

# First Academy Leesburg

## Athletic Handbook



**FIRST ACADEMY - LEESBURG  
2010-2011 ATHLETIC HANDBOOK**

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Because of the many situations that may arise, it is understood that the handbook is a guideline and not a complete document.

In areas where the family or athletic handbook does not directly address an issue it will be the determination of the Athletic Director then the Administrative staff who will act as the governing body.

## Welcome

Welcome to the First Academy Leesburg Athletic Program. We are excited about the season ahead and the potential for success at every level of our program.

Your son or daughter is at the heart of our focus. It is our desire that they be given every opportunity to shine for his or her Savior, family, and school.

We have compiled an excellent group of coaches that will direct our teams this year. First Academy offers the following sports at the following grade levels:

**ATHLETIC DIRECTOR                  Don Birdsall**

**Fall Sports:**

BOYS VARSITY FOOTBALL .....	Grades 9-12
GIRLS VARSITY VOLLEYBALL .....	Grades 9-12
GIRLS MIDDLE SCHOOL VOLLEYBALL .....	Grades 6-8
BOYS VARSITY GOLF .....	Grades 6-12
GIRLS VARSITY GOLF .....	Grades 6-12*
CO-ED MIDDLE SCHOOL SOCCER .....	Grades 6-8

**Winter Sports:**

BASKETBALL VARSITY BOYS .....	Grades 9-12*
BASKETBALL VARSITY GIRLS .....	Grades 9-12*
SOCCER VARSITY BOYS .....	Grades 9-12*
BASKETBALL JV BOYS .....	Grades 9-11*
BASKETBALL MIDDLE SCHOOL BOYS .....	Grades 6-8
BASKETBALL MIDDLE SCHOOL GIRLS .....	Grades 6-8

**Cheerleading:**

VARSITY GIRLS .....	Grades 9-12*
MIDDLE SCHOOL GIRLS .....	Grades 6-8

**Spring Sports:**

TRACK VARSITY BOYS .....	Grades 6-12
TRACK VARSITY GIRLS .....	Grades 6-12
TRACK MIDDLE SCHOOL BOYS .....	Grades 6-8
TRACK MIDDLE SCHOOL GIRLS .....	Grades 6-8
TENNIS VARSITY BOYS .....	Grades 6-12
TENNIS VARSITY GIRLS .....	Grades 6-12

*\*Exceptions can be made with the consent of the Athletic Director in accordance with the FHSAA rules and regulations.*

*And/or*

*\*Subject to student availability.*

## Philosophy of Athletics

Athletics are a key part of a student's school experience. Lessons in athletics help in the development of character and values. Through their participation they will be challenged to grow and develop in many ways. First Academy's athletic program is designed to compliment the academics and Christian values we strive for in all areas of the school.

The purpose of our athletic program is to teach students to develop a Christ-like attitude and life style. We will emphasize Christian character and expect our athletes to be a witness for Christ's Kingdom on and off of the campus. We promote a team concept of growth, and are not here for self-glorification. Although we strive to be the best and emphasize winning, our win-loss records are not the key of measuring success. Success will primarily be measured by the quality of young people we produce.

The support and encouragement of each parent is essential for a successful athletic program. First Academy has a definitive role in supporting the family and local churches in developing responsible Christians for the Lord's service. Parents are therefore expected to set a proper example for their children and others in supporting our teams and in keeping with the purpose of First Academy athletics. Every spectator has the responsibility to demonstrate respect for coaches, participants, officials, and other spectators. Due to the intense nature of athletics and the uniqueness of each player, there will be times when open and honest communication is needed to understand and support your student, or his/her coach. Please communicate with the coach, by appointment, if there is something you do not understand. Through a preseason meeting and a printed schedule we hope to keep you informed. Because of the intensity of athletics, great responsibility is given to all athletes to demonstrate the Spirit of Christ within them.

