



INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Lake of the Woods High School (LHS) volleyball program. The LHS volleyball program is a member of the Minnesota State High School League (MSHSL). The mission statement of the MSHSL is to provide educational opportunities for students through interscholastic athletics and fine arts programs, and provide leadership and support for member schools.

The goals of the LHS volleyball teams are to be highly competitive, and to develop a solid foundation of fundamental and technical skills that will increase the ability of the players in Lake of the Woods School District. The LHS volleyball program strives to develop these skills through challenging practices, and demanding games and tournaments.

The LHS volleyball program is governed by Lake of the Woods School, and strictly adheres to all Lake of the Woods School and MSHSL rules and policies. This handbook provides an overview of the LHS volleyball program, its philosophies, and what it takes to become successful in our program.

FEE STRUCTURE

All fees must be paid, or a payment plan must be set-up with the Athletic Director, prior to the first match of the season. No player will be allowed to play in any match until their fees are paid, or a payment plan has been set in place.

TEAM SELECTION

Teams will be comprised of players selected from the Lake of the Woods School District, who are willing and able to contribute and subscribe to the rules, philosophies and goals of the LHS volleyball program, Lake of the Woods School, and the Minnesota State High School League.

Team selection is based on each individual player's performance. To be considered for the 7th and 8th grade teams (junior high teams), players must be in grades 6, 7, and 8. To be considered for the Varsity, Junior Varsity, and C-Teams players must be in grades 7-12.

COACHING STAFF

Teams will be staffed with coaches who promote integrity and good sportsmanship. Each coach involved in the development of the team should be treated with the utmost respect. Any abuse of our coaches by a player or a parent may be dealt with swiftly and fittingly.

PLAYER PHILOSOPHY

It must be each player's philosophy to respect the process that is set in place for the LHS Volleyball program.

- 1) I will work hard to tell the truth in my interactions with teammates and coaches.
- 2) I will learn how to set goals, strive to reach those goals, and develop a lifestyle that will produce success on the court.

- 3) I will overcome the urge to complain, think negatively, backstab, take part in cliques, act selfishly, or engage in any unnecessary behavior that disrupts team chemistry.
- 4) I will maintain my academic life on a solid foundation throughout my high school career.
- 5) I will be loyal to my teammates, coaches, and to the LHS Volleyball program. I will not air “dirty laundry” outside of the team fabric.
- 6) I will learn the principles of positive reinforcement and apply them in practices and in competition.
- 7) I will show frequent and genuine appreciation to those who work on our behalf (managers, administration, boosters, coaches, fans, etc...)
- 8) I will use good eye contact, verbalization, and listening skills toward my coach/coaches, referee’s, and other adults that are willing to make me the best player that I can be.
- 9) I will be accountable for equipment, jerseys, and locker rooms. This will be my responsibility, not the responsibility of coaches or other teammates.
- 10) I will eliminate the use of obscenities during practices and competition.
- 11) I will accept the decisions of the coaching staff regarding playing time. I will support my teammates when I am not in a match.

COACHING PHILOSOPHY

It is our philosophy that practices are the time to improve skills and work on new concepts. The fundamentals, which are emphasized initially, are used to develop proficient offensive and defensive tactics.

Our philosophy on playing time, for the junior varsity and varsity levels, is stated below:

During game and tournament play the coach has the right to determine the line-up that he/she determines best suited to meet the goal of the particular level of participation. An “equal play philosophy” does not apply in many situations. It is each player’s responsibility to perform at a level that is consistent in keeping with the goals of the team. If the player does not, for whatever reason, fulfill their obligations on the court it is the coach’s right to substitute them out so that the team may achieve its goals. Players are expected to perform certain roles on the bench as well, which greatly contribute to the success of the team.

All players earn their playing time in practice. It is the player's task to work hard enough and learn enough to get on the court during games. Some players will be given specialized assignments while others must work to be the best alternate starter that they can be. Regardless of the role that evolves over the season, all players and parents are expected to remain positive and committed to the goal of having the TEAM do as well as possible by the end of the season.

