

# **LANIER COUNTY SCHOOLS**



## **2026-2027 ATHLETIC HANDBOOK**

**Lanier County Athletic Department**

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Dear Parents,

Participating in athletics provides numerous opportunities and experiences for students. We appreciate your child's interest in the athletic program and recognize the importance of parental support.

A well organized, properly controlled sports program promotes physical, mental, and emotional growth. It is the responsibility of the Lanier County Athletic Department to create standards that govern interscholastic competition. These standards require community support, achieved only through strong parental, student, and athletic department communication.

## **I. PHILOSOPHY**

A primary goal of the athletic program for Lanier County Schools is to provide a variety of student athletic opportunities intended to enhance individual preparation for the future. The interscholastic athletic program shall be conducted in accordance with existing GHSA and Lanier County Board of Education policies, including the rules and regulations outlined in the Lanier County High School and Lanier County Middle School handbooks. It is recognized that community values include good sportsmanship, teamwork, success, and the overall mental and physical development of the individual student athlete. At all times the athletic program must be conducted in such a way so as to justify it as an educational activity.

## **II. OBJECTIVES**

1. TEAMWORK – To learn the importance of teamwork, requiring self discipline, respect for authority, and the spirit of hard work and sacrifice. To give priority to the accomplishment of team vs. personal objectives.
2. ENJOYMENT – To encourage personal satisfaction resulting from participation.
3. SPORTSMANSHIP – To accept success and defeat, while striving toward best efforts regardless of the outcome.
4. PHYSICAL/ATHLETIC IMPROVEMENT – To encourage the desire to excel as an athlete through the process of goal setting and monitoring of personal achievement.
5. PHYSICAL HEALTH – To encourage physical fitness through exercise and good health habits.

### **III. CODE OF RESPONSIBILITY**

**Those students who choose to participate in athletics, co curricular activities, and other extracurricular activities are believed to have a very strong influence on both the members of the student body and the local community in general.**

**Students who participate in any of these activities or functions are highly visible and are viewed by many as the public image of Lanier County Schools. As such, their conduct should form both the model and standard for behavior. In exchange for the many benefits and advantages afforded to those who participate in athletics and other extracurricular activities, students have an obligation to exhibit moral and responsible conduct and to present themselves in such a manner as to not discredit their school, family, community, coach, advisor, team, club, group, or themselves.**

1. Responsibility to Yourself – To become successful as an athlete you will be challenged to maintain high physical, emotional, mental, and academic standards. Self Discipline, a full effort, a positive attitude, and a strong respect for self and for authority will help you achieve these goals.

2. Responsibility to Your Team – As a team member, your teammates will look to you for leadership, requiring you to put forth your best effort and attitude at all times. Athletic awards are intended to be worn with pride and dignity, and to promote a positive image for the team.

3. Responsibility to Family & Friends – As an athlete, expectations will increase even among family members. Your family will look to you for strength of character and as a role model for siblings and family friends. Athletic participation will be difficult without the encouragement of your family and friends. It is the responsibility of every athlete to show appreciation for those who invest in your participation through their support.

4. Responsibility to Your School – As an athlete, you are a representative of your school at all times.

Your conduct and attitudes should reflect the very best that Lanier County High School/Lanier County Middle School has to offer. This position is a privilege and should be regarded with honor.

5. Responsibility to Your Community – As an athlete, your community takes pride in you and your team and will view you as a role model for younger students. It will become your responsibility to set a good example for upcoming athletes and to contribute positively to the community.

### **IV. COACHES CODE OF ETHICS**

1. The coach must be aware that he or she has a tremendous influence, either good or bad, in the

education of the student athlete and, thus, shall never place the value of winning above the value of instilling the highest desirable ideals of character.

2. The coach must constantly uphold the honor and dignity of the profession. In all personal contact with the student athlete, officials, athletic directors, school administrators, the state high school athletic association, the media, and the public, the coach shall strive to set an example of the highest ethical and moral conduct.

3. The coach shall take an active role in the prevention of drug, alcohol and tobacco abuse and under no circumstances should authorize their use.

