O'NEAL ATHLETICS HANDBOOK

Lance Stucky, Athletic Director

2024-2025

THE O'NEAL SCHOOL

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WELCOME TO O'NEAL ATHLETICS

To the Parents

Your son/daughter has indicated the desire to voluntarily participate in The O'Neal School Athletic program. The O'Neal School believes participation in athletics provides many opportunities to enhance spiritual, intellectual, and physical development, each an essential component of The O'Neal School's mission. Open lines of communication and a clear understanding between parents and the Athletic Department are vital to each athlete's success. Your interest and active participation in support of your student-athlete is, therefore, greatly appreciated.

The Athletic Department sets policies and procedures that govern the spirit of competition and uphold the traditions and standards of The O'Neal School. To be effective, these rules require broad support from parents, an objective requiring proactive communication. This handbook addresses that objective.

We ask that you read this policy thoroughly with your student-athlete(s).

To the Athlete

Being a member of The O'Neal School Program is a privilege. Participation carries certain responsibilities on and off the field and courts, and on and off campus. A great athletic tradition is built by the hard work of many people over many years. You are a valued part of continuing to build a wonderful tradition, a tradition you are challenged to uphold. We ask that you read this policy thoroughly with your parents.

From the Athletic Department

The Athletic Department uses The O'Neal School website (www.onealschool.org) for all communication. Communication includes scheduled and rescheduled games and game times, transportation information, and practice changes. Please check the website on a regular basis. The coaches and the athletic director are responsible for maintaining and updating the athletic website. It is the parents' and the students' responsibility to regularly monitor these updates.

In addition, each coach pledges to adhere to the athletic (school and conference) rules and regulations and shall do his/her utmost best to develop each player's ability to his/her potential on (and off) the field and courts. This includes teaching the fundamentals of each sport to enable the player the best chance of success and striving to be fair in the assessment of a player's ability to contribute to the team. We will not only try to develop the student-athlete physically but will try to strengthen his/her character as well.

MISSION

The O'Neal School is a college preparatory school dedicated to the development of academic excellence, strength of character, and physical well-being of its students in an environment where integrity, self-discipline, and consideration for others are fundamental.

CORE COVENANTS

Athletics are an extension of our school's mission. Athletics help us grow as student-athletes.

WE ARE DEDICATED, DETERMINED AND DISCIPLINED

As a student-athlete and member of a team, I will…

- Uphold a positive attitude
- Be coachable
- Be accountable
- Strive for excellence
- Display proper sportsmanship
- Demonstrate strong character and highly ethical behavior
- Respect other team members, coaches, officials, and opponents
- Practice patience

As a parent of a student-athlete, I will…

- Support my student-athlete and the team as needed
- Encourage my student-athlete to advocate for him/herself
- Refrain from coaching and commit to supporting
- Plan for and support my student-athlete's attendance to all practices and events with his/her team for the duration of the season
- Recognize athletics are an extension of O'Neal's mission

Student-Athlete _____

Parent _____

Date _____

Dedicated (to the team)
Driven (to a common goal)
Disciplined (in our approach)

GENERAL INFORMATION

Academic Credit

The O'Neal School requires each student to earn Physical Education credits for graduation. Please refer to the student handbook for details.

Admissions Fees

Admission to regular contests is free to The Falcon Club members, Students, Faculty and Staff.

Fees are required of all other spectators to help cover the cost of individual game management such as officials, and maintenance.

Regular Season and SAC Tournament Game Fees: (Varsity and JV)

Adults $8.00

Students $5.00

Regular Season/SEMSAC Tournament Game Fees: (Middle School Games)

Adults $5.00

Students $2.00

NCISAA State Championships:

Depends on the sport: Please check the NCISAA.org site

Please note: Conference and State Tournament games are not covered by The Falcon Club Membership

ATHLETIC ORGANIZATIONS

National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA)

All student-athletes expecting to participate in NCAA Athletics must meet freshman eligibility standards established by the NCAA Eligibility Center.

