DEER CREEK
ATHLETIC HANDBOOK

FOR PARENTS AND STUDENT-ATHLETES

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To the Student/Athlete and Parent,

Congratulations on your decision to participate in the Deer Creek Athletic program. Participation in Athletics at Deer Creek is a privilege and commitment. Always remember that it is an honor to represent your team, school, and community.

You have chosen to be a student athlete. Many rewards and responsibilities accompany this decision. Remember that younger boys and girls are always watching you and looking up to you. Be a good example!

The athletic arena is a classroom and many life lessons can be learned such as teamwork, character, respect, confidence, achievement, discipline, unselfishness, and integrity.

Good sportsmanship should be a goal for every athlete, parent, and coach. An athlete treats opponents with respect. They play hard, but play within the rules. Self control is exercised at all times, setting the example for others to follow. Officials are highly respected and their decisions accepted without gesture or argument. Win without boasting, lose with no excuses, and never quit!

The coach, athlete, and parent must work together to provide a platform for success. Parents should encourage and support their student athletes and help them to understand the importance of hard work, good attitude, and working with their teammates and coaches toward a common goal. Communication is extremely important, and parents are strongly encouraged to discuss concerns with coaches at the appropriate time and place. This process is outlined in the Deer Creek Athletics Communication Guide, included in this handbook.

Deer Creek has enjoyed great success and much of this can be attributed to the support of our parents working with our coaches and booster organizations. This collective effort has been instrumental in providing our student-athletes with everything they need and the opportunity to create memories that will last a lifetime.

Finally, realize that you attend school to get an education and for many people athletics is an integral part of that education. Attitude is very important. Put your team first and you will find success.

Good luck this season,

Bill Bays
Director of Athletics

Philosophy of Athletics

The combination of academics and athletics can be a tremendous experience in a young person's life. Athletics are an integral part of the Deer Creek School District and are viewed as a part of the total educational program. Athletics programs help serve the community by providing a common ground of interest by drawing our patrons together in support of our various sports activities. The life lessons that can be developed as a part of an athletic program are invaluable and their potential contribution to the athlete include but are not limited to the following: personal integrity, self-discipline, determination, self-confidence, proper mental attitude, selflessness, individual and group responsibilities, and the desire to set high goals which should be characteristic of any sound educational system.

While it is the goal of our athletic program to offer the opportunity for participation, no student is obligated to take part in athletics nor is it required for graduation. It should be stressed that participation in athletics is a "privilege" and not a right and as such the coach and administration have the authority to revoke this privilege when the rules are not complied with. This privilege carries with it the responsibility for the athlete to represent themselves, the student body, team, school, and community in a positive manner at all times.

Sportsmanship

Participation in extracurricular high school activities are positive learning experiences for young people. Self-discipline, loyalty, perseverance, and teamwork are some of the benefits of these activities. Unsportsmanlike acts by the fans have no place at these events. High school activities are an important part of our local communities and good sportsmanship is an essential and admired quality. Deer Creek Schools and the OSSAA encourage you to support our Deer Creek teams and support them in a positive way.

Lettering Policy

General Requirements:

1. Students shall be required to start and finish the season with the exception of overlapping seasons, late enrollments, or sickness and injury.
2. Any athlete who participates for three (3) full years in a varsity sport but does not meet the requirements for lettering as a senior can be considered for a letter at the discretion of the coach.
3. This policy is for varsity games only.
4. Requirements for each sport vary and will be made clear by the head coach in each sport.
5. Every athlete who meets the requirement for lettering may purchase a letter jacket at their discretion.

General Rules for Athletics

1. **The Deer Creek Student Handbook** rules are in effect during athletic activities, whether those are during or outside of the school day, at Deer Creek or on away trips. Coaches in each sport may have additional expectations which will be outlined in their individual sport handbook or syllabus.

2. **Quitting a sport**: Athletics at Deer Creek are a class and part of the school day. Any athlete that wishes to quit a sport needs to understand that they may be given an "F" for the class and receive no credit.
    a. A student wishing to quit or drop a sport must get an athletic withdrawal form from a counselor and meet with and get signatures from all required parties on the form.
    b. A student who quits a sport while the sport is in season will not be allowed to move to another sport except by mutual agreement of both coaches.
    c. A student who quits and is not going to another sport will be put in an off-season class and if they participate will be given a physical education grade.