*The following information should be read carefully and agreed to by both parents and student before the season begins.*

## Team Commitment Policy

The following rules apply to all sports:

1. All rules and regulations stated in the Student Handbook will also apply to all school sponsored activities.
2. Students who tryout for a sport and make the team, need to realize that they have entered into an agreement in which others are dependent upon them to contribute. Once a student is part of a team, he/she will be responsible for all practices, competitions, and other responsibilities unique to their sport season.
3. Student athletes are expected to be **on-time** to every practice and game. They are to be dressed properly for games and practices. For games, the student athlete is to wear the uniform as stated in the FHSAA hand book. For practices, coaches shall ensure that every athlete is dressed appropriately. This means no under garments showing, no midriff, and no cleavage.
4. On game days, proper attire is expected to be worn to and from all games. The minimum standard is to wear the school uniform. Other possibilities include team uniform warm-ups, dresses for the ladies, and dress slacks, dress shirt, and tie for the gentlemen. Coaches are responsible for handling all inappropriate dress promptly. Students may wear an approved team t-shirt with school dress code bottoms. Shirts must be tucked and belts worn according to the student handbook.

5. At every game, officials are representative of authority. Students are expected to respect that authority whether they agree or not with the decisions made. Any show of disrespect can result in removal from the game. If a student is ejected from a game he/she will be subject to a minimum of a one week or two game suspension, as well as possible dismissal from the team.
6. Public displays of affection between students are not appropriate at any school activity.
7. In order for a student to participate in practice or a game, he/she must attend school in accordance with the following policies:
  - a) Students who are absent from school may not participate in **extracurricular** activities during that day.
  - b) Students must attend four full class periods in order to participate in an athletic contest that day.
  - c) Returning late from away games will not result in an excused absence the next day. Student athletes are expected to be in regular attendance the day following an athletic competition. Medical excuses may be permitted in some cases. The Athletic Department will deal with lack of compliance.
8. Uniforms (except cheerleading) are the property of the school and are not to be worn **on or off campus** unless authorized by the coach.
9. If a student is not able to participate in P.E. classes due to illness or injury, he/she will not be eligible to participate in extracurricular athletics the remainder of the day (including practices and games).
10. Each athlete and his/her parent(s) must have read the Athletic Handbook, signed the statement paper saying they have done so, and that they will abide by the Athletic Handbook's content. Also, each parent and athlete must sign and abide by the Parent/Player Contract. These signed documents must be on file prior to an athlete's participation in a sport at First Academy.

## **Facilities**

1. Our athletic facilities, and those that we rent, are designed for the safe use of our students and visiting teams. An athlete should make every effort to keep the facilities neat and clean. Locker room areas should be kept free of clutter and litter.
2. Inappropriate activity, which could result in injury to individuals, damage to equipment or property, and theft will not be tolerated. This includes guest schools facilities and overnight accommodations.

## **Uniforms and Equipment**

1. Your coach or Athletic Director will issue a uniform at the beginning of the season after the participation fees have been paid by the player. The uniform is your responsibility. It is to be clean when you arrive for a game. The proper uniform will include shoes, socks, and the uniform required. If you do not have the "proper uniform" you will not be allowed to participate. The uniform is to be returned clean within one week of the conclusion of the season.

2. Lost or damaged uniforms must be paid for at the full cost of replacement by the end of the season. This includes all fees associated with replacing the uniform.
3. Treat all school equipment with care. Put all equipment in the proper storage area after practice. Equipment is here for your use. If it is lost or destroyed, it will not be there for others to use.
4. Students are not allowed to get equipment without the permission of their coach or the Athletic Director. School equipment is for use only in practice or games. School equipment may not be taken home or used for unauthorized "student games."
5. **Please follow special-care labels in the laundering of all uniforms.**

### **Medical Information and Injury Procedures**

1. A current physical examination (FHSAA form only) will be required for any student before they can participate in any sport at First Academy. A record of that physical must be on file in the administrative office along with a consent form for participation. Participation includes tryout, practices, and games.
2. Report any injuries to your coach as soon as you are aware of them. Serious injury can be avoided if appropriate action is taken and/or treatment is provided. Please do not attempt to play through an injury. The sooner you seek help for an injury, the sooner you will be back at 100% and contributing to the success of your team. Coaches will complete an accident report form for any injury. An accident report must be filled out by the coach of the injured player, signed by the parent, and kept on file in the school office.