GRIEVENCE PROCEDURES

Competitive athletics by its very nature will not allow all people involved to be pleased at all times. Should there be a need to address a grievance the following procedures have been established and are required to be followed to ensure the best possible resolution for all concerned:

1. The first step is to have the player speak to their coach about the problem. Parents/Guardians ARE NOT to approach coaches regarding team or player issues UNTIL their daughter has had time to communicate with their coach FIRST.

2. If there continues to be a concern following your daughter's attempt to work things out with the coach on her own, the player or parent may bring the concern to their daughter's coach, **BUT ONLY AFTER 24 HOURS** have passed following a competition,
3. If there continues to be a concern after the first two steps above have been followed, then a meeting can be scheduled involving the player's coach, player, parent/guardian, head coach and/or athletic director.

Parents/Guardians are asked to refrain from negative comments around their daughter and other players and parents of athletes. Young players are vulnerable and if they hear complaints about the coach, the coach's style, or program policies this can have an adverse effect on their performance and/or attitude. Repetitive complaining to player(s) or third parties (other parents/supporters) also interferes with the program's efforts to pursue its purpose of providing a positive and healthy competitive environment for the players and may jeopardize participation.

IMAGE PRESENTATION

You are representing yourself, your family, and the Lake of the Woods School at every practice and game. We are a program that will be known for good sportsmanship and integrity by our players, coaches, and parents. Arguing with officials is never appropriate and not tolerated.

DRESS CODE

All players must dress appropriately to all practices, games, road trips, etc.... Please remember that you are representing yourself, your family, and your school. If one can see any part of your chest, back, stomach, or butt it is inappropriate! There is no exception to this rule. Spaghetti strap tank-tops, crop tops, belly shirts, and mesh top/bottoms are unacceptable for practices, before games, after games, and on road trips! If it is not appropriate to wear to school, then it is definitely not acceptable to wear at practice, before games, after games, or on road trips. **THIS RULE WILL BE STRICTLY ENFORCED!** All players are expected to dress appropriately to all home and away games. In other words wear dress clothes. No Jeans (if this is a problem, please speak with your coach).

MAINTAINING GOOD GRADES

We consider the LHS volleyball program to be an organization comprised of scholar athletes. It is important to maintain good grades. Time management is a critical skill that successful student athletes need. Players are expected to plan ahead and make sure that preparation for school work is completed well in advance of the assignment due date. No consideration will be given for failure to plan ahead resulting in missing practice to complete assignments or study for tests. We expect all athletes to maintain good grades during the season. We will adhere to all Lake of the Woods School policies in regards to grades. Players must notify, and get all assignments from their teachers one day prior to a road trip if they will be missing class. Academics come first, volleyball comes second. If players are having trouble in their classes, please notify your coach and they will work with you.

HOUSEKEEPING

All players will be held accountable for the appearance of home and opposing locker rooms, home and opposing gymnasiums, buses, restaurants, gas stations, etc... It is the policy of the LHS volleyball program that we will leave every area we enter in a better condition than when we arrived. Any player who fails to comply by this rule, will be dealt with appropriately.

EXPECTATION OF PARENTS

Yes, we do expect something from our parents. Because we operate on a very strict budget and volunteers perform a large amount of work, there are many ways parents can be part of the team and contribute to the team's success.

As parents of players on a LHS volleyball team, parents must conduct themselves in a manner as outlined by the following CODE:

