
HARKER



ATHLETICS

2026-27 UPPER SCHOOL
Handbook For Coaches

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OVERVIEW

Introduction

This handbook continues to evolve. We continue to welcome and value your input regarding athletic policies and philosophy and will consult with you on a regular basis to discuss your program and Harker's athletic program. An athletic department is only as good as its coaches.

Athletic Mission Statement

Harker's athletic program exists to provide students with positive athletic experiences, to show the value of competition, cooperation, and commitment, to teach athletic skills, to develop self-respect and respect for others and to promote physical fitness. We guide our students toward becoming mature adults who see beyond individual needs to the needs of teammates and the larger community.

Athletic Philosophy

Harker's upper school athletic department is committed to the academic and physical needs of students in grades 9-12. Participation in structured activities that emphasize such values as sportsmanship, commitment, dedication, leadership, respect and teamwork is essential. We strive to improve each individual's physical and mental state of health. We believe each student should be given opportunities to help him or her recognize a moral responsibility for one's actions and attitudes.

Athletic Code of Ethics

Athletics provide more than exercise and competition. Sport, at its best, teaches the virtues of humanity, courage, grace, persistence, discipline and greatness of spirit.

Those who coach have a special role in the development of their players and exert a uniquely powerful influence on them. Such power carries with it the responsibility and accountability necessary to follow this code.

A coach should:

- respect and support colleagues and administration.
- treat student-athletes with respect and dignity.
- be an advocate against verbal and physical harassment and maintain a safe environment for athletes.
- teach and practice true sportsmanship.
- be humble in victory and courageous in defeat.

- never publicly criticize other coaches. Always respect and support officials.
- offer congratulations in public – win or lose.
- be an advocate of student abstinence from drugs, alcohol and tobacco. Be a good role model. Conduct oneself to earn the respect and confidence of all.
- conduct oneself as a worthy member of the coaching profession.
- demonstrate professionalism within and outside the Harker community.
- demonstrate the highest level of dedication and commitment to their sport.

DEPARTMENT STRUCTURE

Athletic Director

Dan Molin

The athletic director's primary responsibilities are to provide leadership and direction in the athletic program. Questions concerning coaching responsibilities, athletic events, facilities, eligibility, equipment and finances should be directed to the athletic director.

Assistant Athletic Director

Alfredo Alves

The assistant athletic director's primary responsibility is to assist the athletic director with any administrative need.

Athletic Trainer

Wes Howard

The primary role of the athletic trainer is to care for, and help prevent, athletic injuries. This is accomplished by caring for acute injuries as they occur, and helping to treat and rehabilitate injured student-athletes on site in the athletic training room. The athletic trainer also works to coordinate all health care athletes receive related to their sports injuries, and serves as a liaison between parents, coaches, students and other health care providers. While working under the direction of a licensed physician, the athletic trainer will make all decisions about our student-athletes' ability to participate in their sport.

Strength & Conditioning Coordinator

Marlen Castaneda

The strength & conditioning coordinator's primary responsibility is to collaborate with coaches to develop and conduct off-season, pre-season and in-season development programs for all of our interscholastic sports.

Walk-On Coaches

As a general rule, the walk-on coach should maintain regular contact with the athletic director and strive to make bi-weekly appearances on campus during the season to meet with students. All coaches must check and respond to email daily. During the off-season, walk-on coaches should maintain a limited visitation schedule. In addition, the athletic director should be consulted on any matter requiring a decision that the walk-on coach does not feel comfortable making.

COACHING RESPONSIBILITIES

Planning for the Season

It is essential for coaches to have well-structured plans for their seasons. Each coach will conduct a pre-season meeting with your players to determine or explain the following specific items:

- an emphasis on sport commitment and the importance of early communication to avoid conflicts
- rules of the team: attendance, tardiness, training rules
- goals for the season
- All student forms are on file through our Magnus system.

In preparing for the year, consider the following:

- equipment needs
- communicate travel needs well in advance
- contest set-up needs and procedures
- Coaches should all be familiar with the school calendar to be aware of days when there may be conflicting events on the schedule. Consult with the athletic director.
- Tournament entries are planned well in advance as fee processing takes time
- choice of team parent.
- Make students aware that you expect them to adhere to the concepts of the parent/student athletic handbook.
- Practice and game facilities must be reserved and athletic

- department is notified immediately of any changes.
- Immediately notify athletic department of any roster changes throughout the season.
- knowledge of state, section and league bylaws.
- all catering requests, go through the athletic office.