Playing in college can be a rewarding experience. It can also be a challenging one where the students involved must be responsible and pro-active in gathering the information they need to try out and participate. To play athletics in college, especially a Division I or II school, the student-athlete needs to fill out a core class worksheet and register with the NCAA Eligibility Center online at www.NCAA.Eligibilitycenter.org

NCAA Athletic Scholarship Information:

Seminars are held across the country for student-athletes and their parents to explain the procedure for obtaining an athletic scholarship. The NCAA Guide for the College-Bound student-athlete is available online at www.ncaa.org

North Carolina Independent Schools Athletic Association (NCISAA)

The O'Neal School is a member of the NCISSA. There are approximately 90+ schools in the association which is divided into four sections; 1A-(0-100) high school students. 2A (101-200), 3A (201-300) and 4A (301 and above). Presently, The O'Neal School is competing in the 2A division where we have been since the 2001-02 school year.

SAC/SEMSAC Conference

The O'Neal School's Varsity and JV teams are members of the Sandhills Athletic Conference (SAC).

SAC Member Schools: The O'Neal School, Berean Baptist Academy, Fayetteville Christian School, Northwood Temple Academy, Freedom Christian Academy, Trinity Christian School, Village Christian Academy.

Middle School teams are members of the South East Middle School Athletic Conference (SEMSAC).

SEMSAC Member Schools: Berean Baptist, Fayetteville Academy, Fayetteville Christian School, Freedom Christian School, Liberty Christian, Northwood Temple Academy, Saint John Paul II, St. Patrick's School, The O'Neal School, Village Christian School, Sandhills Classical Christian School and Cape Fear Christian Academy.

NCISAA ELIGIBILITY

Enrolled in grades 7-12.

Individual conferences have the right to further restrict eligibility.

In addition, no player shall have reached his/her 19th birthday on or on or before August 1, of the current year.

The player must be a full-time student. The student must be successfully progressing toward graduation with the expectation of meeting all graduation requirements.

Academic Eligibility

The O'Neal School hopes that participation in our athletic program will enhance the athletes' overall experience while at the school. Participation in athletics does not lessen a student's academic responsibility. Part of being a student-athlete is learning to balance the load between academics and athletics. The time commitment involved in many of our programs is considerable. Students need to budget their time, sharpen their study skills, and fulfill the responsibility to their team and academics.

Athletes traveling to an away game should turn in homework and get assignments for the next day before leaving school. They are expected to be fully prepared for all class activities the next day, including tests.

Students must be signed into school by 10:10 am to participate in an athletic event or other extracurricular activity. (Medical appointments are the exception to this stipulation.)

If a case arises where a student's Division Head, Teacher, Parent and/or Coach feel it would be beneficial for the student to restrict their involvement in games and/or practice for academic reasons, it will be arranged for a period of time without penalty. Students must maintain a minimum GPA of 2.0 to participate in games and practices. By using this policy, decisions will be made to suit what is best for the student.

NCISAA Ejection Policy

If any player is ejected from any contest, they will not be allowed to participate in the next scheduled contest but may sit on the bench. If any NCISAA coach is ejected from any contest, they may not attend the next scheduled contest. If the same player is ejected a second time from any contest, they will not be allowed to participate in the next two scheduled contests but may sit on the bench. If the same player is ejected from any contest for a third time, they will not be able to participate in or attend any sport until the beginning of the next school year.

Penalties are cumulative from sport to sport and from sport season to sport season, but not academic year to academic year. Ejections in the last game of the season carry over to the next sports season in

which the individual participates that year. Conferences may choose to enforce a more stringent code of conduct into this rule.

The athletic department recognizes that hazing, harassment, sexual or otherwise, and/or bullying of students and staff is abusive and illegal behavior that harms victims and negatively impacts the school culture. We further recognize that preventing and remedying hazing, harassment, and/or bullying in schools is essential to ensure a healthy, nondiscriminatory environment in which students can learn and employees can work productively.