### **Eligibility**

All students who participate on an organized school team must meet the following academic and behavior standards.

1. In order to tryout for a team or club, a student must have earned a cumulative 2.0 GPA or above.
2. Students must have a 2.0 GPA at the end of each nine weeks to remain eligible. If the nine weeks GPA is below a 2.0 the student will be suspended from all team activities, except practice, until the grades are back up to a 2.0 GPA.
3. If an athlete is failing a course at any point he/she is required to attend tutoring in that course until the grade is brought up to a passing grade.
4. Proper conduct and behavior is expected of all students at First Academy. Any student who demonstrates poor behavior or conduct will be subject to removal from the team for a specified period of time. Receiving a poor conduct report from a teacher will result in suspension from games until satisfactory reports are issued from teachers. If a student is suspended from school he/she will be suspended from all games and practices the day(s) the suspension is served. If there are multiple suspensions on the same team the administration may stagger suspensions so that the

school can fulfill its commitments to other schools. The First Academy Student Handbook supersedes all policies in the Athletic Handbook.

5. Each student is expected to complete all homework as assigned by his/her teacher regardless of whether the game is at home or away. If the team must leave before dismissal of school, it is the student's responsibility to obtain all assignments for each class missed prior to leaving school. They are to complete these assignments as required by their teachers. **Athletic contests are not an excuse for late work.**
6. Being part of a team or squad involves commitment to practice. The absence of any team member places a greater burden on those at practice and dilutes the effectiveness of the practice in preparation for games. Participants are required to attend all regularly scheduled practices and remain for the duration of the practice as required by the coach. An **unexcused absence** from a practice will result in disciplinary action from the coach. One unexcused absence will result in that person not playing in the next game. A second absence will result in a week (seven calendar days) of missed games. The third unexcused absence will result in dismissal from the team or squad. Excused absences are granted due to illness (absence from school), family emergency, family trips that are planned prior to the season (The head coach must have been notified prior to team selection), and any extenuating medical issues. For liability reasons, no practice may be held without a coach or an adult present. Team members shall be expected to inform the coach as soon as possible (24 hours in advance) if it is necessary to miss practices and/or games.
7. The display of Christian sportsmanship is extremely important. The poor behavior of one member can detract from the testimony of the entire group. Displays of poor sportsmanship or behavior will result in immediate discipline. Repeat offenders will be removed from the team or squad.
8. A student may participate in interscholastic competition in accordance with the FHSAA age policy.
9. Upon entering the 9<sup>th</sup> grade a student shall have four years to complete his/her eligibility in interscholastic competition, regardless of when the student began to participate in varsity level sports.
10. Each athlete must be a bona fide, full-time student in regular attendance at First Academy in order to participate in the athletic program.
11. A player quitting or being removed from an athletic team may not join another team without going in front of a review panel consisting of the principal, both coaches, and the athletic director.

### **Student Participation Fees**

The cost of operating an athletic program committed to excellence is high and continues to rise. That cost is not covered by tuition. The FAAA (Eagle Athletic Club) helps raise money for the athletic programs. The FAAA offer both Gold and Navy sponsorships which provides opportunities for personal and business advertising to help fund the athletic program.

Each student who participates is assessed an athletic fee to help cover the costs of equipment, officials, transportation (bus and driver), rented facilities, and in some cases uniforms. The cost for officials is

usually more than \$100 per contest. Equipment and uniform costs are rising as well. The participation fee must be paid before a student will receive his/her uniform. The First Academy Athletic Association (FAAA) offers many fundraising and sponsorship opportunities for families and businesses. There are monthly FAAA meetings so that parents can get involved. Every family is required to complete 10 service hours per year if they have a student participating on a First Academy athletic team. These hours can be bought out for \$10 per hour if the family so chooses. This is in addition to the ten hours required for all First Academy families. The FAAA helps our athletic program by purchasing uniforms, high priced equipment, and awards for all of our teams. All FAAA funds are used to benefit the First Academy Athletic Program.