1. Understand that your daughter has joined the LHS volleyball program to LEARN skills and concepts of volleyball; **SHE HAS NOT JOINED THE PROGRAM FOR EQUAL PLAYING TIME IN GAMES AND TOURNAMENTS.**
2. The LHS Volleyball program welcomes and encourages support of all teams during competition. We believe that our parents are a huge part of the LHS organization and are seen as such by other schools and officials. Therefore, we will conduct ourselves accordingly by:
 - a. Cheering LHS teams for their play and NOT jeering or harassing the opponent's team, officials, or work crews for their performances;
 - b. Realizing that the officials and their work teams are attempting to do the best job they can to referee the game fairly. Therefore, we will conduct ourselves with appropriate sportsmanship;
 - c. Acknowledging that some LHS players are relative beginners in the sport of volleyball and will make mistakes. We will be patient and supportive through these times for all players we are around;
 - d. Realizing that coaching is NOT a science and that all coaches will make decisions that are popular and unpopular. We may not agree with every decision they make, but we will respect that decision.
3. Refraining from talking to the players during practice or games. The players need to concentrate on the game and listen to their coach.
4. We will see that our daughter is at practices and team functions on time.
5. We will be responsible for fees and paperwork due on specified dates.
6. We will be responsible for making sure our daughter's physical is up-to-date every three years.
7. We are responsible for our daughter's conduct.
8. We recognize that we must participate in fundraising for the overall LHS program expenses.
9. We are aware that the decisions rendered by the coaches are done so with concern for the overall betterment and reputation of LHS program and will abide by these decisions.
10. If we have concerns or questions about our daughter's status with regard to her team, we will follow the "Grievance Procedure" discussed earlier.
11. We will use social media as a positive platform, and will refrain from negative talk/language when using the resource/resources.
12. If we do not behave in a manner consistent with the sportsmanship and professionalism the LHS volleyball program demands from its athletes and coaches, we may be asked to refrain from attending games and tournaments.

EXPECTATIONS OF PLAYERS

As Players of the LHS Volleyball Program, we will conduct ourselves in a manner as outlined by the following CODE:

We understand and will abide by the LHS Volleyball Policy Handbook, Lake of the Woods School policies, and Minnesota State High School League regulations. If they are not followed at any time, we will undergo all punishments accordingly.

THE FOLLOWING ACTIONS ARE PROHIBITED:

1. Possession, consumption or distribution of alcohol and/or tobacco if illegal or in violation of Minnesota State High School League rules. MSHSL policy prohibits the possession, consumption or distribution of alcohol and/or tobacco by any one player.
2. Physical damage to a facility or theft. (Restitution will be part of any penalty imposed.)
3. Any action considered to be an offense under Federal, State or local law ordinances.
4. Violation of the specific policies, regulations, and/or procedures of the Lake of the Woods School and the Minnesota State High School League rules. (It is the responsibility of the individual to be familiar with applicable specific policies, regulations and procedures.)
5. Conduct which is inappropriate.
6. Physical or verbal intimidation of any individual.
7. Actions that will be detrimental to the Lake of the Woods School and the MSHSL.
8. Foul language is never allowed!

PLAYER ABSENCES

Commitment to full attendance at practices and matches is critical to the team's success. READ THIS SECTION CAREFULLY AND BE SURE THAT YOU UNDERSTAND THE COMMITMENT THAT IS EXPECTED OF YOU:

Absence from school:

1. Players must be in class the ENTIRE school day to be eligible to play or practice, unless absence is pre-approved by the principal or athletic director.

Acceptable absence from practice:

1. Absences for academic, school, or religious functions within reason.
 - a. We require that a player's specific coach be notified via phone call, e-mail, text, Team Reach message, or in person one day prior to the absence.
2. Illness - Any illness that would keep you from going to school is certainly accepted as an excused absence.
 - a. Please make sure to inform the coach as soon as possible when you realize you are going to miss a practice or tournament.
3. A death in the family.
 - a. Please make sure to inform the coach as soon as possible when you realize you are going to miss a practice or tournament.
4. Quarantine
 - a. If a player has tested positive for COVID, displays symptoms of COVID, or has come in close contact with a person that has tested positive for COVID and is under quarantine, their absences from practices and games will be excused.
 - b. Players that have been placed in quarantine, and are not displaying any COVID symptoms will be required to complete the "Quarantine" activities that are posted on the Lake of the Woods Volleyball website.

Unacceptable absence from practice:

1. Homework is NOT an excuse for missing practices. A major part of being a student-athlete is organizing your time to accommodate your studies and practice commitments.

2. Participation on another non-school related team or activity (AAU sports, theatre events, etc.).
3. Tanning, haircuts, shopping trips, etc...

Punishment Incurred for Absences:

1. Each unacceptable absence from practice equals missing one game of the following match, unless prior arrangements are made with the coach. The missed game will begin with the first game of the following match.

BULLYING POLICY

Bullying in any shape or form will not be tolerated! Bullying is the use of aggression with the intention of hurting another person. Bullying results in pain and distress to the victim.