4. The coach shall promote the entire interscholastic program of the school and direct his or her program in harmony with the total school program.

5. The coach shall be thoroughly acquainted with the contest rules and is responsible for their interpretation to team members. The spirit and letter of rules should be regarded as mutual agreements. The coach shall not try to seek an advantage by circumvention of the spirit or letter of the rules.

6. Coaches shall actively use their influence to enhance sportsmanship by their spectators, working closely with cheerleaders, pep club sponsors, booster clubs, and administrators.

7. Contest officials shall have the respect and support of each coach. The coach shall not indulge in conduct which will incite players or spectators against the officials. Public criticism of officials or players is unethical.

8. Before and after contests, rival coaches should meet and exchange friendly greetings to set the correct tone for the event.

9. A coach shall not exert pressure on faculty members to give student athletes special consideration.

10. It is unethical for coaches to scout opponents by any means other than those adopted by the league and/or state high school athletic association.

11. The coach will consider the well being of the team as fundamental in all decisions and actions.

12. The coach will cooperate with the staff and school administration in establishing, implementing and supporting school policies.

13. The coach will fulfill professional responsibilities with honesty and integrity, and uphold the honor of the profession in all relations with students, players, colleagues, coaches, administrators and the general public.

14. The coach must be able to develop good rapport with any number of individuals and groups: team personnel, the student body, the professional staff (faculty, administration, maintenance, etc.,) the community as a whole, spectators, officials, fellow coaches in the region, media representatives and the parents of his/her players. Good rapport and an image of competency are invaluable for the coach.

15. Diligence, enthusiasm, honesty and a love for the game are all part of a professional pride that should be exhibited by any coach. Personal appearance, dress, and physical condition – all should be exemplary. Dressing appropriately for practice, following practice schedules and building positive attitudes are very important.

16. Every facet of discipline is the coach's responsibility. Individually, the coach becomes a model of all that the program represents – observation of school codes, training rules, rules of the game, ideals of good sportsmanship, behavior of participants throughout the season (at home and away) and the conduct of the crowd (especially where the student body is concerned). Desire to do well; to win well, to lose well, should be emphasized. Staff, players and spectators should be motivated toward established goals.

17. A coach owes his/her school his/her efforts and loyalty at all times. He/she must constantly strive for excellence in all areas of his/her school. To be effective, a coach must be respected. To be respected, good personal habits and neat appearance are important; but most important are the examples set by the coach.

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Being respected is much more important than being well liked. Treat the faculty, the players, and the general students with the same honor and respect that you desire to be shown to you. Private, firm, fair and consistent discipline must be maintained.

## **V. ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS**

### **1. Academic Requirements**

#### ***A. Lanier County High School***

All high school student athletes must pass a minimum of three (3) units toward graduation the immediately preceding semester in order to be eligible, as required by the Georgia High School Athletic Association (GHSA).

- First Grading Period – All incoming freshmen are eligible for the first semester. Eligibility for all other students is determined by the last semester grading period of the preceding year and commences with the start of the fall sports season.
- Subsequent Grading Periods – Changes of eligibility will be based on the immediately preceding semester grading period and will become effective on the start of the 1st school day of the new semester period.
- Study Halls at Lanier County High School , we are going to ask any student who is failing 2 classes to attend after school tutoring. This will begin after the first 4 1/2 week grading period. A coach of the sport for that season will be assigned to ensure that the student is working with the teacher that he/she is having the difficulty in.
- Head coaches are to keep a log of the progress for each of their player's grades and continually monitor them throughout the year whether they are in season or out of season to ensure that all of their players are able to participate by the start of their season.

### ***B. Lanier County Middle School***

All middle school athletes must receive a passing grade in five (4) out of six (6) of their classes to be eligible to participate. Academic eligibility is determined by the administration of LCMS.

