



**Falls Lake Academy
Student / Parent
Athletic Handbook**

Falls Lake Academy Athletic Department

<https://fallslakeacademyathletics.bigteams.com>

Falls Lake Main Number: 919- 964-9003

Athletic Director - Kate Wright
katewright@fallslakeacademy.com

Executive Director- Amy Hobgood
amyhobgood@fallslakeacademy.com

High School Principal – Nealie Whitt
nealiewhitt@fallslakeacademy.com

Middle School Principal- Lisa Mayhew
lisamayhew@fallslakeacademy.com

Business Manager- Tiffany Clark
tiffanyclark@fallslakeacademy.com

Falls Lake Academy Parent/Student Handbook

Table of Contents

- I. Purpose
- II. Philosophy/Mission Statement
- III. State Affiliations
- IV. Conference Affiliations
- V. Athletic Eligibility
- VI. Athletic Academic Policies
- VII. Athletic Code of Conduct
- VIII. High School Transfer Policy
- IX. Athletic Website & Program Information
- X. Transportation
- XI. Athletic Awards Policies
- XII. General Athletic Department Policies
- XIII. Flight Crew Booster Club
- XIV. NCAA Clearinghouse
- XV. FLA Player Waiver & Release Form

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this handbook is to communicate all aspects of the Falls Lake Academy (FLA) athletic program to coaches, athletes and parents. The information contained in the handbook is beneficial to understanding the philosophy and overall scope of our athletic program.

II. PHILOSOPHY/ MISSION STATEMENT

“To create an environment focused on pride, unity, and victory where student athletes demonstrate a strong social conscience.”

The Falls Lake Athletic Department considers athletics an integral part of education and believes that participation in sports develops and instills the qualities of pride, unity and victory; while developing the student athlete to live their life with strong social conscience. It is our goal to give our student athletes the tools and skills to achieve this mission. Being a part of a team not only promotes a healthy lifestyle but provides multiple opportunities for skill enhancement, competition, collaboration, and cooperation. We also believe that physical fitness, discipline and success can help promote academic success, and we expect that our athletes take pride in their performance in the classroom as well as on the field. Students should dress, act and conduct themselves in a way that reflects positively on their school. Each student is expected to display good citizenship on & off the field of play. We strive to build competitive, winning teams, our primary mission is to promote the value of fair play.

As a student-athlete progresses through the Falls Lake Academy athletic program, a more selective criterion of choosing participants is required. These criteria will be based on the coaching staff's analysis that the prospective student-athlete possesses skills and attitudes required to compete at higher-level athletic contests, as well as the ability to play within the framework of the team concept.

1. Middle School- Middle School programs are, by nature, developmental skills programs for student-athletes entering the school's athletic programs. The primary focus of the program is to introduce student-athletes to team play and to develop skills for the sport selected. The goal is to encourage full participation by all student-athletes. Although “cuts” are a part of the program, a strong emphasis on skill development over a successful record is valued. In addition, establishing a positive learning environment for each student-athlete and the development of mentor-mentee relationships between coach and player requires supplemental support from parents regarding to sportsmanship, team dynamics, academics, and character.

2. JV / Varsity- The JV / Varsity level program is the most competitive level of play. Team selection is based on the skills and abilities of each student-athlete to create a successful and competitive experience for the team and improvement for each student-athlete. Athletic ability, sportsmanship, game awareness and knowledge, individual growth, commitment to team and program, and character also factor into team selection. The varsity student-athlete demonstrates strong academic awareness, and a high level of character, and is committed to personal growth and team development. A realistic understanding, by coaches, student-athletes, and parents of the individual student-athlete's skills as a contributor to the team and program is essential to successful competition at the varsity level. Our varsity level sports are catered to prepare our student-athletes to the next level of play.
3. Cuts- Coaches at both the middle school and varsity levels select teams based on student-athlete skills, abilities, and team dynamics. The process is selective and may require cuts to select student-athletes that best fit within the team dynamics. This may mean that the best athlete does not always make a team if they are unable to gel within a team framework. Clear expectations regarding school programs, team goals, and team selection will be shared openly with student-athletes, parents, and the community. However, coaches will not discuss any student-athletes with parents other than their own child. The selection process will be based on school participation/experience, and not on youth program or recreational league experience. Playing time is based on coaching judgment with a focus on the student-athletes' skills, ability, teamwork, and character. It may also be unique from game-to-game, be determined by game conditions, matchups, and competitiveness of teams.

