

Eastern Lebanon County School District



Booster Club Handbook 2026 -2027

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WELCOME

There is a rich athletic tradition in the ELCO School District. Contributing to the success of the ELCO athletic teams is the support provided by Booster Clubs. If you are reading this Booster Club Handbook, there is a good chance that you are involved in the leadership of a Booster Club for an ELCO athletic team. This handbook was developed and written for the leadership of ELCO High School Athletic Team Booster Clubs. The ELCO School District Administration recognizes that Booster Club members unselfishly commit countless volunteer hours to administer productive and successful Booster Clubs. The goal of the ELCO School District Administration is to provide Booster Club leadership with the information and resources necessary to partner with the ELCO Athletic Department to provide an appropriate level of support for the student-athletes and coaches. If you have questions regarding information in this handbook, please contact the ELCO School District Athletic Department at 717-866-7447 or e-mail Tommy Mealy, Director of Athletics, at tmealy@elcosd.org.

PHILOSOPHY FOR INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETICS

Until the mid-1990s, interscholastic (School District sponsored) athletic teams were the most available option for student participation. During the past two decades, club sports (athletic teams sponsored by for-profit, nonprofit, and community organizations) have become widely available to students. It is important that ELCO School District Booster Club leadership understand the philosophy of interscholastic athletics, which can be much different than club teams.

Student-athletes achieve the benefits of interscholastic athletic programs when the program mission and goals align with the mission and goals of the educational institution. In the ELCO School District, our athletic teams are “extracurricular,” meaning that implementation is to be a support mechanism to the curriculum, mission and values of the ELCO School District. ELCO athletic teams are designed and administered to develop young adults who demonstrate responsibility, respect, trustworthiness, fairness, care, and citizenship on and off the field of competition.

Student-athletes have an opportunity to be coached by coaches who model leadership, integrity, respect, selflessness, commitment, teamwork, goal setting and attainment, and effective communication, with a caring, positive, and professional attitude. Providing student-athletes with an opportunity to experience competitive success is a priority but not at the expense of winning and losing without respect and dignity. The ELCO Administration does not evaluate coaches on the basis of winning championships. The highest priority for the ELCO Administration is for coaches to lead athletic teams that have a team culture that provides a positive experience for the student-athletes.

The interscholastic model is a highly effective model of administering athletic teams if all stakeholders adhere to their roles. The Administration administers, coaches’ coach, players play, officials officiate, parents/guardians support their student-athletes, and Booster Clubs support the efforts of the coaches and players. Unfortunately, when a

group attempts to take on the role of another stakeholder, the system becomes dysfunctional and the experience of the student-athlete is diminished.

ROLE AND AUTHORITY OF BOOSTER CLUBS

The ELCO School Board and Administration recognize and declare that the role of Booster Clubs is to assist and support but not direct or interfere with the athletics program. All school district sponsored activities, including athletics, are under the control, direction, and supervision of the School Board and Superintendent through the building Principals and their designee, the Director of Athletics. The Head Varsity Coach serves as the liaison between the Booster Club and the ELCO Administration.

ELCO Booster Club activities should strive to achieve the following objectives:

1. To promote positive fan support, spirit, and sportsmanship;
2. To assist the ELCO School District by providing supplemental benefits and services to student-athletes and coaches; and
3. To increase the opportunity for communication between parents/guardians and coaches in areas of common interest.

Below are some practical examples of acceptable and unacceptable actions of Booster Clubs:

ACCEPTABLE BOOSTER CLUB ACTIVITIES

- Fundraising for items supported by the Head Coach. If this will involve a donation to the school district, please reference Board Policy #702, Gifts Grants, Donations on the district website;
- Provide spirit wear/ warm-up gear/sideline clothing for coaches and student-athletes;
- Organize an end-of-season activity/banquet;
- Fund out-of-season teams/tournament/training opportunities organized by the Head Coach;
- Fund senior recognition items and senior gifts approved by the Head Coach;
- Fund team building activities organized by the Head Coach;
- Organize and fund coaches' gifts;
- Assist the Athletic Department in organizing a "youth night" and encouraging community feeder programs to attend a senior high game;
- Communicate proper spectator behavior and expectations to parents of student-athletes; and
- Provide an opportunity for community members to purchase spirit items.