#### **1. Freedom from Substance Abuse Requirement**

It is expected that all student athletes in the Lanier County Schools Athletic Program will be free from the effects of substance abuse so that they may develop to their full potential. Accordingly, the possession, use or distribution of any tobacco product, alcoholic beverage, illicit drug, illegally obtained prescription medication, inhalant, counterfeit or look-alike drug, or drug paraphernalia by a student athlete is prohibited at any time. The primary response to a substance abuse violation is intended to encourage the student to seek counseling. Substance abuse violations are handled as follows:

##### **A. First Substance Abuse Violation**

Upon substantiated evidence of the first violation of this rule, the athlete may be denied athletic participation for the remainder of the school year from the date of determination of guilt. This suspension will never be less than two (2) weeks and may be carried over into the next school year and into the next athletic season in which the athlete participates. The athletic director will consider all available evidence before making the determination of guilt. As a result of the investigation if the student is found responsible

for a substance violation, the student may face disciplinary actions as listed in the athletic handbook and the Lanier County High School Student Code of Conduct

Upon request of the athlete and the parent or legal guardian, the principal may reduce the suspension. The principal determines the amount of the reduction. The suspension will never be reduced to less than twenty percent (20%) of the remainder of that sports season, nor will the suspension be reduced to less than a period of two (2) weeks. In the event that there is less than a two week period in the season, the remainder of the suspension will take place during the next athletic season in which the athlete participates. The principal will only consider reducing the original suspension when the following conditions exist:

### **B. Subsequent Substance Abuse Violations**

Upon substantiated evidence of a subsequent violation of this rule within the school year, the athlete shall be denied athletic participation for one (1) calendar year from the date of the determination of guilt. The athlete shall not receive consideration for any individual or team awards.

### **Appeals Procedure**

The student athlete and the parent or legal guardian may appeal the decision of the principal to the Athletic Appeals Board. The principal will additionally select one head coach (from a different sport) and one classroom teacher to serve. The principal will chair this board. The Athletic Appeals Board will make the final determination of guilt and will have the authority to determine the length of the suspension. The appeal will require the following:

- a) The written appeal must be presented to the principal within three (3) workdays of the initial ruling and must be signed by the athlete and the parent or legal guardian.
- b) The student shall have the privilege of representation although it is not a legal process.
- c) The Athletic Appeals Board shall render a decision within three (3) workdays to the parents or legal guardian of the student.

## **2. Dress/Grooming Requirements**

Athletic participation will be contingent upon adherence to team grooming/dress policies. Standards will be determined by the coaching staff and reviewed by the school administration (as per Lanier County High School/Lanier County Middle School handbooks).

Hairstyles are to be maintained in a neat and clean manner as defined by the team coach, so as to present a positive image for both the team and the school.

Dress of team members is to be appropriate (as defined by the team coach) at all times including trips, assemblies, meetings, etc. Only uniforms issued by the Athletic Department will be permitted to be worn for athletic competition/activities. Uniforms are to be worn only at approved events.

### **3. Additional Requirements (these forms should be in back of handbook)**

- **The parent and athlete must sign the “Athletic Responsibility Acknowledgement” form.**

- Student athletes must have a physical examination annually. A “Physical Examination” form must be completed and signed by a physician, and must be on file in the Athletic Department.

- An “Emergency Medical” form must be completed by the parent or legal guardian, and must be on file with the coach.

All other departmental and team eligibility requirements must be satisfied. Coaches may establish additional rules and regulations for their respective sports. Penalties will be imposed consistent with these policies. Specific policies will be on file with and approved by the Athletic Director. Parents will be informed of these rules during the parents’ preseason meeting.

Athletic participation will be contingent upon adherence to the Lanier County High School/Lanier County Middle School athletic handbook as well as the Lanier County High/Lanier County Middle School student handbooks confirmed by the Lanier County Board of Education; adherence to the handbooks will be determined by school administrators and/or coaching staff.

## **VI. ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT POLICIES**

### **1. Student Athlete Resignation Procedure**

When a student athlete intends to resign from a sport, the athlete is expected to first discuss the situation with the immediate coach, and then with the head coach if necessary. The coach will report any resignation to the athletic director as soon as possible.