Supervision

If practices end before 5:45 p.m., students are to report to Manzanita (dining) area until they're picked up on that side of campus. There is supervision there until 6 p.m.

If your practice or home/away game ends after 6 p.m., you are to remain present until all of your athletes are picked up.

Head and/or assistant coaches shall properly supervise locker rooms. Ensure athletes are quickly getting ready for practices and games without them "hanging out" in the locker room. The same procedure is applied post-practices as well. Coaches should be the first to arrive and last to leave.

Coaches' Checklist

Please note the following requirements in order to be compliant with state, section and Harker employment. Also note required events which you must attend:

- NFHS Fundamentals of Coaching online course with California supplement, completed once in your coaching career. (www.nfhslearn.com)
- NFHS Concussion in Sports: What You Need to Know course, completed once every two years. (www.nfhslearn.com)
- NFHS Sudden Cardiac Arrest course completed once every two years. (www.nfhslearn.com)
- NFHS Heat Illness Prevention course, once every two years (www.nfhslearn.com)
- First Aid & CPR training: This is offered three to four times throughout the school year and must be kept up to date. It must be renewed every two to three years.
- All Harker annual online trainings
- Harker online biography. Make sure your online bio is complete and up to date using the Harker specific survey: <https://forms.gle/4PArkE88QuqPsARQ6>

- Driver Policy and Acknowledgement Form: Must be on file in order to drive Harker students and/or Harker vehicle. Form available on the faculty portal or through the athletic office.
- Meet with college counselors (varsity head coaches): Set up a time to meet with them each spring to discuss your rising seniors. They rely on your quotes heavily to assist them in writing college recommendations.

Other required attendance dates:

- Annual grade 4-12 Coaches Workshop (usually the third Saturday in August)
- Upper School Open House, Date and time TBA
- League pre- and post-season meetings (varsity head coach only)
- Your season's parent night (all coaches)
- Athletic Awards Night (usually the last Wednesday in May)

Parents' Preseason Meeting

Communication is vital to a healthy relationship between coach and parent. Each coach must conduct a preseason meeting with the parents. No student may participate in an athletic contest until a parent has met with the coach at the preseason team meeting or individually at a time convenient to both parties.

The topics to be covered at the preseason parent meeting include but are not limited to:

- introduce assistant and lower level coaches; explain program as a whole
- an emphasis on commitment and priorities during your season. Discuss a four-year commitment as optimal, including their junior year.
- how uniforms are issued or purchased; when students are expected to return equipment; what students will be billed for such as clothing, food, etc.
- discuss athletic clearance requirements
- team rules
- emphasize points from athletic trainer which include return to play protocol resulting from injury and/or concussions, and strength & conditioning coordinator
- the Parent/Student Athletic Handbook (PowerPoint presentation)
- attendance procedures, and how an absence can affect playing time or remaining on the team.
- end-of-year lettering and gathering

- parents' role as spectators (cheer positively for all athletes) and explain any new rule changes or differences between college, pro and our league
- practice and game schedules, especially vacation and weekend commitments, and for outdoor sports, how postponed games may be rescheduled.
- specific rules about making the team and earning playing time. Playing time discussions are between athlete and coach only, not with parents.
- soliciting volunteers, team parents, etc. Introduce team parent if one is already defined. Allow them to speak if needed.
- travel teams and expectations of bus travel and release only to their parents; mention picking up their child in a timely fashion after events
- Chain of command, problem-solving: talk to you first, then athletic director, then assistant head of school for student affairs.

The athletic director may help you identify a team parent whose responsibilities may include:

- assisting in end-of-season gathering,
- encouraging parents to attend competitions in support of the team,
- assisting in any other areas of concern.

Team Equipment

For most sports there are two types of equipment: uniforms and general team equipment. Uniforms are checked out to individual team members who have qualified under eligibility requirements and who have been identified as a team member by the athletic director. Coaches shall require each student to sign for all team apparel upon distribution. Although the uniform is the responsibility of the student, it is the athletic director's responsibility to issue the appropriate charges when equipment is lost, stolen or damaged. Uniform and equipment distribution and collection is the responsibility of the head coach and is coordinated with the assistant athletic director, equipment manager and/or athletic director. Postseason uniform collection should occur in an organized, timely fashion. Varsity athletes will receive a Harker varsity jacket. Extra team gear or "spirit packs" will consist of no more than three items (i.e., shorts, T-shirts, warm-up), and covered by the athletic department.

