



LOYALSOCK HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETE'S GUIDE TO

LANCER PRIDE FOOTBALL

DISCIPLINE - COACHABILITY
COOPERATION - RESPONSIBILITY
RELIABILITY - ACCOUNTABILITY

DISCIPLINE YOURSELF ... AND NOBODY ELSE WILL HAVE TO

INTRODUCTION

In that “championship football” requires great commitment, effort, responsibility and concentration from its participants, the following guidelines shall apply to **ALL** those individuals involved in the LTHS Football Program, **without exception!** It is assumed by the coaching staff, that all participating players and their parent/guardian have read, acknowledged and accepted the guidelines as stated in this booklet.

BASIC CONCEPTS & PHILOSOPHY

The application of and decisions regarding these guidelines are done at the discretion of the **head football coach**. Any situation not specifically covered by these guidelines will also be handled and penalized at the discretion of the head football coach.

The Loyalsock football coaches make the assumption that all Loyalsock football players know the difference between “right and wrong”. Loyalsock football players are always expected to make the “right” decision in relation to matters of behavior, discipline and academics. If a player makes a “wrong” decision in relation to behavior, discipline or academics, the coaching staff will assume that it was a conscious decision on the part of the athlete to do so ... and the athlete will therefore be held accountable for willfully making a “wrong” decision. Accountability can range from being counseled and or reprimanded by the head coach ... denial of playing or practice time ... suspension or dismissal from the team ... expulsion from the football program ... all to be decided at the discretion of the head football coach.

Football championships are won by “special” people ... a championship football player must be a disciplined person ... we must be a disciplined team.

In order to be a disciplined team, every player **must** adhere to the guidelines set forth in this packet. An athletic team **cannot** win championships with “individuals.” Nor does a team win championships with common people. The Loyalsock Football Program requires student/athletes who will sacrifice their personal welfare for the betterment of the team. Athletes who wish to stand out or draw attention to themselves as “individuals” will **not** be allowed to participate.

- The Loyalsock High School Football Program is based on:
 - **Pride**
 - **Common Sense**
 - **Good SCHOOL & COMMUNITY Citizenship**
 - **Respect**
 - **Loyalty**
 - **Academics**

We are not a “win at all cost” football program

- An athlete wishing to join the LTHS Football Program must first commit to good citizenship in school and in the community. This means promoting a feeling of pride, loyalty and respect for his team, school, community, family, faculty and administration. This is coupled with the understanding that his **primary** purpose at LTHS is to be an excellent student/citizen ... his **secondary** purpose is to play football.
- An athlete’s decision is NOT whether he wants to adhere to these disciplinary guidelines but whether or not he wishes to join the team. Once an athlete chooses to join the team, his decision in terms of these disciplinary guidelines **has already been made**.
- An athlete who chooses to lie, cheat, steal, sneak or perform poorly academically has no place in the LTHS Football Program.

LTHS FOOTBALL PROGRAM TEAM GOALS

The athlete and his family will learn that expectations of a scholar/athlete ARE GREATER than those for in the general student body. **The scholar/athlete will be held accountable for any failure to meet those lofty expectations.** In general, the expectations are as follows:

- Be on time - being early is better
- Pay attention to staff, teachers, administrators and your coaches
- Be at school every day - all day
- Be at practice every day - plan ahead to meet your commitment
- Earn A's, B's and C's in your classes, as evidenced by your report card - never D's or F's
- **Adhere to the "DO RIGHT RULE" at all times**
- Increased expectations involving off-season training as an athlete and as a football player; continued encouragement to be a multiple sport athlete.
- Continue high academic achievement.

ATTENDANCE & PUNCTUALITY

All LTHS **football players and their families** are expected to **PLAN AHEAD** and organize their personal schedules so that they can meet and honor their school responsibilities and commitment to their team.

The below lists of excused and unexcused absences above is far from complete and, of course, exceptions can be looked at depending on unusual circumstances. Parents are strongly encouraged to inform the head coach **in advance** of any absence so that the coach has ample time to decide and inform the athlete and parent whether the absence will be penalized or not.

Parent/guardians are respectfully requested to always assist their student/athlete in communicating and in decision making ... so that they can successfully **meet their team commitment!**

**-REFER TO YOUR FOOTBALL CALENDAR OFTEN-
PLEASE PLAN AHEAD!**

Parents **must** consider these guidelines when scheduling:

- Family functions
- Doctor appointment
- Dental appointments
- Any and all other activities that remove the player from practices and games

Absences and late arrivals TO SCHOOL AND/OR PRACTICE, whether "excused" or "unexcused," will have a **negative** effect on a player's academics, the progress and preparation of the athlete and the eventual success of the team. A missed day of school and/or a missed practice session are opportunities for improvement and growth that **cannot** realistically be made up.

- The **"excusability"** of an absence or a tardy is determined solely **at the discretion of the head coach.**
- LTHS football players must learn to **always be early.** If you are **always** early, you will **never** be late!

ATTENDANCE & PUNCTUALITY (Cont.)

- The player and/or his parents **must** notify the head coach **in advance** that he is going to be **tardy** to any team function due to an “excusable” reason.
 - If **advance notice** is **not** given, the late will be considered “unexcused”.
- Any player who receives an UNEXCUSED LATE shall be held accountable for his lack of punctuality. Consequences could include:
 1. Verbal reprimand
 2. Decrease in practice or playing time
 3. Game day suspension
 4. Dismissal from the team

EXCUSED ABSENCE RULE

Excessive “**excused**” absences will jeopardize an athlete’s playing time. The athlete and his parent/guardian are **strongly** encouraged to understand the vital importance of practice time to the preparation of each individual player and the team as a whole. Even if “excused,” an absence from practice and/or a game always has a **negative** effect on the team’s opportunity for success.