An athlete wishing to change sports during an athletic season may do so within 2 weeks after the official starting date for practice as mandated by the GHSA. After that date, the athlete may not participate in any other sport until the sport in which he/she stopped

participation in is completed. \*\*\* The only exception to this rule is if the current sport coach gives the athlete clearance to leave his sport and continue on in the next sport the athlete participates in.

Additionally, an athlete participating in two sports must remain in good standing with both sports for the duration of the season or lose his eligibility in both.

## **2. Financial Obligations and Equipment**

Athletes may be required to supply a portion of the equipment needed for participation. Any equipment supplied by the athlete will remain the property of the athlete.

All athletes are responsible for the proper care and security of issued equipment. Fees will be charged for lost equipment as well as equipment returned in poor condition as determined by the coach and/or the athletic director. Beginning in the summer of 2021, athletes will have taken care of their athletic financial obligations to the school before being able to participate in practice or games.

## **3. Absence From Practice**

Athletes must contact the coach prior to a practice absence. The head coach will determine the penalties for practice absence. Students must be in school or in an approved school activity the equivalent of two (2) periods (or 1/2 of the school day according to schedule) in order to participate that day. An excused absence the day before a Saturday event will allow the student participation. Participation in a school activity will not constitute an absence.

Athletes may be given a five (5) day grace period between consecutive sports seasons in which they competed.

## **4. Vacation Policy**

Athletes are encouraged to take vacations out of the athletic season or in summer when off time is provided. Athletes are required to notify the head coach if intending to take vacation during the season. Vacation absences may negatively impact an athlete's position on the team; the head coach will determine penalties for absences.

## **5. Travel**

**Athletes and Coaches are required to travel to and from away events with the team when school transportation is provided. Decisions about team travel arrangements will be up to the coach. Any exceptions will require approval of the coach or building administrator and written parental permission in advance of the event.**

Athletes are required to remain with their teams, under the supervision of the coach,

when attending away events.

## **6. College Recruitment Policy**

College recruitment information is available in the AD Office. Athletes are expected to contact the head coach as soon as possible upon contact by a college recruiter. In addition, coaches will work diligently to help athletes seek opportunities at the post secondary level.

## **7. Conflicts in Extracurricular Activities**

Participation in numerous extracurricular activities may result in conflict of obligations. The athletic department encourages students to have the opportunity for a broad range of experiences in extracurricular activities and will attempt to schedule events in a manner so as to minimize conflicts.

Athletes must also assess potential conflicts as they determine their ability to participate in various activities.

Athletes must advise sponsors/coaches of potential conflicts, in advance of potential conflicts. Coaches and sponsors will work together to resolve the conflict.

**Athletes and parents are advised that participation in athletics inherently places participants at risk for injury. It is the responsibility of athletes and parents to assess the potential risks involved in making the decision to participate in athletics.**

## **8. Insurance**

Athletes must have on file in the athletic office an accident insurance policy number either through school insurance or adequate other insurance certified by the parent/guardian. Lanier School Board Policy no longer allows us to sign a waiver form for this .

## **9. Discipline Referral (OSS/ISS/ISD)**

Any student guilty of a school violation or unlawful act may be denied the privilege of participation in athletic activities for a period determined by the Athletic Director and/or Principal.

**ISD** - Any student athlete that is placed in ISD is still able to participate in practice or a game during the same day. It is the responsibility of the coach to apply make-up work for any player missing a strength and conditioning class during that time and or extra work for an athlete being placed in ISD.

**ISS** - Any student athlete placed in ISS will still be required to attend practice each day while they are still in ISS. Also, they will be required to make-up their workout that was

missed during the day and receive extra work after practice for being placed in ISS. An athlete will **NOT** be allowed to participate in a game or competition on any day he or she is assigned ISS, or until they are reinstated back into class.

**OSS** - Any student athlete that is given OSS may NOT participate in any practice, game, competition, or even be on campus while serving days of OSS.

An athlete will be disciplined for any unlawful act he or she may commit in which such action detracts from the image of LCHS or for any action that may be unbecoming of an athlete.

All athletes in the Lanier County School District are subject to the GHSA Sportsmanship Policy.