UNACCEPTABLE BOOSTER CLUB ACTIVITIES

- Fundraising for and purchasing items without support of the Head Coach;
- Organizing in-season and out-of-season activities without approval of the head coach;
- Arranging activities, both fundraising and non-fundraising, during an athletic event without the approval of the Director of Athletics;
- Maintaining or making improvements to ELCO athletic facilities without permission of the ELCO administration and School Board; and
- Using the Booster Club organization as a means to communicate to the ELCO Administration of dissatisfaction with the Head Coach, scheduling of athletic competitions, condition of uniforms, condition of equipment, transportation to away games, assignment of game officials, and condition of facilities.

BOOSTER CLUB ORGANIZATION AND COMMUNICATION

Booster Clubs are governed by a published constitution and by-laws which are consistent with the philosophy, mission, and policies of the ELCO School District. This includes at least three officers such as the positions of President, Vice-President, Secretary, or Treasurer, as well as Committee Chairpersons.

Booster Club communication should be inclusive and transparent. Booster Club by-laws, officers' contact information, meeting dates, meeting agendas, meeting minutes, and current financial reports should be easily accessible to parents/guardians of student-athletes, School and District Administration, and the general public. Booster Club meetings should be held when the Head Coach is not involved with team workouts and practices as the expectation of the ELCO Administration is for the Head Coach to attend Booster Club meetings.

EMPLOYER IDENTIFICATION NUMBER (EIN #)

Please be aware that if the Booster Club is soliciting donations from outside organizations or individuals, the donor may request an employer identification number from the Booster Club to substantiate the gift that was made. Similarly, if the Booster Club is hosting an out-of-season athletic event that charges and directly receives registration fees to participate in events, the participants may request the employer identification number when they register.

In both of these cases it is strongly recommended that each Booster Club establish an employer identification number to eliminate any confusion. The School District will not provide the School District's employer identification number in these circumstances since the revenue will be received directly by the respective Booster Club.

NOT-FOR-PROFIT AND TAX-EXEMPT STATUS

Nonprofit status is a state law concept. Nonprofit status may make an organization eligible for certain benefits, such as state sales, property, and income tax exemptions. Although most federal tax-exempt organizations are nonprofit organizations, organizing as a nonprofit organization at the state level does not automatically exempt the organization from federal income tax. Booster Clubs that do apply for and obtain not-for-profit or tax-exempt status are subject to all declaration, deduction, and filing requirements as set forth by the state and federal governments.

BOOSTER CLUB FUNDRAISING

It is the position of the ELCO School Board and Administration that the ELCO School District will provide for the “needs” of the ELCO sponsored athletic teams. Needs consist of, but are not limited to, School Board approved paid coaching staff, athletic facilities for practices and PIAA competitions, safe and appropriate equipment and uniforms for competitions, transportation to away competitions, game officials for home games, and athletic training services. Support provided by Booster Clubs provide the “wants” for the ELCO sponsored athletic teams. Wants consist of items that are not necessary to administer PIAA athletic teams but may enhance the experience of the ELCO coaches and student-athletes.

SCHOOL BOARD POLICIES ON FUNDRAISING

All Booster Club fundraising must comply with School Board Policy #229 – Student Fundraising, School Board Policy #707 – Use of School Facilities, and School Board Policy #915 – PTO and Booster Organizations. These policies can be found on the district website. It is the expectation of the ELCO Administration that all Booster Club officers read these policies and discuss questions with the Director of Athletics.

Addition to Policy #915: Auxiliary organizations shall bond their treasurer at the District's cost. Auxiliary organizations shall select a new treasurer candidate if the bond is denied, or the cost and risk is excessive.