Finances

You are responsible for signing your offer letter with all information requested. Any equipment and uniform needs must go through the athletic director first. Do not order or receive items on your own. All items must be received by shipping and receiving for proper inventory and tracking purposes. Do not go to the business office.

All non-exempt coaches must utilize the Paycom App to record hours of work. Any rare missed or forgotten swipes or pre-approved work from home must be communicated to the athletic director and assistant athletic director that same day via the app. Head varsity coaches are responsible for budget submission to the athletic director when requested, usually early November for the following school year.

Travel Policy

Dismissal times come from the athletic department and are sent to coaches on a weekly basis. For early class dismissal, coaches must relay dismissal times to students once information is received from the athletic department. It's important to report any time discrepancies to the athletic department as soon as possible. Students must check with their teachers for any assignments to be missed due to athletic travel. Coaches must assist with this endeavor. Additionally, please communicate changes to game day travel rosters so proper school attendance is noted.

It is a major priority of the athletic department to keep students in class every minute possible while still providing sufficient warm up time for your contests.

School Bus Regulations

1. Most away game travel is by bus for all players and coaches. At least one coach, and for teams of 18 players or more, two coaches, must ride the bus with the team, unless previously approved by the athletic department.
2. The coach is responsible first for taking roll before the bus departs Harker, and must be aware of the travel numbers to and from an event. The coach should inform the athletic department of any changes to the travel roster from day to day to assist with preparing attendance rosters for travel, and send confirmation of those on the bus before it departs. Attendance must be taken again before the bus leaves the game site.

3. While the bus driver is responsible for the safe operation of the bus and for its passengers, the coach is responsible for enforcing all rules and regulations regarding safe behavior by the students as established by the driver at departure. Whether riding on a Harker bus or chartered vehicle, this principle applies.

4. At game's end, students may only be released to their parents after you make direct contact with them. This protocol should be established at the parent meeting at the beginning of the season. Students are not allowed to leave the contest site with anyone other than their parents, so they may not arrange to "ride home with a friend or friend's parents" at the last minute, unless previously arranged via email from all parties allowing such travel with others.

5. For games on Harker campuses, students may take the intercampus shuttle or drive themselves to the game or practice. They may not drive other students. With prior approval from the athletic director, a student-athlete may drive themselves to a competition if they live close to the opposing site. General boundaries for self-driving are south of Atherton or Fremont and north of Morgan Hill.

6. Driving alone with one student is not permitted. If no other solution exists, contact the athletic director or assistant athletic director.

Insurance

All students are required to have health insurance in order to participate in any athletic activity.

Evaluations and Feedback

The athletic director will visit at least one practice and one competition during your season. Additionally, a meeting will be held with the athletic director at the conclusion of your season. At this meeting come prepared to give a self-evaluation of what went well during your season, and suggestions for improving the next year's season.

We will conduct mid-season surveys of all student-athletes to gather feedback regarding their athletic experience. This information may also be used to foster conversations between coach and athletic director.

Eagle Award: Students will choose the recipient at the end of their seasons by secret ballot. The award will be presented to the member of the team who has displayed the following criteria:

- enthusiasm at all times
- support for the team and individuals throughout the season
- hustle in every task assigned
- a positive role model for other members of the team
- a selfless and giving approach to the program

This award will be presented at the end-of-the-year athletic awards night. Also, this evening will recognize multiple sport athletes (three or more), the Iron Eagle Award, the commitment award, league achievement award, and the directors' awards. Students who successfully complete a varsity season will be recognized at the team's postseason gathering.

Awards are as follows:

- First year: Block letter with a brass pin of the sport
- Second year: Service bar
- Third year: Service bar
- Fourth year: Service bar

In addition to these awards, head coaches are supplied plaques (four to varsity teams and two to junior varsity) by the athletic department, which will be awarded at a postseason gathering. Each coach must conduct a postseason gathering to provide season closure. Coaches are to give the award titles and recipient's name to the athletic director at least two weeks prior to the gathering. Head coaches will be responsible for notifying the athletic director of those who qualified in their sport.