### **10. Award Criteria That Pertain to All Sports**

An athlete who moves from one level of competition to another will letter at the highest competition provided he/she meets team requirements. A coach will have the prerogative to letter a senior/player who has not met the seasonal requirements for lettering.

Injury rule: Any athlete who participated before an injury may be awarded a letter at the discretion of the coach (based upon the judgment that the athlete would have met the lettering requirements, had it not been for injury.)

**11. Mandatory Workouts** All athletes are required to participate in a daily scheduled workout. No athlete will be able to participate in an event unless their workout has been completed. The athlete may fulfill this requirement by having a weight lifting class during the school day. If the athlete can not fulfill his or her responsibilities, then they will be expected to do the workout before or after school with their team coach. If there is a problem with academic requirements during the day the athlete will be required to workout after his or her practice. It is the responsibility of the coach to make sure that each member of their team is following these guidelines.

**12. Monitoring progress** Head coaches are to keep a log of the progress for each of their player's grades and continually monitor them throughout the year whether they are in or out of season to ensure that all of their players are able to participate by the starting date of their sport and during the season.

**13. Feeder programs** - The Head Coach of each sport should work closely with the Lanier County Recreation Department training rec coaches and players in the way they would for them to be taught. This will ensure that the feeder program is preparing our young athletes for the future, to become the best Dawgs they can possibly be.

**14. Athlete passes** - Any athlete participating in any sport will be issued a student

athlete pass so that they will be able to attend any other Lanier County sporting event free of charge for the 2026-2027 school year. This is for only the card holder and may not give entry to any other person except for the athlete that is pictured on the pass.

**Students that are eligible**

Athletes participating in any Fall sports 2026-2027 school year.

Returning Athletes that completed the entire sports season of a winter or spring 2025-2026 season

**Students that are NOT eligible:**

Students that do not attend Lanier County High School

Students that do not participate in Lanier County High School athletics

2026 Graduated Seniors

Any student who may have started a season but did not complete the entire season.

People not pictured on the pass

Athletes family member or friends

At any time during the year if any athlete that has been issued a pass and quits a sport before the end of season, then that athlete will have their pass revoked for the remainder of the school year.

**15. Meetings with parents** - No Head coach or assistant coach should meet with a parent or fan concerning a problem after a game or contest. If a parent would like to meet with a coach concerning an issue then they can set up a time the next day and it can be discussed in the office with the head coach and AD.

**Any exceptions to these rules will be at the discretion of the Lanier County High School Athletic Director, Principal, or Superintendent.**

**REQUIREMENTS FOR LETTER FOR EACH SPORT (min of 2 years varsity in same sport)**

**A. Varsity Basketball (boys and girls)**

1. The player completes all guidelines set by the head coach.
2. The player must play the entire season from the 1st day of practice until the last game of the year.
3. The player must be in good standing with the coaching staff.

## **B. Golf and Cross Country**

1. The player completes all guidelines set by head coach
2. The player must play the entire season from the 1st day of practice until the last match of the year.
3. The player must be in good standing with the coaching staff.

## **C. Tennis and Soccer**

1. The player completes all guidelines set by the head coach.
2. The player must play the entire season from the 1st day of practice until the last match of the year.
3. The player must be in good standing with the coaching staff.

## **D. Baseball**

1. The player completes all guidelines set by the head coach.
2. The player must play the entire season from the 1st day of practice until the last game of the year.
3. The player must be in good standing with the coaching staff.

NOTE: We do not use innings played because a player cannot re-enter the game if he is a substitute like it is in basketball or football

## **E. Track**

1. The player completes all guidelines set by the head coach.
2. The player cannot miss over three (3) practices.
3. The player must be in good standing with the coaching staff.

## **F. Football**

1. The player completes all guidelines set by the head coach.
2. The player must play the entire season from the 1st day of practice until the last game of the year.

3 The player must be in good standing with the coaching staff.

### **G. Cheerleading**

1. The player completes all guidelines set by head coach .2. The player must play the entire season from the 1st day of practice until the last game of the year. 3. The athlete must be in good standing with the coaching staff.