III. STATE AFFILIATIONS

Falls Lake Academy High School is a current member of the North Carolina High School Athletic Association (NCHSAA). Middle School Athletics will follow DPI State Rules.

IV. CONFERENCE AFFILIATION

The Middle School is a member of the CCMS Central Carolina Middle School Conference- *East Wake Academy, Falls Lake Academy, Oxford Prep, Roxboro Community, Vance Charter & Voyager Academy.*

The High School is a member of the NCAC North Central Athletic Conference- *East Wake Academy, Falls Lake Academy, Franklin Academy, Henderson Collegiate, Oxford Prep, Roxboro Community, Vance Charter & Voyager Academy.*

V. ATHLETIC ELIGIBILITY

All students in grades 6-12 are eligible to try out for athletic teams at FLA.

Middle school teams shall consist of 6th-8th graders

High School teams consist of 9th-12th graders only.

*A student-athletes are required to turn in the following REQUIRED paperwork before participating in any activity: (All forms are good for one school year)

- *NCHSAA Physical Form*
- *Gfeller-Waller Concussion Student- Athlete & Parent Consent Form*
- *NCHSAA Eligibly & Authorization Statement*
- *FLA Player Waiver & Release Form*
- *FLA Social Media Contract*

VI. ATHLETIC ACADEMIC POLICIES

The purpose of an academic eligibility policy is to ensure that our student-athletes are reminded of the importance of balancing athletics and academics. Middle and High School athletics follow the Academic Eligibility Policy Per **FLA & NCHSAA** Standards:

Athletic Academic Policy

A student must have passed a minimum load of work during the preceding semester to be eligible at any time during the present semester. The semester is normally considered half of the academic year. All students must also meet local promotion standards, set by the LEA and/or the local school.

(a) A minimum load is defined as five courses in the traditional school schedule, so students must pass 5 of 6 courses in traditional schedule – for a block schedule students must pass three of four 90 minutes courses taken during a semester to be eligible the next semester.

(b) Any student, including seniors, must pass that minimum load, even if they need fewer for graduation. A minimum load as defined by NCHSAA is 3 of 4 block 90-minute courses. Also according to NCHSAA a student must be present in 3 of 4 courses to be eligible to practice or play in an athletic contest. Middle school student-athletes must be present for over half the day to be eligible for athletic practices or contents.

***FLA Higher Expectation Academic Policy**

Student-athletes are required to maintain minimum of a 70 average in ALL classes during the sports season. A 3 week grade check will be conducted by the Athletic Director per sport. If a student-athlete has below a 70 in any class, the student-athlete will be placed on Phase 1 Academic Probation. (See below)

PHASE 1

This includes the following:

- Student-athlete is required to attend tutoring sessions/study hall until the grade is brought above a 70. Student-athletes are not allowed to miss sessions or study hall for practice or games.
- Student-athletes will not be allowed to participate in games while in Phase 1. However, they are required to attend games but not dress.
- A teacher "RTP" (Return to Play) form is required to be completed by the teacher to signify grade is above 70. The form will be turned into the athletic director who will reinstate the player if all requirements are satisfied.

PHASE 2

At the time of the second 3 week check any student-athlete with a grade lower than a 70 will be removed from their team to focus on their academics.

VII. ATHLETIC CODE OF CONDUCT

Athletic participation is a privilege, not a right. Falls Lake Academy athletes will be role models within the school. A firm and fair policy of enforcement is necessary to uphold the regulations and standards of the athletic department. The community, school administrators, and coaching staff feel strongly that high standards of conduct and citizenship are essential in maintaining a sound program of athletics. The welfare of the student is our top priority.

This Student-Athlete Code of Conduct is designed to alert you, the student-athlete, to the behavior expected of you, and to the potential consequences that your behavior may have on your status as a student-athlete. You are a student first, and your participation in athletics derives from your status as a student. Student-athletes will be required to sign a social media contract for FLA athletics in addition to other contracts for their specific teams. Accordingly, all CCMS and NCAC policies governing student conduct apply to you. In addition, your participation in FLA athletic programs are governed by policies and procedures put into effect by the North Carolina High School Athletic Association (NCHSAA), NCDPI, Central Carolina Middle School Conference (CCMS) & North Carolina Athletic Conference (NCAC) policy and eligibility guidelines.