The criteria for this selection are as follows:

- attendance for practice and games
- attitude at practice and games

Attendance & Eligibility

Students must be present for 50% of their classes in order to participate in extracurricular activities such as a school dance or performance, or an athletic event or practice on the day of the absence. In the event that a student has only one class on the day of absence, that student must be present for that class in order to participate in extracurricular activities. The dean of students must approve any exceptions. Communicate additions to or deletions from rosters to the athletic office as soon as

they occur.

Our athletes will adhere to a 2.0 grade policy to determine academic eligibility. The athletic director and dean of students or upper school head will work together to determine each student's status. Most of our games will be scheduled during weekdays. Talk with your athletes about their particular class schedules.

League Meetings

Varsity head coaches must attend their respective league meetings that take place both prior to and at the conclusion of their particular season. At these meetings you will be allowed to suggest policy changes and make various recommendations. If you cannot attend, please send an assistant or notify the athletic director.

Dismissal from a Team

Dismissal from a team is the last action a coach should take in attempting to discipline a student. Counseling, suspensions, etc., are alternative ways of dealing with discipline problems.

Because of the seriousness and ramifications of suspension or dismissal from a team, it is required that due process is followed as part of the action taken by school officials:

- a 24-hour grace or "cooling off" period before communicating any decision
- notification to the athletic director/administrator
- parents and student notified regarding circumstances and reasons for the action
- athletes should be notified of their right to appeal.

The reasons for this policy are to alleviate irrational actions by coaches and misunderstandings by parents and the community. There will be no dismissal or suspension from a team without a face-to-face conference with the parent(s) that includes the athletic director or assistant head of school for student affairs. The dismissed athlete still has the right to appeal their case to the athletic director.

Practice Guidelines

Any practice longer than two hours must have prior approval from the athletic director. Practice on campus will begin between 3:15-6 p.m. and end between 5-8 p.m. depending on the school dismissal times. Stick

firmly to your posted times and utilize every minute wisely and productively. Students perform better when their time is structured. It is also important that your practice be organized so you can accomplish what needs to be done in a two-hour time frame.

Be aware that no one comes to practice to stand and watch others perform. Organize your practice so people are constantly moving and improving in the elements of the game that will make your teams successful.

You will be expected to write out daily practice plans. Hopefully this will accomplish two things. First, it will give you the opportunity to review what types of practices were successful. Another good reason to maintain these records is to be proactive about athletic injuries. You can look back over your records and determine what ways to improve conditions for the next year.

Reporting Scores/Record Keeping/Media

Head varsity coaches must report contest results to the appropriate media contacts. Results must be posted on Maxpreps, emailed to webmaster@wbalsports.org, (for WBAL sports.) and emailed to athletics@harker.org. Please keep accurate team and individual records and be a historian of your program. Team and individual statistics will be turned in at the end of your season as part of check-out procedures. Harker's O of C handles the school's media relations, and works with the media to garner appropriate news coverage, assist reporters with their stories and track coverage of the school. We report coverage in both Harker News online and the Harker Magazine.

If the media contacts you for Harker-related information, explain that it's school policy to refer all inquiries to the O of C and refer them to news@harker.org or 408.345.9661. (The only exception is sports coverage where reporters attend and report on games, publish stats, etc.). Reporters and photographers wishing to cover Harker students, faculty and programs must be signed in at the front desk and escorted by O of C staff when on campus. While we do our best to monitor Harker media coverage, social media has created a proliferation of information about the school, students and faculty over which we have little control but that we monitor regularly. Please contact us if you run across anything of concern.

If you're asked to provide photos, information, logos, etc., for publications and websites of organizations related to contests and competitions, contact the O of C who will help provide the right files, photos, permissions, etc.

If the administration has released an official statement on an issue, you may reiterate that statement, but refrain from commenting or answering questions from the media. It is important that the school speaks with one voice on school-related issues.

Coaches must be receptive to Harker Journalism interview requests and are allowed to dictate the time of the interview. Efforts should certainly be made to conduct the interview soon after the game if requested.