### **H. Softball**

1. The player completes all guidelines set by the head coach . This means that dressing out with the varsity could constitute participating.

2. The player must play the entire season from the 1st day of practice until the last game of the year.

3. The player must be in good standing with the coaching staff.

NOTE: We do not use innings played because a player cannot reenter the game if he is a substitute like it is in basketball or football

NOTE: A coach or athletic director also has the right to hold that letter due to grades, discipline or money owed.

### **Weather Guidelines Grades 6-12**

The following guidelines for heat related illness, extreme cold temperatures, and lightning safety are suggested, though each student and situation is unique, and may not require every step listed or may call for different or additional measures: Information that must be reviewed is attached. It is important that all coaches sign in for the local school meeting as a record that they have received the heat related inservice. A copy of the sign in sheet must be kept on file at the local school. Any coach who does not attend the meeting must be in-serviced at a make-up session.

HEAT INDEX The heat index (HI) is the temperature the body feels when heat and relative humidity (RH) are combined. It is a measure of the contribution that high

temperature and high humidity make in reducing the body's ability to cool itself. The chart below provides general guidelines for assessing the potential severity of heat stress. Individual reactions to heat will vary. It should be remembered that heat illness could occur at lower temperatures than indicated on the chart. Studies have indicated that susceptibility to heat illness tends to increase with age. Note: Exposure to full sunshine can increase Heat Index values by up to 15° F

## **Lanier County Schools Extreme Heat Index**

### **Table Heat Index Zone Effects On The Human Body**

80-89 1. Fatigue with prolonged exposure

90-104 2. Cramps or heat exhaustion possible

105 -129 3. Cramps or heat exhaustion likely , heat stroke possible 130 or higher 4. Heat stroke highly likely with prolonged exposure

## **HEAT INDEX WARNING LEVEL GUIDELINES FOR LCHS**

These are guidelines for outdoor practices Level Heat Index Affects Practice hours  
Equipment and breaks Fluids Caution

### **Zone 1**

80-89

Fatigue with prolonged exposure

Reasonable and use caution

Full pads : Remove helmet with 5 minute break every 20 minutes

Cold water

Extreme caution

### **Zone 2**

90-104

Cramps or heat

exhaustion possible

Use extreme caution

Full pads : Remove helmet with 5 minute break every 15 minutes  
Cold water & shade if possible. Danger

### **Zone 3**

105-120 Cramps or heat exhaustion likely, heat stroke possible

Practice time should be shortened with low intensity

Recommend helmets and shoulders with shorts or pants.

Remove helmet with 10 min break every 15 minutes

Cold water and shade if possible

Extreme Danger

### **Zone 4**

121 or higher Heat stroke highly likely

with prolonged exposure

*121 or higher No Practice or reschedule after 5:00 pm or before 10:00 am*

*\*\*May practice indoors*

Helmets and pads in air condition gym ‘

Normal break periods

Cold water

1. A digital monitor is used to measure the Heat Index (HI). The heat index will be measured before each practice.

a) All Activities: Monitor and follow all guidelines. Will be required to measure the Heat Index with the digital Heat Index Monitor. This can be done by the school Athletic Director, First Aid Facilitator, or a coach. \*\*\*\* All sports should measure the heat index if there is a local heat advisory given before the start of practice.

b) All Outdoor Activities: must provide a tub with water, to cool players down, in case of an emergency. It should be placed at a place accessible for athletes during practice. It is the coaches responsibility to make sure this is taken care of daily.

2. Practices and games should be held early in the morning and later in the evening to

avoid times when environmental conditions are generally more severe.

3. An unlimited supply of cold water shall be available to participants during practice games.

- a. Coaches/Supervisors shall inform all students participating that cold water is always available and accessible and they will be given permission anytime he/she asks for water.

- b. Hydration and fluid replacement is a daily process. Students should hydrate themselves before, during, and after practice. Meals should include an appropriate amount of fluid intake in addition to a healthy diet.