FUNDRAISING GUIDELINES

1. Fundraising activities should be limited so as to not put undue pressure on community businesses and individuals. Booster Clubs are discouraged from involving themselves in fundraising projects that would be in excess of their projected needs for that sport season. Each Booster Club should undertake no more than one major fundraising project per school year. Mr. Tommy Mealy (tmealy@elcosd.org) must approve all fundraising requests at least two weeks before the start date. Fundraisers are approved on a first-come, first-serve basis.
2. Student-athletes and parents/guardians of student-athletes are not to be required to take part in fundraising activities, nor are they to be “singled-out” if they do not choose to participate in the fundraising activity. The words “mandatory” or “required” are not to be used in any description or communication of a fundraising activity to student-athletes or parents/guardians of student-athletes;

3. Benefits of fundraising are not to be withheld from any student-athletes. Nonparticipation in a fundraising activity will not preclude a student-athlete from receiving the benefits received by student-athletes who participated in the fundraising activity;
4. If your club would like to run a Small Game of Chance fundraiser, you must apply for your own license for each event. The county requires a letter from the District to process the application. Please email Megan Hanichak (mhanichak@elcosd.org) requesting the letter. Also, please note that only one type of Game of Chance fundraiser can be run by an organization each school year. It is important that no two organizations can run the same type of Game of Chance fundraiser simultaneously.
5. Booster Clubs may not use the ELCO tax-exempt number for purchases. Booster Clubs are encouraged to file with the Commission of Charitable Organizations, Department of the State, as a charitable, nonprofit organization to secure their own tax-exempt number.
6. Booster Clubs may not accept any forms of electronic payment such as: Venmo, ZEPHY and Pay Pal.
7. No Booster Club or Athletic Coach member shall be allowed to maintain a checking account or other cash fund for monies earned by students in a school fund-raising project.

NUMBER AND WINDOW OF TIME FOR FUNDRAISERS

1. Limit door-to-door fundraising activities that involve students to in-season;
2. Conduct out of school Fundraisers by Booster members only, according to the Athletic Director/Principal schedule. (No defined time limit or number) Note: Out-of-season student-athletes may participate on a voluntary basis on the day of the Fundraiser only (i.e. work at car wash, refreshment stand, etc.) Limiting the number of Fundraisers reduces the impact upon the community and businesses to raise funds for student booster related activities; and
3. Signage: Booster Clubs who wish to sell signs to display at their team's venue must adhere to the following guidelines:
 - a. A written contract stating the size, fee, and length of time the banner will be displayed during the team's season of play. All banners must be of uniformed size and construction using school colors.
 - b. The Athletic Director, Assistant High School Principal, and Director of Building and Grounds must approve all contracts before they solicit any businesses.
 - c. The School District reserves the right to reject any potential advertiser.
 - i. All sponsors artwork must be approved by School Administration before the banner is purchased and displayed.

GUIDELINES FOR MAKING CONTRIBUTIONS/DONATIONS TO ELCO ATHLETIC TEAMS

The ELCO School District supports the concept of donations to the athletic teams from Booster Clubs. All Booster Club donations must comply with School Board Policy #702

– Gifts, Grants, Donations, and #915 – PTO and Booster Organizations. These policies can be found on district website. It is the expectation of the ELCO Administration that all Booster Club officers read these policies and discuss questions with the Director of Athletics.

Booster Club donations to individual sports must be made with the advice and approval of the Business Manager. This is necessary to:

1. Ensure the donation is aligned with mission and goals of the ELCO Athletic Program;
2. Ensure equity among athletic teams in keeping with the guidelines of Title IX federal legislation; and
3. To protect the student-athletes from potential violations of PIAA regulations concerning amateur status. It is the responsibility of the ELCO School District to ensure that equitable benefits and services are provided to teams and team member of both genders and to ensure there is appropriate storage space and the ability to maintain the donation for the long-term. In accordance with School Board policy, donations are to be presented to the School Board for approval.

GUIDELINES FOR FACILITY USAGE

The ELCO School District supports the concept of Booster Clubs using ELCO facilities to support and assist the ELCO athletic teams. All Booster Club facility use must comply with School Board Policy #707 – Use of School Facilities. This policy can be found on district website. It is the expectation of the ELCO Administration that all Booster Club officers read this policy and discuss questions with the Director of Athletics.