The Athletic Department may take action under this Code of Conduct regarding your participation in any athletic program. This Code of Conduct is intended to complement and support conduct rules that your sport team has adopted, including consequences for violating a sports team's rules.

The following infractions will not be tolerated and will result in immediate removal from any athletic participation:

- Any felony or act that would be a felony if tried as an adult
- Violation of the alcohol, tobacco, and drug policy
- Acts resulting in a 10 day suspension
- Hazing/Bullying
- Vandalism
- Theft

Athletes and coaches at FLA are to be exemplary in their display of sportsmanship during games and practices. Team members should congratulate opponents after a game with a customary handshake and kind word. Physical and/or verbal abuse aimed at an opponent, official, coach, or teammate will result in immediate discipline by the coach, and possibly, the administration.

Taunting, trash talking, and/or inappropriate language directed toward an opponent or teammate is not "part of the game" and is inconsistent with the mission of Falls Lake Academy. Players are required to sign a social media contract before participating in any sport at FLA.

An athlete ejected from a contest is automatically suspended for the next game and may not attend the next game. A coach that is ejected from a game must see the Athletic Director before any further contact with their team is made. All ejections are to be reported to the athletic director no later than the day after the ejection takes place.

Athletes are to demonstrate sportsmanship and an attitude of cooperation with coaches, teammates and FLA staff members at all times. An athlete who has a grievance with the coach or another player should attempt to resolve the problem with that individual first, in private. Coaches, players, and parents shall refrain from confrontation immediately following a contest, and rather schedule a meeting no less than 24 hours afterwards. Matters of disagreement and dispute should be kept confidential between the individuals involved. If the situation remains unresolved the athletic director must be informed.

VIII. HIGH SCHOOL TRANSFER POLICY

Per NCHSAA policy: After initial entry into the ninth grade, and absent a bona fide move as provided in the Residence Section in the Handbook:

- a) A student transferring from one member school to another member school within the same LEA must sit out 365 days for athletic participation. The LEA may create criteria for immediate athletic eligibility for transfers within the LEA.
- b) A student transferring from one member school in one LEA to another member school in a different LEA must sit out 365 days for athletic participation. Exceptions for immediate athletic eligibility for transfers from one LEA to a different LEA will be heard by a special NCHSAA transfer committee.

- c) A member school is not part of a defined LEA (e.g., charter school, non-boarding parochial school, etc.), then the member school itself will be considered its own LEA for purposes of this policy (i.e., exceptions involving these member schools will fall under subsection (b) above).
- d) If a student transfers from a NCHSAA member school to a NCHSAA non-member school (including a transfer to a DPI-approved home school) and then attempts to transfer to any NCHSAA member school within a 365 day period, such initial transfer will be disregarded for purposes of this transfer rule and the subsequent transfer will be treated as if it were a NCHSAA member school to NCHSAA member school transfer and evaluated by the NCHSAA as provided in section (b) above.

IX. ATHLETIC WEBSITE & PROGRAM INFORMATION

Visit us on the Falls Lake Academy web site at
<https://fallslakeacademyathletics.bigteams.com>

You will find the current season’s individual team schedules, practice schedules, game dismissal times, away game addresses, coach bios, and more. Our athletic website is the best way for parents to receive the most up to date information about any athletic event or news.

X. TRANSPORTATION

Student-athletes are responsible for their own transportation to and from all practices and games. Coaches are not permitted to provide transportation to student-athletes under any circumstances. If transportation issues become a regular problem – either to or from practices and games – the student-athlete’s place on the team may be jeopardized. Student-athletes should be dropped off & picked up punctually at all practices and games. High School athletes that are able to driver are required to have a parent permission form signed by their parents to be allowed to drive to games or practices.