4. Give adequate rest periods. Remove appropriate equipment or clothing when possible.

Exposed skin cools more efficiently.

- a. Football players shall be allowed to remove helmets.

- b. Shoulder pads should be removed if conditions warrant.

5. Participants should wear clothes that are light in weight and color.

6. Students who need careful monitoring include:

- a. Overweight students

- b. Weight control problems (fluctuation)

- c. Those taking over the counter and prescription medication

- d. Students who have done absolutely no exercise at all

7. Be familiar with all heat related symptoms and corresponding treatments.

8. Be familiar with the Heat Index Temperature Chart and utilize guidelines determining length and rest periods.

**The following are guidelines for fluid replacement as recommended by the National Athletic Trainers Association (NATA)**

## **FLUID REPLACEMENT (From the NATA) Weight Lost During Workout**

### Fluid Amount Needed to Refuel

2 pounds 32 oz. (4 cups or one sports drink bottle)

4 pounds 64 oz. (8 cups or two bottles)

6 pounds 96 oz. (12 cups or three bottles)

8 pounds 128 oz. (16 cups or four bottles)

### **GUIDELINES FOR HYDRATION DURING EXERCISE (From the NATA)**

1. Drink 16-24 oz. of fluid 1 to 2 hours before the workout or competition. 2.

Drink 4-8 oz. of water or sports drink during every 20 minutes of exercise.

3. Drink before you feel thirsty. When you feel thirsty, you have already lost needed fluids

### **HEAT ILLNESS SYMPTOMS AND TREATMENTS (From the NATA)**

Heat illness is used to define several types of afflictions suffered when an individual experiences arising body temperature and dehydration. Following are the different forms identified by the NATA.

Symptoms Treatment Heat Cramps Muscle spasms caused by an imbalance of water and electrolytes in muscles Usually affects the legs and abdominal muscles Treatment Rest in a cool place Drink plenty of fluids Proper stretching and massaging Application of ice in some cases Heat Exhaustion Can be a precursor to heat stroke Normal to high temperature Heavy sweating Skin is flushed or cool and pale Headaches, dizziness Rapid pulse, nausea, weakness Physical collapse may occur Can occur without prior symptoms, such as cramps Treatment Get to a cool place immediately and out of the heat Drink plenty of fluids Remove excess clothing In some cases, immerse body in cool water Heat Stroke Body's cooling system shuts down Increased core temperature of 104°F or greater If untreated it can cause brain damage, internal organ damage, and even death. Sweating stops Shallow breathing and rapid pulse Possible disorientation or loss of consciousness Possible irregular heartbeat and cardiac arrest Treatment Call 911 immediately Cool bath with ice packs near large arteries, such as neck, armpits, and groin Replenish fluids by drinking or intravenously if needed. Each coach of an outside sport is required to have an ice/water tub accessible to them at practice to use for players that may need them.

### **GUIDELINES FOR EXTREME COLD TEMPERATURES**

1. The local school principal, or designee, will make the final decision as to whether outdoor practices will be allowed. The health, safety, and welfare of the students should be the determining factor.
2. The wind chill factor should be used to determine the severity of the cold temperatures, NOT just the temperature alone.
3. Warm up and stretch properly up until immediately before the competition/practice.
4. Clothing should be selected for comfort. Do not overdress. Multiple layers provide good insulation.
5. Properly cover the head, neck, legs, and hands. Much of your body heat is lost through these areas.
6. Extreme cold blocks some sensations of pain. Thus, frostbite can easily affect the fingers, toes, ears, and facial areas. Check these areas regularly.
7. Hypothermia is a dangerous and severe level that can occur in cold temperatures. Add extra clothing and move to a warm environment immediately after exercising or practice. Drink warm fluids if possible. Hypothermia has occurred in air temperatures of 50 - 65 degrees F.
8. Early signs and symptoms of hypothermia include shivering, euphoria, confusion, and behaviors similar to intoxication. Severe signs include lethargy, muscular weakness, disorientation, depression, hallucinations, and even combative behavior.