Social Media and Student Interaction

Using Social Media

It's important that employees exercise appropriate discretion when using social media (even for personal communications), monitor their sites to keep them safe and/or clear of spam and hijacking by inappropriate sites, and keep in mind that social media activities may be visible to current, past and prospective students, parents, colleagues and community members. Athletic staff are encouraged to follow the school's social media - Facebook, Instagram, etc. - and to share any posts about Harker's athletic program. It's a great way to support our athletes and program..

Interacting with Students

This is covered in the boundaries portion of the fall coaches' meeting. To ensure clear boundaries, faculty and staff can only "friend" or "follow" a Harker student in social media, such as Facebook, Instagram and SnapChat, after the student has become an alumnus of the school and is 18 years of age or older (exceptions are of course made for faculty/staff parents following their own children). Using social media as part of a classroom, club or off-campus trip must be cleared by the division head and Office of Communication.

Please refer to the personnel handbook for further guidelines on using social media, email, text and telephone contact with students. In short, you may only use your Harker email to communicate with your team roster at their Harker student email address. All text contact must be done using the Remind App only. With an appointment, the director of learning, innovation and design (LID) can help you set up that app for

your team.

STUDENT-ATHLETES

Athletic Training

The certified athletic trainer provides injury assessment on site, initial first aid, therapeutic exercise and rehabilitation, and also coordinates return-to-play decisions. The athletic trainer often is the primary contact for parents in the case of injury, communicating with doctors who become involved in an injury situation, and acting as liaison to coaches in the above situations.

Injuries and Release of Student-Athletes to Play

When athletic injuries occur, it is the responsibility of the coach to report them directly to the athletic training staff and to refer the student to the athletic training room. For more serious injuries the athletic trainers should be called immediately to the site. In the absence of an athletic trainer, or if the injury occurs off site, then care for the injury is the responsibility of the coach. The coach is responsible for initial assessment and first aid, communication with parents, and calls to 911 if necessary, while utilizing the emergency plan. The athletic trainer should then be informed about the incident as soon as practical, and definitely within 24 hours. For less serious injuries or those that are less time-sensitive, students can be referred to check in with the athletic trainer the next day. Any time a referral is made in this fashion, the coach is expected to check in with the athletic training staff to discuss the referral prior to the next day of activity for the student. As an example, if a student has an injury that may affect their ability to participate, the coach is expected to tell the student to report to the athletic trainer, hold them accountable to follow-through, and then make certain they communicate with the athletic trainer themselves.. Any athlete who is unable to complete a practice or game, or who misses a practice or game, or who sees a doctor for treatment for an injury, must have that injury reported to the athletic trainer. The coach must then receive written clearance via the injury reports maintained by the athletic trainers prior to that student-athlete's return to play. The response to these injuries will not be left to the discretion of the student. There are no exceptions to this protocol, which is designed to protect all coaches in this area of liability.

Also, any student-athlete who sees a doctor for an injury or illness that affects their ability to participate in their sport must provide written

permission (preferably on athletic training department forms) from the doctor prior to returning to any practice or competitive play. This form is to be returned to the athletic training staff, and follow-up instructions will be communicated to the coach. Coaches should never collect doctors' notes.

The athletic trainer will regularly distribute an injury report for the head coach of each team. This will include an updated status of rehabilitation and recovery progresses until the student-athlete is given full return-to-play status. This report will be in the form of a Google Doc and will be emailed to coaches. The coach will be required to acknowledge receipt of every report sent (via email reply or comment on document itself) in order to support the personal communication between coach and athletic trainer and help to protect and support the student-athlete. This will help ensure that all parties are on the same page. Upon review by the coach, if the injury report does not accurately reflect the physical status of the members of the team, the coach should immediately communicate that to one of the certified athletic trainers. More frequent reports or direct communication with coaches may be required in some circumstances. Coaches must follow the recommendations made by the athletic training staff, and should call or message the athletic trainers directly when they have any questions or concerns regarding the health status of their players.

Strength & Conditioning

Strength & conditioning is the development of physical performance through the combination of strength training, aerobic/anaerobic conditioning, and recovery methods. Harker's strength & conditioning program is led by Marlen Castaneda, but should be head coach driven in terms of attendance and importance for sport preparation.