3. **Academic Eligibility**: All athletes are subject to the eligibility requirements of both the Oklahoma Secondary Schools Activity Association (OSSAA) and the Deer Creek School District. In addition to the OSSAA requirements, the Deer Creek School District requires that students have a 2.0 or better GPA on a weekly basis in order to participate. Scholastic eligibility for students will be checked after three weeks of a semester and each succeeding week thereafter. The period of probation and ineligibility will always begin the Monday following the day eligibility is checked. A student must be passing with a "C" GPA without an F in any class he/she is enrolled in during a semester. If a student is not passing all subjects enrolled in on the day of the grade check, he/she will be placed on probation for the next one-week period. If a student is still failing one or more classes or has a GPA below a 2.0 during the next week on the grade check day, he/she will not be eligible to participate during the next one-week period. The ineligibility periods will begin on Monday and end on Sunday. A student who has lost eligibility under this provision must be passing with a C GPA average without an F in any class in order to regain eligibility. A student regains eligibility under this policy with the first class of the new one-week period (Monday through Sunday).

4. **Attendance**: Athletes must attend a minimum of four of their classes to compete in an activity on the same day. (Any exceptions such as personal emergencies must be approved by the principal or their designee.)
    a. As required by the OSSAA, a 90% attendance rate must be maintained for eligibility.
    b. Unexcused absences or habitual absences from practices or games may result in dismissal from the team.

Additional OSSAA Policies

Deer Creek High School and Deer Creek Middle School are members of the Oklahoma Secondary Schools Activities Association (O.S.S.A.A.) and responsibility of this membership is delegated to the HS principal or superintendent as the voting delegate. The O.S.S.A.A. rules govern eligibility in all cases; however, the policies and rules of the Deer Creek Public School District supplement those of the Activities Association. The rules of the O.S.S.A.A. can be found on their website, www.ossaa.com. (This website is also available to get forms such as the physical and medical consent form, the new student form and many other forms and important information.)

Physicals: Every student-athlete must have a current physical and medical consent form for each year of participation. The proper form to be filled out by a physician is the "OSSAA Physical examination and parental consent form" and is available to download from the OSSAA website listed above. Physicals are to be given on or after May 1 for the next school year's participation. The school will generally have a night for physicals sometime in May. There is a charge for these physicals and students certainly have the option of getting their physical from their own physician. The physicals will be kept on file in the principals' office. Athletes are required to provide their own insurance, or parents must sign a waiver.

New Students: Every new student to the Deer Creek District from grades 7-12, needs to fill out the OSSAA New Student Form when they enroll. From these questions it will be determined if the new student is immediately eligible in accordance with OSSAA rules, if the student will have to sit out for one year, or if there is sufficient criteria for a hardship to be requested. New students that enroll after the first day of school must sit out a minimum of 15 calendar days before they will be able to compete even if they are eligible in all other respects.

Hazing Prohibited

No student organization or any person associated with any organization sanctioned or authorized by the Board of Education shall engage or participate in hazing. Hazing means an activity which recklessly or intentionally endangers the mental or physical health or safety of a student for the purpose of initiation or admission in or affiliation with any organization operating under the permission of the Board of Education or administration. "Endanger the physical health" shall include but not be limited to any brutality of a physical nature, such as whipping, beating, forced calisthenics, exposure to the elements, forced consumption of any food, or other substance, or any other forced physical activity which could adversely affect the physical health or safety of the individual; and "Endanger the mental health" shall include any activity, except those activities authorized by law, which would subject the individual to extreme mental stress, such as prolonged sleep deprivation, forced prolonged exclusion from social contact, forced conduct which could result in extreme embarrassment, or any other forced activity which could adversely affect the mental health or dignity of the individual.

Equipment and Facilities

1. In most sports coaches will expect students to purchase a “spirit pack” which will consist mainly of daily practice equipment. In such cases the coach will order the pack to insure uniformity and then the students purchase these items at school price.
2. Students are responsible for all school equipment that is checked out to them and will need to pay for lost equipment or equipment that is damaged beyond the extent of “normal wear and tear.”
3. In most of our sports, parents or students may be expected to take care of washing and cleaning of athletic clothing. Coaches will instruct students as to whose responsibility this will be and emphasize the proper care of uniforms.
4. It is the athlete’s responsibility to “daily” take home practice clothing to be cleaned. Personal hygiene is of the utmost importance.
5. Athletes should keep their locker area clean. Clothing and equipment should always be put in lockers when possible and the lockers should be locked. The school will not be responsible for lost or stolen items. Take pride in keeping your locker rooms and other facilities neat and clean.
6. Weight room: Athletes are not permitted to workout in the weight room unless supervised by a staff member. Everyone has a responsibility to practice good hygiene in the weight room. Shirts must be worn when using equipment and benches should be wiped regularly. All weight should be properly racked or put in its proper place after use.