Participation fees:

Middle School sports teams .....	\$75 per sport
JV High School sports teams .....	\$90 per sport
Varsity High School sports teams .....	\$125 per sport

The First Academy Athletic Program is here for the students. Any carryover funds will be applied to reducing athletic fees for the following year.

### **Transportation**

1. To Contest: The school will either provide or arrange transportation to and from the event. The students will be required to abide by these arrangements. Deviation from the arranged transportation after an athletic contest will be made by the coach and only when requested in writing by the parents before leaving from the First Academy Campus. If a parent is present at the end of an away game and wishes to take his/her student directly home, he/she must communicate directly with the coach prior to leaving with his/her child. Should an athlete wish to ride home from an away game with another parent, the request must be made in writing and approved by the coach prior to leaving for the game.
2. Team members may not travel to or from any out of town contests with other students. Students are not allowed to drive their own vehicles to out of town games. Parents are responsible for arranging transportation for student athletes to and from in-town games if the school is unable to provide a bus.
3. When boys and girls are traveling to and from athletic contest on the same bus, they will sit with their teams. Members of the opposite sex may not sit together. This will allow the players to remain focused on the job at hand, and to foster a sense of team unity.
4. When stopping to eat while going to or coming from a game, proper behavior will be expected. First Academy athletes are expected to pride themselves in leaving things in better shape than when they arrived. The same policies regarding displays of affection in public will also apply.
5. Buses must be left clean by the classes or sports team(s) using them. All trash will be removed from under seats and in the aisle, and disposed of properly. The bus will be swept if needed. Windows will be closed. All trash and debris is to be removed from the bus and disposed of properly upon returning from any trip. The bus driver is responsible for each student's safety and therefore is in authority over all riders while on the bus.

6. If buses are not cleaned after each use the class or sports team(s) using them will be charged for the clean-up. If a group is a repeat offender for lack of cleaning and/or are a behavior problem they will lose bus privileges.

## **Playing Time**

Success is not synonymous with playing time. Success is contributing to the teams benefit by using the abilities God has given us.

The lessons learned as members of athletic teams are valuable, and can be carried over into everyday life situations.

Every eligible student has the opportunity to try out for a team, but not everyone will always make the team.

Those athletes who make a team will be given every opportunity to demonstrate their skill and prove their ability to their coaches, and thus increase their chances of playing a significant amount of time. Athletes have the opportunity to improve their skill level and thus increase their chance to play.

It is assumed that parents will instruct and prepare their children for participation in a competitive athletic program at First Academy. Please remember that we are preparing students for life, and for competition that will be encountered in the world after graduation.

Our athletes are expected to be hard workers, committed, dedicated, self-disciplined, and determined to grow in their athletic skill, academic knowledge and especially in their Christian walk with the Lord.

The following sections deal with First Academy guidelines for individual student athlete's playing time, while competing at each level of competition through our middle and high school.

### **Middle School Expectations**

At the middle school level, coaches will give an opportunity for every team member to earn playing time based on the effort each athlete puts forth, the skill each one has developed, the ability to enhance the entire team, and the positive, Christ-like attitude displayed at practices and games.

We want to encourage all students to participate in our athletic program. However, because of the limited amount of time and space available, a team's size may need to be limited. If this occurs, there would be a try-out period during the first week of the season. The team members will be chosen based on the athlete's skill development, attitude, academic standing, and perceived potential. An athlete who makes the team can expect to play provided he/she meets the following team expectations. Although an athlete can expect to play if they make the team they are not guaranteed to play every game.

Team members are expected to attend all practices and games. Unexcused absences will result in loss of playing time. Each team member is expected to take care of his/her uniform, (having it properly cleaned after each game), and to bring it to each game. Any uniform (or part of one) left after a game may subject that player to a fine to get it back. Any stolen or lost uniform is the responsibility of the athlete. All athletes are expected to demonstrate a Christ-like attitude and follow all team and school rules.