Coaches should have a year-round approach in preparation for their competitive season as the next season begins the day after the current season ends. The development of our student athletes is a four-year progressive process, and it should be the coaches' expectation that their athletes participate in strength & conditioning year-round (off- season, preseason or in-season). It is particularly important for our student athletes to participate in a well-planned preseason strength & conditioning program which will allow head coaches to spend less time conditioning their athletes and more time on technical and tactical skill development. Another important benefit of preseason strength & conditioning is the reduced risk of overuse injuries that typically occur during the first three to four weeks of practice. Practice time is precious

and valuable therefore having fewer athletes miss practice due to these minor injuries leads to increased sport play.

Coaches must make sure their student athletes stay current with all medical clearance paperwork on Magnus. All student athletes must provide athletic clearance prior to working in our strength & conditioning program as well as in their respective sports. Failure to do so will result in being sidelined for practices and games until compliant.

Athletic Clearance

Coaches have the critical duty of ensuring all students participating in their sport or activity are cleared to participate. Wes Howard will create a working roster prior to your season commencing, based on who registers for your sport. This working roster will indicate to you who is cleared and who is not. For a student to be cleared, the student's name needs to appear on the roster AND clearly show a "YES" in the clearance column. This will indicate that they are cleared to participate. These rosters will be available to you through Google Docs, and viewable even from your phone, so you will always have access to the most current status of your athletes. If an athlete's name does NOT appear on the clearance roster, it means that student has NOT registered, and is NOT cleared to participate. You may provide those students with the clearance-how-to PDF, or simply refer them to the athletic trainer.

For best compliance, pre-season meetings can be conducted by coaches, and information/instructions can be emailed out well in advance to anyone who has expressed interest in participating in your sport. A "how to get cleared" instructional sheet is available for you to send anyone who inquires about your sport. It contains instructions on the required 2-step process. Step 1 (for parents): Complete required paperwork online. Step 2 (for students): Register for sport/activity they intend to play or try out for.

Prior to your first event off-campus (first away game, or off-site practice) the athletic trainer will provide you with a set of emergency cards that you should carry with you for the duration of the season. You must have these available at all practices and games. These will contain important medical information and emergency contacts. In the cases of multiple coaches, we will create multiple sets of emergency cards so each coach has them available. Because of the nature of the information they contain, emergency cards should remain in the coach's possession and

kept private. They should never be handled by students, managers, etc. As a back-up to the hard copies, you will also receive a PDF copy sent to your email.

Sharing Athletes Across Programs

Since Harker is a small school and coaches always “share” athletes, coaches must always have a view toward the athletic program as a whole. Coaches should encourage student-athletes to participate in other sports and programs if they can coexist with a minimum of conflict, and discourage sport specialization.

Coaches who wish to internally recruit a student-athlete who is currently playing another sport at Harker must speak with the athletic director. This is required if the sport involved occurs during the same season as one the student may have previously played. For example, a student who previously played baseball in the spring now wants to swim. This needs to be reviewed with the athletic director. This is to ensure that the athletic director can be an active participant in the communication process with the student and the coaches.

The Admissions Process and C.I.F. Rule 510

We believe that a Harker education and participation in athletics can be a life-changing experience. Most of us involved in athletics have had the privilege to be positively impacted by a coach during our lives, and it may be one of the primary reasons why we coach. Coaches can have a tremendous influence on young people.

Our task is to make sure that influence begins after the student is enrolled at Harker, and not before. The California Interscholastic Federation (C.I.F.) has clearly defined guidelines regarding pre-enrollment contact, and at Harker we will strive to adhere to them implicitly. Clearly the recruitment of students to Harker for the expressed purpose of participation in our athletic programs is prohibited. We also do not offer athletic scholarships. All financial aid is need-based, involving a neutral third-party process.

The entirety of Rule 510 that governs this topic can be found at www.cifccs.org. We will present a summary on the topic at the fall coaches’ meeting each year, and to all coaches who join us after the beginning of the year. What is included here is a brief summary intended to provide necessary guidance in this area.

The use of Undue Influence to secure or retain a student can result in loss of eligibility for the student and serious sanctions for the school. Undue Influence is any act, gesture or communication that may objectively be seen as an inducement to a student or their family to enroll in, transfer to, or even remain in (such as Harker eighth graders matriculating to Harker grade 9) a school for athletic purposes.