Team Travel

Team members will travel to and from athletic contests on school provided transportation. Athletes may return with their parents if the parents make arrangements with the coach. A signed note from the parent must be given to the coach. Students will only be allowed to leave when a parent has contacted the coach in person following the event. Athletes should keep the bus as clean as possible. Coaches will expect them to pick up around their seats, close windows, and help sweep the bus and throw away trash as necessary. Sports will be charged for buses that do not return in an acceptable condition to possibly be used for routes the next school day. Athletes should pick up around dressing rooms, bleachers, showers, or other team areas before leaving the opponent’s facility. There should be an effort to leave the team area better than you originally found it.

Parent ● Athlete ● Coach
COMMUNICATION GUIDE

Parent & Coach Relationship: Children are best served in their athletic experiences by understanding and respecting the position of both coaches and parents. Clear communication between athletes, coaches and parents is an important element in any athletic program.

COMMUNICATION ATHLETES AND PARENTS SHOULD EXPECT FROM THE COACH:

- Expectations that the coach has for the team and your child for the season
- Philosophy of the coach
- Team selection process
- Team rules and guidelines and consequences for infractions
- Times and locations of practices and games
- Injury procedures
- Lettering and awards policies for athletics

COMMUNICATIONS THAT COACHES EXPECT FROM PARENTS:

- Concerns expressed directly to the coach
- Notification of any injury or illness in a timely manner
- Notification of any scheduling conflicts well in advance

As a student athlete at Deer Creek, your child may experience some of the most rewarding moments of his/her life. It is also important to understand that things may not always go as your child expects. At these times discussion with the coach by the student athlete is encouraged. This is an important first step to a mutual understanding.

APPROPRIATE CONCERNS TO DISCUSS WITH THE COACH:

1. The coach's interaction with your child
2. Any concerns about your child's interaction with others
3. Ways to help your child improve athletically

The primary role of every Deer Creek coach is that of an educator. As a parent it is sometimes difficult to accept that your child is not playing as much as you wish. Coaches make decisions on what is in the best interest of all student-athletes in their programs. Certain concerns such as those previously listed are appropriate to discuss with your child's coach. Other areas, such as those listed below, must be left to the discretion of the coach:

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

Conflicts and conferences are generally best resolved at the lowest level, that between the player and the

coach. Such conferences are encouraged. When a parent-coach conference is necessary, please follow the procedure outlined below.

WHEN YOU HAVE A CONCERN TO DISCUSS WITH A COACH - PLEASE USE THE FOLLOWING PROCEDURE:

1. If the coach-athlete conference does not resolve the situation, please call the main number at the school and ask for the coach's extension. You may also access their email through the district web site or get it from the front office. Please only use email to set up the conference and not in place of the conference.
2. Request a time to meet with the coach.
3. If the coach cannot be reached, call the District Athletic Director and request that a meeting be arranged between the parent and coach.
4. Please do not attempt to conference a coach before or after a contest or practice. These can be emotional times for the parent, athlete, and the coach. Meetings of this nature usually do not promote positive relations.

THE NEXT STEP:

What can a parent do if the meeting with the coach does not provide a satisfactory resolution?

1. Call the District Athletic Director to discuss the situation.
2. Call the Principal and schedule a meeting to discuss the situation.
3. Final step would be with the Superintendent of Schools.

(Please do not call the members of the school board as you will be redirected to the above process.)

PARENT CODE OF CONDUCT:

- Be realistic about your child's athletic ability.
- Help your child set realistic goals.
- Be an encourager at home and in the stands by emphasizing "improved performance", not winning.
- Don't relive your own athletic past through your child.
- Control your emotions at games and events.
- Respect your child's coaches, communicate with them in a positive way and encourage others to do the same.
- Be a positive role model.
- Be responsible, sensible, and keep your priorities in order. Much more is at stake than a win or loss.

THE ATHLETE AND THE NCAA

The following is a summary by grade for athletes who are interested in competing at NCAA Division I and II schools. There are two important links that anyone can access over the internet: www.ncaa.org and www.ncaaclearinghouse.net. It is highly recommended to go to the above links and take some time to look through the sites. Students and their parents can download the "Guide for the College-Bound Student Athlete". This guide is very thorough and will help high school athletes prepare for meeting the requirements to play at NCAA Division I and II schools. Also included within this guide are worksheets that will help you compute and plan your high school schedule to meet the core requirements to play in the NCAA.

Middle School: It is important to note that any class taken at the middle school for high school credit "WILL NOT" be counted towards meeting NCAA eligibility requirements.