We are committed to providing an educational and working environment that promotes respect, dignity, and equality and that is free from all forms of harassment. To this end, we strictly prohibit all forms of hazing, harassment, and/or bullying on school grounds, school buses and at all school-sponsored activities, programs and events including those that take place at locations outside the district.

Any form of hazing, bullying or harassment is unacceptable and may result in suspension or dismissal from the team.

HAZING: Any actions involving harassment, abuse, or humiliation of a member of an O'Neal Student Athlete at any level.

BULLYING: The intentional act of aggression that is meant to harm a person either physically or psychologically.

HARASSMENT: Unwelcome advances, conduct that is intimidating, hostile or offensive.

TEAMS AND SEASONS

Fall Sports

Boys

Varsity Soccer: Kyle Kegl, Adam Bennett

Varsity Cross Country: Wendy Hodges, Earle Poole

MS Soccer: David Williamson, Danielle Worley

MS Cross Country: Kim Tauch, Ginger Monroe, Jordan Bates

Girls

Varsity Cross Country: Wendy Hodges, Earle Poole

Varsity Volleyball: Jill Faxon, Vicki Howard

MS Volleyball: Sarah Freeman and Paula Alonso

Varsity Tennis: Tom Switzer and Ashley Harless

Varsity Golf: Veronica Karaman

Winter Sports

Boys

MS Swimming: Tracie Marino

Varsity Swimming: Jen Schmitz, Daniel Hubbard

Varsity Basketball: Najee Fitzgerald, James Lindsey, DeShawn Brown

MS Basketball: Desirae Gainey, Casey Harrell, Kyle Kegl

Co-Ed

MS Cheer: Shanna Campbell

Girls

MS Swimming: Tracie Marino

Varsity Swimming: Jen Schmitz, Daniel Hubbard

Varsity Basketball: Donna Taylor, Lee Bowe

MS Basketball: Jill Faxon, Jenell Copeland, Jen Hamner

Spring Sports

Boys

MS Baseball: Roman Tapia, Najee Fitzgerald, Casey Harrell

Varsity Baseball: Casey Harrell, Tyler Beyer, Roman Tapia

Varsity Tennis: Tom Switzer and Christine Fecteau

Varsity Golf:

MS Golf: John Wainwright and Jill Faxon

Track and Field: Mason Kinn, Wendy Hodges, Jordan Bates, James Lindsey, Lance Stucky, Mike Fager

Girls

Varsity Soccer: Kyle Kegl, Owen Gemmer, Jen Hamner

Track and Field: Mason Kinn, Wendy Hodges, Jordan Bates, James Lindsey, Lance Stucky, Mike Fager

MS Soccer: David Williamson and Danielle Worley

MS Golf: John Wainwright and Jill Faxon

O'NEAL ATHLETICS POLICIES

Accidents/Injuries

All injuries must be reported the Athletic Director and Head Coach immediately!

The O'Neal offers a secondary coverage. Claims must first be submitted to the parent or guardian's primary insurance carrier. An accident report must be on file within 72 hours with the business office. (Katie Wolff, ext. 128)

Part A: School report must be completed by the Head Coach.

Part B: "Statement of Parent or Guardian" must be completed by the student's legal guardian. The benefit period for eligible expenses is 52 weeks from the date of the accident, except dental, which is 104 weeks.

Athletic Levels

Middle School

Middle School teams are comprised of students grades sixth through eighth depending on the sport. Rosters may be limited at the school's discretion to coachable numbers in all Middle School sports. Middle School Teams sponsored are volleyball, baseball, boys' and girls' basketball, boys' and girls' soccer, co-ed golf, and co-ed swim.

In addition, seventh and eighth graders may try out for Junior Varsity and Varsity team sports.

The O'Neal School believes that in most cases it is in the best interest of sixth and seventh-grade students to play on a Middle School team when provided.