XI. ATHLETIC AWARDS POLICIES

Following the conclusion of the spring season athletic awards ceremonies will be held by each individual team at an appropriate location. Coaches are responsible for coordinating the event for their team. Awards will include the following: Most Valuable Player, Most Improved Player and a Coach’s award. It is recommended that student-athletes be in attendance in order to receive their award.

Award Criteria

MVP- Presented to the athlete(s) whom the coach feels contributed the most to the team during the season taking into account attitude, attendance, grades, skill & performance.

Most Improved: Presented to the athlete whom the coach feels has made improvement in all facets of the sport and who showed great improvement from day one to last day of the season.

Coaches Award: Presented to the athlete(s) whom the coach feels contributed the most to the team during the season taking into account things a sportsmanship, dedication, grades, character and contribution to the team.

High School Lettering Criteria

Varsity athletes have the opportunity to earn a Varsity Letter. The criteria for earning a letter have been established by the Athletic Department, HS Principal and Executive Director. Team managers are eligible for letters.

A. Varsity letter requirements: The varsity award shall be presented to an athlete who satisfies the participation requirements of his/her team, completes all team obligations and receives the recommendation of the athletic director.

- a. Season is defined as period of time from the first practice to the awards ceremony.
- b. Junior varsity student-athletes do not qualify.
- c. Managers or Statisticians who have held the position for at least *two* seasons in the same sport *may* earn a letter.

B. Lettering Criteria that pertain to all sports:

- a. An athlete who moves from one level of competition to another will letter at the level of the highest competition provided the athlete has met combined requirements.
- a. Injury rule: Any athlete who is a starter or plays regularly and was thereafter injured may be awarded a letter if in the coach's judgment, he/she would have met the lettering requirements.
- b. Complete the season in good standing with the school and coach.

C. Awards:

- a. 1st year award: Chenille award letter and specific sport pin. (*Note: should the athlete letter in another sport, he/she will not receive a second chenille letter*).
- b. 2nd year award: Gold service bar
- c. 3rd year award: Gold service bar
- d. 4th year award: Gold service bar
- e. Conference and State champion recognition may vary by team.

XII. GENERAL ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT POLICIES

- A. **Participation:** All students at Falls Lake Academy are encouraged to participate in as many sports per year as they choose.
- B. **Equipment:** School equipment issued to the student athlete is his/her responsibility. Athletes are expected to keep it clean uniforms in good condition. Coaches are now responsible for collecting and creating uniform agreement with athletes. Any student-athlete that does not return or returns uniform that has not been cared for properly will be charged for replacing the uniform. An athlete will not be allowed to participate in another sport until all overdue uniforms or equipment fees have been paid.
- C. **College recruitment policy:** In the event a college recruiter should contact an athlete personally, he/she has an obligation to work through his/her coach and the athletic department. All student-athletes interested in participating in college athletics at the Division I or Division II levels must be registered with the NCAA Initial-Eligibility Clearinghouse. Please contact your guidance counselor for more information.
- D. **Conflicts in extracurricular activities:** An individual student who attempts to participate in several extracurricular activities will, undoubtedly, be in a position of a conflict of obligations. The athletic department recognizes that each student should have the opportunity for a broad range of experiences in the area of extracurricular activities. Students have a responsibility to do everything they can to avoid continuous conflicts. This would include being cautious about belonging to too many activities where conflicts are bound to happen. It also means notifying the faculty sponsors/coaches involved immediately when a conflict does arise. When a conflict arises the sponsors/coaches will try to work out a solution. If a solution cannot be found, it will be the students responsibility to make a choice.
- E. **Class Attendance:** High School Students who miss part of the school day must be in attendance a minimum of two periods in order to play a contest or practice on that date. Middle School athletes must be in attendance for no less than three periods.
- F. **Release from class:** It is the responsibility of the athletes to see their teacher the day before the class they miss because of an athletic contest. All work should be made up according to the policies of the teacher and school.
- G. **Vacation policy:** Vacations by athletic team members during a sport are discouraged. Parents/athletes wishing to do so may wish to reassess their commitment to being an athlete. In the event of an absence due to a vacation is unavoidable, an athlete must make an effort to contact the head coach prior to the vacation. The student-athlete must also be willing to assume the consequences related to their status on the squad as a starter, 2nd, 3rd string, etc.
- H. **Squad selection:** In accordance with our philosophy of athletics and our desire to see as many students as possible participate in the athletic program while at Falls

Lake Academy, however there are team roster limits that are placed on each specific team. Choosing the members of athletic squads is the sole responsibility of the coaches of those teams.