### **High School Expectations**

The varsity team represents the most skilled athletes in each sport in our school. There will be a try-out period for each varsity sport. Try-outs are open to all students in grades 9-12 who meet all academic and FHSAA eligibility requirements. In certain situations students in grades 6-8 may be allowed to participate in a varsity sport with the approval of the Athletic Director, the varsity coach of that sport, and the student's parent(s).

The primary criteria in selecting a varsity team is based on an athlete's skill and attitude. An athlete's grade level is secondary to skill in selecting the varsity team. There may be times when a younger athlete may be selected over a higher grade level athlete because he/she possesses a higher or equal level of skill than the upperclassmen. If the younger player is selected he/she would have to be skilled enough to be a starter or regular player, otherwise he/she would be placed on the JV team to have more opportunity to develop his/her skills.

Our varsity athletes are expected to be good examples to the younger players on and off of the athletic field, in the classroom, and in the area of spiritual leadership.

Being a varsity athlete requires an extra time commitment that may extend into the off season. A varsity athlete must understand that his/her individual skill is developed during the off season.

### **Parent Involvement**

Parents are an important part of the success of any athletic program. Your support and assistance will be needed during the year. Parents may be asked to drive to or from games, work in the concession area, and support the fund raising activities we may sponsor. Your cooperative and enthusiastic support will be a blessing to our school and a source of encouragement to your student, and the Athletic Department.

Conversely, a parent who is not supportive of the Athletic Department, its coaches, its philosophies, or its participants, may affect the status of his/her own child on the team.

### **Parent/Coach Communication**

Both Parents and coaches have difficult jobs. By establishing an understanding of each position, we are better able to accept the actions of the other and provide greater benefit to students. As parents, you have a right to understand what expectations are placed on your student when they become involved in the First Academy athletic program.

### **Communications You Should Expect From Your Child's Coach**

1. General philosophy of your coach.
2. Expectations the coach has for your child.
3. Location and times of all practices and contests.
4. Team requirements, such as fees, special equipment, off-season conditioning.
5. Procedure should your child be injured during participation.
6. Discipline that results in the denial of your child's participation

### **Communication Coaches Expect From Parents**

1. Concerns expressed directly to the coach. (See Matthew 18:15-16)
2. Notification of any schedule conflicts well in advance.
3. Specific concerns in regards to a coach's philosophy, and/or expectations.

### **Appropriate Concerns to Discuss With Coaches**

1. The treatment of your child, mentally, physically, or spiritually.
2. Ways to help your child improve.
3. Concerns about your child's behavior.

#### **Issues under the Direct Authority of the Coach**

1. Playing time
2. Team strategy
3. Play calling
4. Other student athletes

There are situations that require a conference between the coach and parents. It is important that both parties involved have a clear understanding of the other's position. **Please do not attempt to confront a coach before or after a contest or practice.**

A parent with a concern should make an appointment with the coach to discuss the concern (Matthew 18:15-16). Please do not discuss matters regarding your concern with others. If an issue between a coach and a parent is not resolved the matter needs to be brought to the attention of the Athletic Director. It is of utmost importance to follow the chain of command. If not resolved by the Athletic Director the following chain should be followed: School Administrator, school board of First Academy, Administrative Pastor, and Senior Pastor. All decisions by the senior pastor will be final. Skipping any link in the chain will result in directing the person back to the appropriate individual.

#### **C2CSchools.com**

The state has gone to a new site for all school athletic programs. Parents can register on the site and will be given privileges based on the teams that your children participate on throughout the year. If you have a business and would like to advertise please let the Athletic Director know. The school receives 40% of all advertisements that they refer to the site. This is a great new system that will have all of the school athletic information.

**Parent and Player Agreement**

I have read and agree to the terms listed in the athletic handbook, FHSAA eligibility policy, and recruiting policy.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent Name (please print)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Athletes Name (please print)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Athletes Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date