Junior Varsity

As The O'Neal School grows; we will try to develop Junior Varsity programs as dictated by student demands. Depending on the sport, Junior Varsity teams may be comprised of Middle School (seventh and eighth) and/or Upper School students (ninth through eleventh). The Junior Varsity teams as with Middle School teams may have roster limitations.

Varsity

At the Varsity level, the commitment is to put the best teams possible on the field, court, or in the pool. The Varsity teams may have roster limitations when appropriate and will be comprised of student-athletes in grades nine through 12, with participation exceptions indicated below.

When Varsity teams lack numbers due to illness, injury, or attrition, coaches may request players from our Junior Varsity Teams to help fill the roster. These requests must be approved by the Athletic Director and the players parents.

Those seventh and eighth grade students who wish to try out for Varsity teams, must be major contributing players to participate and will be discussed on an individual basis. Student-athletes who do not succeed in earning a varsity roster position will have the opportunity to participate on Middle School or JV teams where applicable.

Varsity teams in the fall season typically begin practice on or around August 1. For winter sports, on or around October 31. Spring sports begin on or around February 20. All candidates for these teams are expected to be enrolled in school and completed pre-participation forms in the Athletic Office and be present on the first day of practice. Any conflicts should be cleared with the coach before that day. Failure to do so may diminish their chance to play that season.

Awards

Each varsity athlete who completes the season in good standing will receive a varsity letter and sport pin in their first year. Every succeeding year they will receive a service bar. Additional honors may come from All-Conference and All-State selections.

Communication Plan

A vital component of The O'Neal School's athletic experience is empowering our student-athletes with self-advocacy tools that will help them in life after O'Neal. With that in mind, the following communication plan has been established. This provides consistent opportunities for our student-athletes to learn and engage in the process of self-advocacy when questions and/or issues arise related to their student-athlete experience.

Step 1 - student-athletes need to approach their coach and discuss their questions student-athlete - to - coach. We ask our student-athletes to try to work through questions and try to find a solution themselves.

Step 2 - IF the problem persists, the parent/guardian AND student-athlete work together with the coach to find a solution – understanding, that the student-athlete continues to be the person asking the questions.

Step 3 - The Athletic Director can help find a solution after step 1 and step 2 have been attempted. The coach, athlete, and parent will be involved in such a meeting so we can help our student-athletes to our fullest – understanding, that the student-athlete continues to be the person asking the questions.

Equipment and Uniforms/Dress Code

Each student-athlete is responsible for his or her equipment and uniforms. Uniforms should be washed in cold water and hung up to dry or dried on a gentle warm or cool air cycle. Absolutely no fabric softener should be used. Student-athletes will be charged the full replacement cost for any uniform lost or damaged.

*Personal Equipment: Athletes may incur the cost of warm-ups, team shoes, etc. Coaches must notify the Athletic Director and parents of their request in writing before any order is submitted.

Dress for all away games will be neat and casual. No blue jeans, t-shirts, cut-off shorts, etc. Some teams may choose to dress in their uniforms or warm-ups before leaving.

Inclement Weather

In the event of a school closing due to inclement weather, all practices and games shall be cancelled. On days where there is heavy rain or snow and school is in session, cancellations or changes to the schedule/locations will be communicated by the coach or by the athletic department.

Off-Season

Off-season skill development sessions are allowed in accordance with NCISAA Guidelines. These workouts may be done during "non-dead" periods.

Parent-Coach Relationships

Parents and coaches should make every effort to communicate often and properly with each other. A positive collaborative relationship between parents and coaches is obviously in the best interest of the student-athlete and the team's success.

Please follow our *Communication Plan* if questions of issues arise in your respective sport.

Physical Exam

Every student athlete must have completed the pre-participation process on Healthy Roster before they can participate on a school athletic team. A sports physical exam completed by a certified physician and a baseline concussion assessment is part of the pre-participation process.