Facilities should be scheduled for all Booster Club meetings and any other Booster Club activities held on ELCO property. The reservation process begins with the Application for Use of School Facilities found on the ELCO website under the Buildings and Grounds webpage. Requests for the Use of School Facilities are to be submitted to Jessica Vicknair via email (jvicknair@elcosd.org). If the facilities are available, the Business Office will determine if a fee will be charged for the use of facilities by a Booster Club.

GUIDELINES FOR HOSTING IN-SEASON TOURNAMENTS

Many ELCO athletic teams have the opportunity to partner with the Athletic Department by hosting a PIAA tournament. This can be a mutually beneficial way to raise funds for the Booster Club and the Athletic Department. The Booster Club and Director of Athletics will work together to determine the details of roles, responsibilities, and revenue/expense allocation of the tournament. The Athletic Department is responsible to the ELCO School District and PIAA for the Administration of all PIAA tournaments hosted at ELCO High School.

GUIDELINES FOR LONG DISTANCE IN-SEASON TRAVEL TO COMPETITIONS

At times, a Head Coach may decide to travel a long distance to an athletic competition and ask for the Booster Club to provide a charter bus and/or overnight accommodation at a hotel for the coaching staff and the student-athletes. Below are guidelines for long distance in-season trips:

1. If the Booster Club is interested in contributing to a charter bus, instead of a standard ELCO bus, the Athletic Department will obtain a quote from a charter bus vendor. The Booster Club will be responsible for paying the Athletic Department for the cost that exceeds the cost of a standard ELCO bus;
2. If the Head Coach requests for the team and coaches to have overnight accommodations from the ELCO Administration, the School Board must approve the trip and the overnight accommodations prior to the requested event.
3. After School Board approval, the Athletic Department will work in conjunction with the Head Coach to arrange the overnight accommodations. The Booster Club is responsible for the cost of the accommodations;
4. It is the recommendation of the ELCO Administration that parents/guardians do not stay in the same hotel as the coaches and student-athletes; and
5. Athletic team overnight trips are subject to all ELCO High School rules and regulations. Violation of High School rules and regulations by student-athletes will result in school and team discipline for the student-athlete.

GUIDELINES FOR SPONSORING OUT-OF-SEASON TEAMS

Sponsoring out-of-season leagues and tournaments is an excellent way for Booster Clubs to assist ELCO athletic teams. However, it is necessary for Booster Clubs to work in partnership with the Head Coach to ensure out-of-season teams comply with PIAA rules and regulations. In Article XVI, Section 2A, Part 4 of the PIAA Constitution and Bylaws, states,

"4. The school's name, nickname, and interscholastic athletic uniform may not be used by community organizations, groups, or students; however, the Principal, may permit community organizations, groups or students to use the school's interscholastic athletic equipment and the school's interscholastic athletic health/first-aid supplies the entire Article XVI Section 2 can be found at <http://www.piaa.org>."

Therefore, the names "ELCO" and "Raiders," may not be used when registering an ELCO High School team or individual to compete in out-of-season leagues or tournaments nor should those names be on the competition uniform.

RECOGNITION OF SENIOR STUDENT-ATHLETES

The ELCO Administration understands the importance of recognizing the senior student-athletes on the athletic teams. Generally, Booster Clubs recognize the senior student-athletes during a recognition at a home competition and at an end-of-the season banquet/gathering. These two recognitions have different purposes.

RECOGNITION AT A HOME COMPETITION

This recognition is usually called “Senior Night” and often scheduled prior to the varsity competition of one of the last regular season home competitions. Although, some ELCO teams hold the senior recognition after the varsity competition of one of the last regular season home competitions. The decision of when the recognition will be held can be determined by the Head Coach and the Booster Club. For recognition events held after the junior varsity game and before the varsity game, the Director of Athletics and the Booster Club will work together for a brief, respectful, and meaningful recognition for the senior student-athletes. The Athletic Department will provide an announcer for the senior recognition. The ELCO Athletic Department will provide information for the seniors to complete and return to the Athletic Department which will include the name of the student-athlete, name of parents/guardians, town of residence and the student-athletes future plans. Additional information or recognitions are to be reserved for post-competition recognition or the end-of-season banquet.