This can be complicated. Some of our upper school coaches also coach our middle school teams. Some of our coaches also coach for clubs on which prospective students may play. We have other club teams that use Harker's facilities. Some of our coaches may be on boards that govern local athletic leagues. Some of our coaches give private instruction in their sport as an income stream. So it is unrealistic to believe that there may not be some contact between our upper school coaches and prospective students. It is the form that contact takes that is critical.

In any of the above scenarios, if approached by a student or family about applying to the upper school, it is okay to be positive about their interest in Harker, but the immediate next step is to refer them to our admissions office to continue the process and the conversation. You can also advise them of the dates of the annual open houses and direct them to attend one of those for more information. Since coaches are able to attend those open houses that showcase the general program at Harker, it is a time when you can answer more general information about the program. If they wish to have a more in-depth conversation focusing on Harker's athletic program, that should be scheduled by appointment. Any coach asked for such an appointment should coordinate it through the admissions office to ensure that another administrator (which can include the athletic director) is present. The conversation can then focus on athletic or coaching philosophy or general information about the sport such as schedule, practice format and timing, coordination with academic schedules and demands, etc. But at no time questions specific as to role in the program, playing time, or the Harker's program needs (i.e., if this was a conversation about baseball, implying that we sure could use a new first baseman after the family reveals the student plays first base) should be addressed. The presence of another administrator is for your own protection should accusations of recruiting ever arise and to help steer the conversation clear of improper areas like the ones referenced above.

It's important to maintain perspective about our program. Strive to be the best coach engaged in the best program Harker can offer, and let

the program do the talking for us.

It's about intent. We all have the intelligence and integrity to know our real motivations in this area. If the intent of any action is to get a student-athlete to transfer to, enroll in, or matriculate to Harker for the purpose of having that student-athlete participate in our athletic program then that activity is a violation of Rule 510.

The athletic director will take special care to scrutinize all potential transfers who may be interested in enrolling at Harker and participating in our athletic program. We will complete all required C.I.F. / C.C.S. paperwork in a timely fashion and ask hard questions about pre-enrollment contact if it has occurred to ensure that the contact has been conducted in accordance with Rule 510. We cannot and will not condone contact which we know violates the intention of Rule 510 and will follow up with any coach whom we feel needs more education in this area. We will accurately characterize that contact to the C.C.S. in our communications with them and respect all decisions regarding eligibility of transfers.

Addendum

Building a Program

Building a program is accomplished by:

- treating all members consistently and with respect,
- having open lines of communication between coach and player, which should exist without the player having a feeling of retribution,
- having team goals that everyone contributes to attaining,
- acting in a professional manner when dealing with your team, and
- demonstrating the values that you expect team members to exhibit (i.e., sportsmanship, practice attire, etc.),
- communicating with team parents, league officials and the greater Harker community in an inclusive professional manner,
- making a connection with the middle school program.

10 Guarantees All Coaches Owe Every Student Athlete

1. Some individual time.
2. Encouragement, regardless of the student-athlete's level of ability.
3. A reasonable opportunity to compete.
4. Top-notch role modeling, from grooming and dress to campus behavior and ethics in general.
5. The absence of foul language.
6. Assistance and guidance with personal problems that arise in every young person's life.
7. A well-structured athletic environment, from practices to actual competition days.
8. Recognition for the contribution each student-athlete has made to the team.
9. Fair, firm and consistent discipline.
10. The right to have a high school career not consumed by the "year round" single sport mentality.

Concussion Information and Management

In order to use the best practices on caring for student athletes, and to follow California state law, we have a very strict concussion management protocol in place. First, this requires coaches to remain current with concussion education, to be renewed every two years, at the time of first aid renewal. The free concussion education module from NFHS satisfies this requirement. This will cover common questions about concussion, and help coaches in recognizing signs and symptoms of concussion.

The law requires coaches to act to protect players. Any student who exhibits signs or symptoms of concussion **MUST** be removed from participation for that day until cleared by a licensed health care provider. After removal from play, help be aware and take note of signs and symptoms and immediately refer to the AT or nurse on campus, or the AT covering the site if applicable. In the absence of a healthcare provider, the coach must monitor and care for the athlete and notify parent/guardian and athletic trainer as soon as reasonable. **DO NOT** send an athlete home without touching base with a parent. All athletes suspected of concussion will be referred to a doctor; the athletic trainer will facilitate this.