9th– 11th grades: This is where the worksheets for Division I and Division II come into importance. The most important thing to do your freshman year is to begin a course of study that will enable you to meet the NCAA core requirements. This can be determined by completing the worksheets described above. Two other important things to keep in mind are your GPA and planning on when you will take the ACT and /or SAT tests, as these are all important components in determining eligibility for the NCAA. "You should also go online and find out which courses at our high school are considered as core courses for eligibility."

11th grade: After the completion of your junior year, go online and register with the NCAA clearinghouse at the site listed above. Student athletes will be assigned a PIN number once you have registered and the school will be asked to send official transcripts at different times so they can determine if you are on course for qualifying.

12th grade: Make sure that you have registered with the clearinghouse as mentioned above and send in your transcripts as requested. Keep tracking your core course requirements, GPA, and make sure your ACT or SAT score is in the acceptable range by taking it as many times as Needed.

Student Athlete Code of Conduct

It is important that every athlete and parent understand that athletics falls under the umbrella of the Deer Creek School District and the rules of the Oklahoma Secondary Schools Activities Association. School rules that are in the student handbook will apply to athletics as well. In that participation in athletics is a “privilege” and not a right and is not required for graduation, coaches and/or the athletic director and principal may find it necessary to remove students from the athletic program if there are disciplinary violations that warrant such removal.

Possible disciplinary sanctions include:

- Appropriate disciplinary action from the head coach of the sport
- Temporary suspension from sport
- Contract for improvement with student athlete and parent(s)
- Suspension from the sport for remainder of season
- Suspension from athletics for the year

Deer Creek athletes will be held to a high standard of conduct and need to represent themselves and Deer Creek at such level in the classroom, in the athletic arena, and in the community. Our athletes will be reminded to “do the right thing” and should understand that they will have to accept responsibility for the choices they make. In preparation for signing the athletic contract, it is necessary to adhere to the responsibility of abstaining from drugs, tobacco and alcohol. Signing the athletic contract requires you to make that commitment to yourself, your team, and your school. The following guidelines from the National Federation of High Schools will serve as the example of expectations for a Deer Creek Student Athlete:

ATHLETES CHARACTER CODE		
MORAL VALUE	**ACTIONS IN LIFE**	**ACTIONS IN SPORT**
RESPECT	✓ Be respectful of other people ✓ Be respectful of others’ property ✓ Be respectful of your environment ✓ Be respectful of yourself	✓ Be respectful of the game and to its rules and regulations ✓ Be respectful of your opponents ✓ Be respectful of the officials ✓ Be respectful of victory and defeat
RESPONSIBILITY	✓ Fulfill your obligations ✓ Be dependable ✓ Be in control of yourself ✓ Be persistent	✓ Prepare yourself to do your best ✓ Be punctual for practices and games ✓ Be self-disciplined ✓ Be cooperative with your teammates
CARING	✓ Be compassionate and have empathy ✓ Be forgiving ✓ Be generous and kind ✓ Avoid being selfish and mean	✓ Help your teammates play better ✓ Support teammates in trouble ✓ Be generous with praise; stingy with criticism ✓ Play for the team, not yourself
HONESTY	✓ Be truthful and forthright ✓ Act with integrity ✓ Be trustworthy ✓ Be courageous to do the right thing	✓ Play by the spirit of the rules ✓ Be loyal to the team ✓ Play drug, alcohol, tobacco free ✓ Admit to your own mistakes
FAIRNESS	✓ Follow the Golden Rule ✓ Be tolerant of others ✓ Be willing to share ✓ Avoid taking advantage of others	✓ Treat others as you wish to be treated ✓ Be fair to all players, including those who are different ✓ Give other players an opportunity ✓ Play to win within the rules
GOOD CITIZENSHIP	✓ Obey the laws and rules ✓ Be educated and stay informed ✓ Contribute to the community ✓ Protect others	✓ Be a good role model ✓ Strive for excellence ✓ Give back to the sport ✓ Encourage teammates to be good citizens

SIGNATURE PAGE

Please read and each statement below then sign this form acknowledging the Deer Creek Policies for Extracurricular Activities. All forms and policies are available on the Deer Creek School District website.

Acknowledgement of Athletic Handbook
I have read and understand the requirements of The Athletic Handbook and the Athlete Code of Conduct. I understand that I'm expected to perform according to the rules of the Deer Creek School District, Student & Athletic Handbooks, and Athlete Code of Conduct. I further understand that there may be sanctions or penalties if I do not.

By signing below, I acknowledge that I have read the policies and I understand the responsibilities of competing in extra-curricular activities for Deer Creek Public Schools.

Print Name of Student-Athlete _____ Signature of Student-Athlete _____

Date _____

Print Name of Parent/Legal Guardian _____ Signature of Parent /Legal Guardian _____

Date _____