Selection of Teams and Expectations of Athletes

At the Middle School level (6th, 7th, and 8th) our teams and number of participants varies in size from year to year and sport to sport. Team sizes may be limited, and tryouts will determine who earns opportunities to participate. We cannot guarantee participants who try out for athletics will automatically make a team.

Junior Varsity teams are composed of students in grades seventh through twelfth depending on the sport.

Varsity teams are composed of students in grades seventh through twelfth depending on the sport. Due to the specialized and individual nature of some sports, (examples: swimming, tennis, golf, and cross-country), a seventh or eighth-grader may participate on the varsity level. Decisions regarding the placement of younger athletes on other varsity teams will be based on what is the best interest of the individual athletes and also the needs of the program/sport in that particular year and varies year to year.

Varsity athletes are allowed a "one-week" window to try a sport. If the student decides to quit a sport during the "one week" grace period, the student may try out for another sport. The student must join the new sport by the next school day.

Students are required to be in attendance and practices and contests when the season begins.

At all levels, it is the coach's responsibility to determine who will play and how much they play in game competition. Students should fully understand that by joining a team they are accepting the pleasures and benefits of responsibility and commitment to that team and agree to O'Neal Athletic Department's **Core Covenants. Students who compromise the Core Covenants could be removed from participation.**

Each coach is responsible for establishing guidelines and expectations for their team regarding practice, travel, etc. The O'Neal School general expectations for all athletes at all levels that are expected from the coaching staff are:

- Punctuality and preparedness for all practices and games.
- Ongoing responsibility for academic work, particularly in cases where classes are missed for game participation.
- Dedication to their team and teammates. Athletes choosing to play an additional sport outside of the school during the same season are expected to honor the school's practice and game schedule first. Dedication to the practice schedule includes early August for fall sports, winter break for our winter sports and the second week of spring break for our spring sports.
- Desire to improve skills and knowledge of the sport(s).
- Self-discipline: athletes will have to sacrifice time and energy for team goals.
- A willingness to work hard and be attentive in practices.
- Ongoing responsibility to represent The O'Neal School always in a dignified and positive way.
- Sportsmanship before, during and after games; win with class; lose with class.

Student-athlete will conduct himself/herself according to The O'Neal School Handbook's rules and procedures. All athletes will display a positive attitude, good sportsmanship, and respect toward their coaches, fellow team members, and opponents. A conference may be called, and disciplinary action taken if an athlete has been disrespectful to teachers, coaches, teammates, classmates, opponents, or spectators.

The O'Neal School Expectations of Coaches

Athletic Staff: The O'Neal School coaches have done an outstanding job of fielding competitive teams both in the conference and state level. The O'Neal Athletic Program has been awarded the Wachovia Cup, now called the Wells Fargo Cup, for 1991, '93,'94, '95, '96, '97, '00, '01, '19, 21, and 2023 for being the most successful athletic program in 1A and 2A State Independent School competitions. Our coaching staff is made up of faculty and non-faculty coaches.

At The O'Neal School, the title "Coach" is one that commands respect both on and off the field, court, or pool. Coaching is an awesome responsibility. At The O'Neal School, we try to provide a coaching staff that is knowledgeable and effective, and has both the team and its individual member's best interest at heart.

A coach is a teacher first. All good teachers are concerned that their students are prepared and perform well. Coaches have the additional opportunity of working with those, who along with the coach, choose to sacrifice time, effort, and energy in pursuit of excellence and team goals.

The O'Neal School Expectations of Parents

If a student-athlete has specific questions or concerns about a sport, the student-athlete should speak first to the Head Coach of that sport. This policy will allow the student-athlete to engage in the process of self-advocacy.

Please follow our Communication Plan if questions or issues continue.

In the event that a generous individual approaches a coach with the desire to make a monetary gift to a particular sports program and/or give an item to a particular sport the coach will refer the person to the Athletic Director. The Athletic Director will then confer with the Head of School and they will make a decision in this matter.