- I. **Reporting of injury:** All injuries that occur while participating in athletics should be reported to the trainer and coach at the immediate time of the injury. If the injury requires medical attention by a doctor or treatment center, it will be necessary to have an injury form completed. Once athletes are treated by a physician, the athlete must obtain the doctor's and/or trainer's permission to return to activity.
- J. **Missing practices:** An athlete should always consult his/her coach before missing practice. Missing practice or a game without good reason will be dealt with by his/her coach. High School Student-athletes are required to attend practices or games that might be scheduled on weekends, holidays, or breaks. Outside club teams, AAU, leagues, etc. are secondary to FLA sports teams.

XIII. FLIGHT CREW BOOSTER CLUB

The goal of the Booster Club is to help financially support and cover the expenses of the student-athletes and the athletic department at FLA. Membership dues and monies earned from fundraisers will be used to cover the expenses of referees/officials for games, team uniforms, supplies for concessions, athletic banquets, and enhance the needs of the athletic department at FLA. Membership is open to all persons willing to volunteer and support the athletes and athletic department at FLA.

XIV. NCAA CLEARINGHOUSE

If you are planning to enroll in college as a freshman and you wish to participate in Division I or Division II athletics, you must be certified by the NCAA Initial-Eligibility Clearinghouse. It is each athlete's responsibility to see that the Clearinghouse has the documents it needs for certification. The NCAA Initial- Eligibility Clearinghouse, located in Iowa City, Iowa, is the organization that handles ALL inquiries regarding an individual's initial eligibility status. The Clearinghouse operates a separate Web site at www.ncaaclearinghouse.net, which maintains and processes all of the initial-eligibility certifications.

Falls Lake Academy Player Waiver & Release Form

I, the undersigned, hereby acknowledge that I am aware of the nature of this activity. My child is voluntarily participating in this activity at the Falls Lake Academy. I will provide any transportation to and from events and assume all risk of injury that might result to my child. I hereby consent to hold Falls Lake Academy and its employees, members or agents free from any liability, claims and other actions whatsoever arising from this activity.

I have read and reviewed the Falls Lake Academy Athletic Handbook. I have discussed this information with my student-athlete. I understand that additional questions or specific circumstances should be directed to my student's principal, athletic director, or coach.

I authorize Falls Lake Academy to exercise drug testing and to release the results of the testing to administrative officials, parents or guardians, the Athletic Director, and the head coach of the sport in which the athlete participates.

I further agree to release Falls Lake Academy and its employees, members or agents from any liability for any loss or theft of personal property. I also agree to waive all rights of subrogation. In the event of any injury, illness, or other condition which would require immediate medical assistance, I hereby consent to allow Falls Lake Academy and its employees, members or agents to take such actions as necessary to contract and provide emergency medical assistance. I hereby consent to assume all financial responsibility for such medical assistance.

I have carefully read this waiver and release agreement and fully understand it is a release of any and all liability, claims and other actions whatsoever. I also understand that failure to sign this waiver and release agreement will prevent my child from participating in this activity.

NCHSAA Sportsmanship Clause

As a parent, I acknowledge that I am a role model. I will remember that school athletics is an extension of the classroom, offering learning experiences for the students. I must show respect for all players, coaches, spectators, and support groups. I will participate in cheers that support, encourage, and uplift the teams involved. I understand the spirit of fair play and the good sportsmanship expected by our school, our conference and the NCHSAA. I hereby accept my responsibility to be a model of good sportsmanship that comes with being the parent of a student athlete.

As a student athlete, I know I am a role model. I understand the spirit of fair play while playing hard. I will refrain from engaging in all types of disrespectful behavior, including inappropriate language, taunting, trash talking, and unnecessary physical contact. I know the behavior expectations of my school, my conference, and the NCHSAA and hereby accept the responsibility and privilege of representing this school and community as a student athlete.

Parent's Name (Print) & Phone _____

Child's Name (Print) & Grade _____

Parent's Signature & Date _____

Athlete's Signature & Date _____