END-OF-SEASON BANQUET/GATHERING

It is recommended that the end-of-the-season banquet/gathering is scheduled following the completion of the season. The dates of Lancaster-League, PIAA District 3, and PIAA State Championships are available by contacting the athletic office. Care must be taken by Booster Clubs not to provide student-athletes with gifts or awards that may be in violation with PIAA rules and regulations. Article II of the PIAA Constitution and By-Laws addresses amateur status of student-athletes and can be found at www.piaa.org. Any questions regarding amateur status should be directed to the Director of Athletics. When planning and holding the end-of-season banquet/gathering, Booster Clubs should be sensitive to the following issues:

1. Formal banquets are expensive. ELCO athletic teams may have picnics/pot luck dinners held on ELCO property or at public parks. These venues provide a pleasant and relaxed atmosphere for honoring student-athletes and their families;
2. Banquets can be lengthy. Repetition of activities, remarks, and recognitions of individuals or groups may lead to restlessness among some attendees and create distraction from the positive nature of the occasion. Organizers should be mindful of reasonable expectations for length not to exceed two hours;
3. Permitting senior-driven activities such as senior farewell speeches, gag gift presentations, and video presentations involve a risk. Prior to the banquet, organizers are to communicate behavior expectations to the student-athletes to reinforce standards of appropriate behavior or to prevent embarrassment or other negative effects to either the presenter or audience; and
4. Alcoholic beverages shall not to be made available to any attendees of an ELCO athletic team banquet/gathering.

SPORT-SPECIFIC AWARDS

Sport-specific awards sponsored by Booster Clubs and alumni groups are to be awarded at the end-of-the season athletic team banquets, or at the Sports Awards Recognition Program at the end of the school year.

SENIOR GIFTS AND COACH GIFTS

Senior gifts are to be kept to modest levels. Cash/Personal checks **shall not** to be given as a senior gift. If the Booster Club desires to provide a monetary gift, a check should be sent to the post-secondary institution to be used to off-set the cost of the student-athletes' post-secondary education. Tokens of appreciation provided to the coaching staff should not exceed the cost of those provided to the senior student-athletes. Please review School Board Policy #322 - Gifts.

GUIDELINES FOR SPECTATOR CONDUCT AT INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETIC EVENTS

Interscholastic athletic events are among the most popularly attended school-sponsored activities. Spectators at an athletic contest take on an important role of representatives of our school district. Actions are seen and comments are heard by family, friends, opposing spectators, local community residents, the local media, administration, coaches, and student-athletes. Our school district expects that all spectators will conduct themselves in a way consistent with the ELCO educational mission.

Booster Clubs can make a significant contribution by governing themselves and holding members of the Booster Club accountable for positive and appropriate behavior during athletic events. The ELCO Administration appreciates Booster Club leadership that communicates and expects positive and appropriate behavior from Booster Club members and parents/guardians of ELCO student-athletes.

The following rules of sportsmanship for spectators at ELCO athletic events outline how Booster Club members can contribute to making athletic contests a positive experience for all persons in attendance:

1. The Lancaster-Lebanon League encourages spectators to cheer and support their respective teams in a positive manner, but not to cheer negatively against the opponent.
2. Only team members in uniform and/or warmups and wearing sneakers, under the coach's supervision are permitted on the floor for warmups to and at halftime of games. Unauthorized personnel are not permitted on the playing surface at the conclusion of the game.
3. The presence and/or the use of balloons, banners, laser pointers, noisemakers, pom-poms (by spectators), shakers, signs, strips of materials, towels, whistles, and/or portable listening devices (without earphones) are PROHIBITED! Persons using such items may be removed from the contest.
4. Only cheerleaders for the purpose of leading cheers or promoting school spirit and authorized personnel are permitted on the sidelines or playing surface.
5. The use of pom-poms by cheerleaders and small portable listening devices with earphones is permitted.
6. During basketball contests cheerleaders may utilize portable signs in their cheer performances and confirm that this does not violate the intent of the "no-sign" policy.