The O'Neal School Expectations of Student-Athletes

In general, participation in a sport at The O'Neal School is a privilege, and each participant must abide by the rules and guidelines in The O'Neal School Handbook and the Athletic Department's Core Covenants as well. Requirements may also include specific rules coaches have established concerning their specific sport.

If a student-athlete is in violation of School or Athletic Department Core Covenants, the Head Coach and Athletic Director will discuss the issue and a decision about discipline or continued participation will be made. The Head Coach and Athletic Director are the final authority in all decisions about participation in a particular sport. If continued participation is an issue, parents will be present to hear the decision. Student confidentiality will be respected, and the student-athlete will be informed in private to keep his/her dignity intact

Drugs, Alcohol, and Tobacco:

Drugs, Alcohol, and Tobacco will not be tolerated. Consequences for abuse of this rule may be found in the student handbook. Disciplinary action may also be taken at the discretion of the coach and administration team.

Profanity:

All players will refrain from using offensive language on and off the field and courts. If profanity becomes an issue, the coach will take disciplinary action as deemed necessary.

Conduct and Respect:

A student-athlete will conduct himself/herself according to The O'Neal School Handbook rules and procedures. All athletes will display a positive attitude and good sportsmanship toward fellow team members and opponents. Coaches and student-athletes should have mutual respect. Praise your opponents and play beyond your ability. Student-athletes must remember that they are not only representing themselves, but they are also representing The O'Neal School.

The coaches at The O'Neal School expect you to conduct yourself as a student-athlete. This means that you are to follow school rules and procedures while attending class, as well as on the field or court. You are to act properly in class, showing courtesy and respect to teachers, administrators, and classmates. A conference may be called, and disciplinary action may be taken if you have been disrespectful to coaches, teachers, opponents, sponsors, teammates, or classmates.

Attendance:

Student-athletes will not miss class, practice, or games and should always be on time. Make every attempt not to schedule appointments or discretionary trips during practice and game/match times. If an athlete must miss school due to an illness, an appointment, or a scheduled trip, make sure the coach is informed in advance.

* Athletes will not be disciplined for missing practice for legitimate, justified academic purposes. Understanding that this policy can be abused, the Athletic Director and the appropriate Division Heads will determine valid excuses. Head Coaches will always be flexible, especially if it pertains to the student's need for academic help. Students, coaches, and teachers will communicate and reach equitable decisions. Again, student-athletes are not to be disciplined for missing practice due to the need for academic assistance.

Committing to a sport:

If an athlete fails to complete an entire season of a sport, he/she may not receive credit for that sport and may not participate in another sport until the prior season has ended.

Transportation to Events

All student-athletes must travel with the team on transportation provided by the school. Arrangements can be made for those athletes who live outside Southern Pines. In such situations where an athlete will not be traveling with the team for any part or the entire trip, written permission must be given to the Athletic Director prior to the day of the contest.

*When teams play away, we adjust departure times to minimize loss of class time. Following the game, the team will usually stop to eat. At that time, the players will call their parents to let them know when the team will return. Parents are expected to be at the school when the team returns. When appropriate, students who live in Sanford and Troy will be dropped off there so their parents will not have to make the drive down to Southern Pines and back.

Two-Sport Participation

Student-athletes may typically participate in only one O'Neal-sponsored sport per season. However, exceptions occasionally do occur at the discretion of The O'Neal School's Athletic Department.

Student-athletes who wish to participate on outside teams while also playing on an O'Neal team are expected to honor the school's practice and game schedule over the outside activity.

The athletic guide is the combined effort of the Head of School, Division Heads, Athletic Director, and Coaches. It is our wish that this guide will communicate to parents and our student athletes, important information about our interscholastic athletic program.

As always, if there are any questions about our athletic program you can reach the Athletic Director at:

Lance Stucky

Director of Athletics & Transportation

lstucky@onealschool.org

910/692-6920 x-124