stored on the vehicle in accordance with State law.
- Students must remain seated until the vehicle stops, then promptly unload and wait in their designated place of safety until the vehicle leaves. Students who must cross the street to reach the residence side of the street must wait for the signal from the driver and cross in front of the vehicle after also checking for traffic themselves.
- Failure of a student to follow these regulations may result in his/her forfeiting the right of transportation on District managed transportation.

### **Discipline**

The Board authorizes the Superintendent or other administrators to suspend a student from transportation privileges only for a period of up to one school year. The only due process required is notifying the student



of an intended bus riding suspension and an opportunity to appear before the administrator considering the suspension before it happens. The administrator's decision is final.

When discipline problems with individual students arise, use the following guidelines.

If possible, the driver should resolve the problem.

When the driver is unable to resolve the problem, he/she should report it to the transportation supervisor. The transportation supervisor and driver, if necessary, confer with the principal. Any discipline is imposed by the principal of the school.

Problems that cannot be resolved by measures specified above are referred to the Superintendent.

The suspension of preschool students and students with disabilities from transportation may require a modification of these procedures and complies with all applicable statutory requirements.

**NOTE:** *It is advisable that regulations in the area of student transportation bear the Board's official stamp of approval.*

***Adopted by Little Miami Board of Education  
April 26, 2022***

### **Attendance**

Attendance and punctuality are essential for an athlete to receive maximum benefit from his/her participation in interscholastic athletics.

### **Attendance at school**

To be eligible to participate in an interscholastic event or practice, an athlete must be at school the ½ day of the event or practice. Exceptions to the rule are only for unavoidable appointments such as doctor, dentist, optometrist, and other such commitments. These appointments require one day's advance notice, unless for an emergency, to the attendance office. Exceptions to attendance will be dealt with at the discretion of the principal or his/her designee. Documentation of any absence must be submitted to the attendance office the day after the absence. An athlete who is absent from school on Friday with an excused absence, as defined by the Little Miami HS Student Handbook, may compete in Saturday competitions.

### **Attendance at practices**

Absence from practice may cause the athlete to miss necessary preparation for an upcoming contest. This could result in non-participation in that contest.

- **Excused absence:** An excused absence requires advance written notice from the athlete to the appropriate coach. The reason for the absence must be considered unavoidable if the coach is to consider it an excused absence. It is understood that sudden illness and emergency situations do occur from time to time. Exceptions will be dealt with at the discretion of the appropriate coach. The Athletic Director/Principal will have the final say in all issues regarding excused absences.
- **Unexcused absence:** An unexcused absence is any absence not falling into the excused category. First unexcused absence will result in denial of participation in the next interscholastic event. Second unexcused absence will result in denial of participation in the next two interscholastic events. The third unexcused absence will result in denial of participation the remainder of the interscholastic athletic season.

### **Attendance at interscholastic contests (including weekends)**

- **Excused absence:** An excused absence requires advance written notice from the athlete to the appropriate coach. The reason for the absence must be considered unavoidable if the coach is to consider it an excused absence. It is understood that sudden illness and emergency situations do occur from time to time. Exceptions will be dealt with at the discretion of the appropriate coach. The Athletic Director/Principal will have the final say in all issues regarding excused absences.
- **Unexcused absence:** An unexcused absence is any absence not falling into the excused category. First unexcused absence will result in denial of participation in the next two interscholastic events. Second unexcused absence will result in denial of participation the remainder of the interscholastic athletic season.

### **Vacations/Holidays**

Vacations by athletes during their sports season are discouraged. Those wishing to schedule a vacation during a sports season need to evaluate the commitment necessary to participate on an interscholastic athletic team. If an athlete does plan to go on a family vacation with a parent/guardian/custodian or is attending a school-related activity during a school recess, advance notice must be given the appropriate coach by the first day of official team practice. Any missed contests or practices due to vacation will subject the student to possible disciplinary action at the coach's discretion.

- **Unexcused absence:** Not going with a parent/guardian/custodian or with a school-related group is an unexcused absence. If the athlete wishes to continue participation, he/she will be denied participation immediately upon return in a minimum of two interscholastic athletic contests. If more than two interscholastic events are missed due to this absence, participation for the remainder of the interscholastic season will be denied.

### **Treatment of Facilities**

Students are expected to leave Little Miami and other schools' facilities clean and free of damage, including fields, meeting spaces, gymnasiums, the weight room, and locker rooms.

### **Weight Room/Facility Usage**

Only current Little Miami Schools students, student-athletes, and staff are permitted use of the Weight Room facility at the High School. Additionally, former Little Miami Schools student-athletes that are seeking facility usage (this excludes the Weight Room) to train while participating at a higher level (collegiate/professional) of sport, must contact administration for approval and access.