## **LIGHTNING SAFETY FOR ATHLETIC EVENTS**

The National Lightning Safety Institute (NLSI) recommends that all organizations prepare a Lightning Safety Plan and inform all personnel of its contents. Lightning safety is “anticipating a high risk situation and moving to a low risk location.” Just as practice and training increase athletic performances, similarly preparedness can reduce the risk of the lightning hazard. Lightning is the most frequent weather hazard impacting athletic events. All outdoor sports have been visited by lightning. That is why education is the single most important means to achieve lightning safety. Lightning Safety Plans should be site specific, but they all share a common outline:

1. Advance warning of hazard:
  - a) “If you can see it, flee it. If you can hear it, clear it”.
  - b) TV Weather Channel; Weather Radio
  - c) Lightning detectors
2. Make a decision to suspend activities and notify people.
  - a) Notify people via radio, siren or other means.

3. Move to safe location:

- a) A large permanent building.
- b) Unsafe places are near metal or water; under trees; on hills; near electrical/electronic equipment.
- c) The 30/30 Rule says to shut down when lightning is six miles away. Use a “flash to bang” (lightning to thunder) count of five seconds equals one mile (10 = 2 miles; 20 = 4 miles; 30 = 6 miles).

4. Reassess the hazard. It is usually safe after no thunder and no lightning have been observed for thirty minutes. Be conservative here.

5. Inform people to resume activities.

## **NATA Lightning Safety Guidelines**

Due to the alarming rise in lightning casualties in recreational and sports settings in recent decades, the National Athletic Trainers’ Association (NATA) has released the following guidelines to follow when participating in outside athletic or recreational activities.

1. Establish a chain of command that identifies who is to make the call to remove individuals from the field.

2. Name a designated weather watcher. (A person who actively looks for the signs of threatening weather and notifies the chain of command if severe weather becomes dangerous.)

3. Have a means of monitoring local weather forecasts and warnings. (Know weather definitions:

- a. Watch indicates conditions are favorable for severe weather. Warning means severe weather has been detected in the area, and all persons should take the necessary precautions.)

4. Designate a safe shelter for each venue.

5. Use a lightning detector or cell phone to alert you of lightning strikes within 10 miles. Once activities have been suspended, wait at least thirty minutes following the last sound of thunder or lightning flash prior to resuming an activity or returning outdoors.

(GHSA MANDATED) b) Avoid being the highest point in an open field, in contact with, or

proximity to the highest point, as well as being on the open water. Do not take shelter under or near trees, flagpoles, or light poles. c) Assume the lightning safe position (i.e. crouched on the ground, weight on the balls of the feet, feet together, head lowered, and ears covered) for individuals who feel their hair stand on end, skin tingle, or hear “crackling” noises. Do not lie flat on the ground.

6) Observe the following basic first aid procedures in managing victims of a lightning strike:

- a. Survey the scene for safety.
- b. Activate local EMS.
- c. Lightning victims do not ‘carry a charge’ and are safe to touch. If necessary, move the victim with care to a safer location.
- d. Evaluate airway, breathing, and circulation, and begin CPR if necessary.
- e. Evaluate and treat for hypothermia, shock, fractures and/or burns.

7) All individuals have the right to leave an athletic site in order to seek a safe structure if the person feels in danger of impending lightning activity without fear of repercussions or penalty from anyone.

**Any changes or exceptions to the rules placed in the handbook will be at the discretion of the Lanier County High School Athletic Director, Principal, or Superintendent.**

## **VII. Chain of Command**

If there are problems or concerns, there is a chain of command to follow to have the problem or concern addressed. **First**, contact the Athletic Director. If there is no resolution, then the **second** contact will be made with the Principal. If the Athletic Director and Principal cannot satisfactorily resolve the situation, the **third** contact is the Superintendent.

**1st Contact – Chase Daniel, Athletic Director**, can be reached at his office by calling (229) 482-3966.

**2nd Contact – Matt Weaver, Principal**, can be reached at school by calling (229) 482-3868.

**3rd Contact – Gene Culpepper, Superintendent**, can be reached at his office by calling (229) 482-3966.