7. Spectators are prohibited from removing their shirt and/or using body and face paint while in attendance at District III and Inter-District Championship contests and may be removed from the contest for doing so. Face decals are permitted.
8. Abusive language, negative gestures, or taunting directed towards players, coaches, officials, cheerleaders, or spectators is prohibited.
9. The throwing of any foreign object that may harass or injure a spectator, player, or official is prohibited.
10. No continuous standing during the contest. Exceptions: before the first basket and last 2 minutes of the game. Athletic Directors and/or Game Managers may need to use professional discretion in the event a team has not scored within the first few minutes of the game.
11. Principals and Athletic Directors shall inform and publicize these regulations to students.
12. The failure of a school to so inform or publicize will not, however, prevent removal from the contest for violations of this policy.

It is important for Booster Clubs to recognize that inappropriate spectator behavior devalues the athletic event and diminishes the experience for the student-athlete. The ELCO Administration appreciates actions taken by Booster Clubs to communicate appropriate spectator behavior expectations to Booster Club members and parents/guardians of the student-athletes.

ELCO SCHOOL DISTRICT LOGO

When using the ELCO School District logo in print materials or for spirit wear, please contact the Athletic Director for approval. One of the easiest mistakes to make in displaying a logo is to choose colors that seem “close enough” or “just about the right shade.” It is important for branding efforts to be as consistent as possible every time our audience sees our logo or a promotional item from our district. The navy blue is Pantone PMS295 and the gold is PMS 124.

ANNUAL EXPENSE AND REVENUE STATEMENT

The ELCO School District is required to submit an annual Interscholastic Opportunities Disclosure Report to the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE). This requires each Booster Club to submit an annual income statement accounting for fiscal activity from July 1 to June 30 each year. The Director of Athletics contacts the Booster Club officers to request the income statement in July of each year.

FALL, WINTER AND SPRING REFRESHMENT STAND GUIDELINES

The fall refreshment stand committee for stadium events will consist of Football, Boys Soccer, Girls Soccer, Band, Field Hockey and Tennis. The Tennis Boosters will sell hamburgers and drinks at all home varsity football games. All money for the stadium events will be divided among the six Booster Clubs evenly. A meeting facilitated by the Athletic Director will be conducted in early August with members of the six Booster

Clubs to set up coverage for all stadium events and decide on responsibilities to run the refreshment stand effectively.

The winter refreshment stand committee for basketball games and wrestling matches will consist of Boys Basketball, Girls Basketball, Wrestling, and Cheerleading. All money for the basketball games and wrestling matches will be divided among the four Booster Clubs evenly. A meeting facilitated by the Athletic Director will be conducted in early December with members of the four Booster Clubs to set up coverage for all events and decide on responsibilities to run the refreshment stand effectively. The High School Learning Support Classroom will be responsible to stock and inventory the refreshment stand. The Wrestling Booster Club will operate the refreshment stand on all-day wrestling events and the funds from these events will all be the profit of the wrestling program.

The Booster Clubs of Girls Volleyball in the fall and Baseball and Track & Field in the spring will operate their own refreshment stand within their respective sport season and receive 100% of the profit.

The fall and winter refreshment stand committees along with Girls Volleyball, Baseball, and Track & Field are required to submit a written copy of their refreshment stand budget to the Athletic Director at the conclusion of their respective season.

All Booster Clubs will pay the ELCO School District 10% of their net profits from the refreshment stand earnings which will go into an escrow account. The escrow account will be used to buy and replace equipment to operate all the refreshment stands.

*All seasonal groups with concessions should report the Activity/Fundraiser form should be filled out at the completed of the season and turned into the District Office. The form should reflect the financial total makings from the season and then include the start and end date, teams involved.

If a needed item for the refreshment stand is to be paid by the escrow account the Booster Club must contact the Athletic Director for approval before the item is purchased.