### **Athletic Attire**

Athletes are expected to dress appropriately for any contest, either home or away. Coaches will inform team members of specific requirements. Proper attire must be worn during practice, as well. This means, specifically, that full-length shirts must be worn on campus at all times.

### **Social Media Policy**

Little Miami School District recognizes and supports its students' right to freedom of speech and expression, including the use of social networks. However, students are expected to conduct themselves in a way that exhibits respect. The Board has zero tolerance of violent, disruptive, harassing, intimidating, bullying or any other inappropriate behavior by its students.

Students are subject to discipline, as outlined in the Student Code of Conduct, for misbehavior that occurs off school property when the misbehavior endangers the health and safety of students within the District or adversely affects the education process. Negative or inappropriate social media postings can have a disruptive impact on the morale, success, and overall experience of the team. Each student-athlete is expected to portray themselves, their teams, and their high school in a positive manner at all times.

Content posted online that is unsportsmanlike, derogatory, demeaning or threatening toward any other individual or entity (examples: derogatory comments regarding another institution; taunting comments aimed at a student-athlete, coach, team at another institution, and derogatory comments against race and/or gender) is prohibited. The Board directs the administration to make all students aware of the Student Code of Conduct and the fact that any violations of the Student Code of Conduct are punishable.

### **Athlete Activity Termination**

When an athlete quits a sport activity prior to the conclusion of the sport season, the student must obtain written permission from the coach/advisor before permission will be granted to join another sport in that same season. If permission is granted, participation may not begin in the new sport until all obligations to the previous sport have been met.

### **Conflicts in Extracurricular Activities**

An individual attempting to participate in too many extracurricular activities or trying to work, undoubtedly, will be in a position of a conflict of obligations. The Athletic Department recognizes that each student-athlete should have the opportunity for a broad range of experiences in extracurricular activities: and to this end, will attempt to schedule events in a manner to minimize conflicts.

The student athlete has the responsibility to do everything they can to avoid continuous conflict. This should include being cautious about belonging to too many activities where conflicts are bound to occur. It also means notifying the activity sponsors immediately when a conflict does arise. When conflicts happen, it is up to the appropriate coach to determine resolution of the conflict and any consequences the athlete may incur.

### **Specialty Event Requests**

- Specialty events such as, but not limited to “Alumni Games,” “Boys verse Girls Games,” and “Powder Puff,” are not permitted.
- Sport scrimmages and/or practices etc. with patrons not of current high school student-athlete standing are not permitted.
- Administration has authority to evaluate and/or approve or deny any other specialty event request.

### **College Recruitment Policy**

In the event an athlete should be contacted personally by a college recruiter, he/she has an obligation to work through his/her coach and the athletic department. Inform your coach of such a contact as soon as possible. If college recruitment information is needed, please contact your coach or the athletic office.

### **NCAA Clearinghouse Information**

The NCAA has established a central clearinghouse to certify athlete’s eligibility for Division I and Division II. Here are the answers to questions that are frequently asked about what students need to do to participate in college sports under this process.

### **Why do I need to register and be certified?**

If you intend to participate in athletics at a Division I or II school as a freshman, you must be registered with and be certified as eligible by the NCAA Initial Eligibility Clearinghouse. Please note that initial eligibility certification pertains only to whether you meet NCAA requirements for participating in Division I or II athletics and has no bearing on your admission to a particular Division I or II institution.

### **When should I register?**

Students may register at any time, but it is recommended that they register during their junior year. The Eligibility Center will evaluate a student’s academic credentials once the following information has been received, and the student has had their status requested by an NCAA member institution

- Completed online registration

- Fee payment
- SAT or ACT test score
- High school transcript

**How do I register?**

Students will need to obtain registration materials from the high school guidance office or go to [www.eligibilitycenter.org](http://www.eligibilitycenter.org)

**Awards**

Awards are meant to signify notable accomplishments by athletes. The awards program appropriately recognizes athletes for their participation in interscholastic sports at each level of competition. The responsibility for determining the qualification for these and other special awards lies with the coaching staff of each specific sport and shall be included as the team rules provided at the beginning of the season.

**Freshman**

First Year: Numerals of graduating year.

**Junior Varsity**

First Year: Numerals of graduating year (If not received on a freshman team).

**Varsity**

First Year: Letter and pin (Sport specific)

Second Year: 4x6 Plaque

Third Year: 5x7 Plaque

Fourth Year: 8x10 Plaque

**Special Awards:** Predicated on head coach's postseason award submission. Total number of special awards will be determined in relation to roster size and Athletic Department approval.

**Academic Awards:** Based on preceding quarter.

ECC Standard: 3.5 GPA (Varsity only)

LM Standard: 3.0 (All levels)

All awards are based on recommendations from the varsity and/or subordinate level head coach. Each coach will determine whether an athlete has met standards that qualify for earning a varsity letter.