All students suspected of experiencing a concussion must provide the athletic training staff with written clearance from a physician prior to returning to ANY physical activity. They must also follow a return to play protocol that involves graduated steps of physical activity, supervised by an athletic trainer. Following a concussion, coaches must follow the strict activity limitations dictated by the athletic trainers as they follow this return to play protocol, with absolutely no exceptions. Explicit instructions will be included in the regular injury reports; if you have any questions please discuss them with the athletic trainer.

A concussion is a brain injury and all brain injuries are serious. They are caused by a bump, blow, or jolt to the head, or by a blow to another part of the body with the force transmitted to the head. They can range from mild to severe and can disrupt the way the brain normally works. Even though most concussions are mild, all concussions are potentially serious and may result in complications including prolonged brain damage and death if not recognized and managed properly. In other words, even a “ding” or a bump on the head can be serious. You can’t see a concussion and most sports concussions occur without loss of consciousness. Signs and symptoms of concussion may show up right after the injury or can take hours or days to fully appear. If your child reports any symptoms of concussion, or if you notice the symptoms or signs of concussion yourself, seek medical attention right away.

Symptoms may include one or more of the following:

- Headaches
- “Pressure in head”
- Nausea or vomiting
- Neck pain
- Balance problems or dizziness
- Blurred, double or fuzzy vision
- Sensitivity to light or noise
- Feeling sluggish or slowed down
- Feeling foggy or groggy
- Drowsiness
- Change in sleep patterns
- Amnesia
- “Don’t feel right”
- Fatigue or low energy
- Sadness
- Nervousness or anxiety
- Irritability
- More emotional
- Confusion
- Concentration or memory problems (forgetting game plays)
- Repeating the same question/comment

Signs observed by teammates, parents and coaches include:

- Appears dazed
- Vacant facial expression
- Confused about assignment
- Forgets plays
- Is unsure of game, score or opponent
- Moves clumsily or displays incoordination
- Answers questions slowly
- Slurred speech
- Can't recall events after hit
- Seizures or convulsions
- Any change in typical behavior or personality
- Loses consciousness
- Shows behavior or personality changes
- Can't recall events prior to hit

What can happen if my child keeps on playing with a concussion or returns too soon?

Athletes with the signs and symptoms of concussion should be removed from play immediately. Continuing to play with the signs and symptoms of a concussion leaves the young athlete especially vulnerable to greater injury. There is an increased risk of significant damage from a concussion for a period of time after that concussion occurs, particularly if the athlete suffers another concussion before completely recovering from the first one. This can lead to prolonged recovery, or even to severe brain swelling (second impact syndrome) with devastating and even fatal consequences. It is well known that adolescent or teenage athletes will often under-report symptoms of injuries. And concussions are no different. As a result, education of administrators, coaches, parents and students is the key for student-athlete safety.

If you think your child has suffered a concussion:

Any athlete even suspected of suffering a concussion should be removed from the game or practice immediately. No athlete may return to activity after an apparent head injury or concussion, regardless of how mild it seems or how quickly symptoms clear, without medical clearance. Close observation of the athlete should continue for several hours.

The new CIF Bylaw 313 now requires implementation of long and well-established return-to-play concussion guidelines that have been recommended for several years:

CIF Bylaw 313. CONCUSSION PROTOCOL

A student-athlete who is suspected of sustaining a concussion or head injury in a practice or game shall be removed from competition at that time for the remainder of the day. A student-athlete who has been removed from play may not return to play until the athlete is evaluated __

by a licensed health care provider trained in education and management of concussion and receives written clearance to return to play from that health care provider. (Approved May 2010 Federated Council)

Q: What is meant by "licensed health care provider?"

A: The "scope of practice" for licensed health care providers and medical professionals is defined by California state statutes. This scope of practice will limit the evaluation to a medical doctor (MD) or doctor of osteopathy (DO).

You should also inform your child's athletic trainer or coach if you think that your child may have a concussion. Remember it is better to miss one game than miss the whole season. And when in doubt, the athlete sits out.

For up-to-date information on concussions you can go to:

<https://www.cdc.gov/headsup/youthsports/index.html> or

<https://www.cifstate.org/sports-medicine/concussions/index>

(Adapted from the CDC and the third International Conference on Concussion in Sport Document created 5/20/2010)

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