Bullying will NOT be tolerated from a player themselves, from a player's family member, from a player's significant other, etc... As a member of the LHS program you are responsible for the protection and encouragement of your teammates, no matter which team level they belong to.

Reporting Bullying:

- ❑ Report all incidences of bullying to your coach, any member of the LHS volleyball program, or a trusted adult.
- ❑ All policies and procedures will be followed, according the Lake of the Woods School Bullying Prohibition Policy #514.

UNIFORMS

Each athlete will wear a uniform that respectfully represents the LHS volleyball program. LHS volleyball uniforms are to ONLY be worn during games/matches. All jerseys/equipment MUST be returned to their coach immediately after the last game of the season. If the jersey/equipment is not returned, that player will be billed accordingly to replace that jersey/equipment.

CURFEWS

Curfew for school nights, before games, will be 10:30 PM. Curfews for weekends, before games, will be 11:00 PM. No ifs, ands, or buts!

AWAY GAME RIDE PROTECAL

Players may ride home with their parents only if the "Travel Release" form has been signed by the player's parent/guardian. If a player fails to have the proper permission, and does not ride home on the bus, punishment will be one missed match. This is an important matter, and should be taken very seriously! Some situations may require coaches to enforce that all players ride the bus regardless of permission. Please respect our decision to enforce this rule.

FUNDRAISING

Fundraising is an excellent opportunity for the LHS volleyball program to gain monies to be used toward new uniforms, practice equipment, game equipment, etc... Though fundraising is not mandatory, all help is much appreciated.

Lake of the Woods High School Volleyball Code of Conduct/Team Rules

As part of a member of the Lake of the Woods High School volleyball program, we understand and agree to the following:

- Playing Time, Practice Time, and Position Assignments:**
 - We understand that playing time will not be equal among each member. We also understand the amount of playing time and positions that are assigned to players in practices and matches are at the discretion of the coaching staff. If we have concerns in regards to playing time and position, we will follow the proper protocol listed in the LHS Volleyball Handbook.
 - I will attend, and be on time for, every practice and game that I can, and will notify my coach, according the LHS Volleyball Handbook, if I cannot make it.
- Conduct Toward Others**
 - I will do my best to listen and learn from my coaches, bringing focus and energy to every practice and game. I understand that coaches are giving their time to make me a better player.
 - I will treat coaches, officials, and fans with respect.
 - I will encourage good sportsmanship from fellow players, coaches, officials, and parents at every game and practice by demonstrating good sportsmanship.
 - I will NOT engage in unsportsmanlike conduct with any coach, player, parent, participant, league official or any other attendee.
 - I will not encourage any behavior which would endanger the health, safety, or wellbeing of a coach, player, participant, league official, or any other attendee.
 - I will encourage my parents to be involved in my team because it is important to me.
 - I will not use profanity while participating in any LHS volleyball activity (i.e. games, tournaments, practices, etc...).
 - I will not tease, ridicule, or make fun of players on my team or the opposing team.
 - I will demand more from myself than from my teammates. I understand that this is a sign of a true competitor. I understand that everyone has different abilities and a true measure of my success is not how I compare myself to others, but how I am doing in comparison to myself. I understand that improving my individual skills will lead to my team's success.
 - I will keep school a top priority remembering to balance sports and academics.
- Alcohol & Drug Use**
 - I will not use alcohol, tobacco, or drugs.
 - I deserve to play in an environment that is free of drugs and alcohol and expect adults to refrain from their use at all LHS volleyball activities.
- Financial Obligations**
 - I understand that all money raised for LHS volleyball cannot be returned to the individual or collected and used for any other personal use.
 - I understand that I must make all payments by their due date, or result in penalties as explained in the LHS Volleyball Handbook.

Please Cut the Bottom Portion Off & Return at the Time of Try-Outs

I _____ have read and agree to adhere to the Lake of the Woods Volleyball Code of Conduct and Team Rules. I understand that if I fail to abide by the LHS Volleyball Code of Conduct and Team Rules, I will be subject to disciplinary action.

Player Signature

Date

Parent Signature

Date