The following are considered EXCUSED absences:

- Funerals
- Weddings
- Family member graduation
- Family member illness
- Family crisis
- College testing (PSAT, SAT, ACT)
- Illness as verified by physician note
- **Reasonable** after school time with LTHS teachers
- **Reasonable** religious and/or church activities

Excused absences that will **NOT** be penalized.

- The following consequences will be issued for **EXCESSIVE EXCUSED** absences at the **discretion of the head football coach**:

| | | |
|----------------------|---|---|
| 1 st time | = | parent/player meeting with entire coaching staff to resolve issue |
| 2 nd time | = | will play first half of following game |
| 3 rd time | = | 1 game suspension |

UNEXCUSED ABSENCES

Players will **not** be allowed to miss or leave any team function to meet a personal job commitment, transportation commitment or commitment to another athletic team. Any player who insists on leaving a team function for any of the above reasons will be charged with an **unexcused absence** and held accountable at the discretion of the head coach. Other examples of unexcused absences include:

- Family vacations and/or “get-togethers”
- PennDOT appointments
- Staying home to care for siblings
- Lack of transportation to or from practice
- Minor or contrived athlete injury or illness
- Athlete or family member birthdays and/or anniversaries
- **Excessive** after school academic time with LTHS teachers
- **Excessive** religious and/or church or cultural activities;

UNEXCUSED ABSENCES (Cont.)

Any athlete who receives an **UNEXCUSED ABSENCE** as determined by the head coach, shall be issued consequences listed below:

| | | |
|---|----------|---|
| 1st unexcused absence | = | will not start following game |
| 2nd unexcused absence | = | will not play first half of following game |
| 3rd unexcused absence | = | 1 game suspension |

MEDICAL EXCUSES

An athlete who is injured during the course of the season and is unable to participate under doctor's or trainer's orders must still attend all team functions, unless the doctor or trainer states otherwise.

Whether under partial or complete activity restrictions, the player must dress for practice in jersey, shorts and helmet, if permitted by the doctor or trainer. The injured player will be expected to participate and contribute to the team effort to the best of his ability.

A specific work-out or rehabilitation assignment (approved by the doctor or trainer) may be provided and is to be completed in its' entirety by the player.

Should a player become injured or ill during the course of the season and require a doctor's treatment and care, it is the responsibility of the player and/or his parents to communicate with the head coach regarding any limitations placed upon the player's activity by the doctor.

SCHOOL-ISSUED CONSEQUENCES AND ABSENCES

LTHS football players are strongly encouraged to use common sense in avoiding situations on or off campus that have the potential of resulting in school consequences. These situations are to be **avoided at all costs**. Players must remember to make "team" decisions - not "individual" decisions.

Out of school suspensions from LTHS will be immediately considered an **unexcused** absence. Athletes may appeal the "excusability" of the suspension to the head coach. A decision will be made after a player, parent, coaching staff and administration conference.

Any athlete who has been suspended is **not** allowed to practice, play in a game or participate in any team function **for the duration of the suspension**.

Any athlete who is assigned after school detention by a teacher or administrator **WILL SERVE THE DETENTION AS ASSIGNED**. If the detention causes a player to be late to or absent from a required team function, the late or absence shall be considered **"unexcused."** The athlete will be held accountable at the discretion of the head coach.

SCHOOL & CLASS ATTENDANCE

All players are expected to meet their responsibilities in the classroom by attending every class during the school day and to be **early** to their classes. Additionally, athletes are to demonstrate respect for their classmates, teachers and all other school staff.

SCHOOL & CLASS ATTENDANCE (Cont.)

The coaching staff will be notified immediately by the LTHS administration if any athlete has an **unexcused absence from class** (aka, “class cut”) and **lateness to class**. An athlete’s **classes** are considered **REQUIRED team functions**. Late to class and unexcused absences from class will be considered an “unexcused absence” for football and consequences will be issued as previously stated.

Parents are reminded to notify the LTHS Attendance Office **in advance** if their son is going to be absent from school for the entire or partial day. Parents are also reminded to **write excuse notes** upon an athlete’s return to school following an excused period of absence.

Parents are reminded that the LTHS Attendance Office **will not** notify the coaching staff if an athlete is going to be absent for the day. Parents are asked to make a **second phone call or email to the appropriate coach** to notify him of the athlete’s absence from school and practice. Coaches phone numbers are listed on the inside front cover of this booklet.

An athlete **MUST BE IN ATTENDANCE THE ENTIRE SCHOOL DAY** in order to **PRACTICE OR PLAY** in a game the **SAME DAY**.

An athlete who misses a portion of the school day due to an **“excused”** reason must have the absence excused by their parent OR through the LTHS Attendance Office **PRIOR** to practice or the game. An absence of **more than two periods (One block)** on a practice or game day requires a parental excuse AND **administrative approval** **PRIOR** to practice or the game. If the absence is **NOT** excused and/or cleared by the administration, the player may **NOT** practice or play in a game.

An athlete who returns to school and or football team functions following an “excused” absence or “excused” late to school will be expected to efficiently and quickly “make-up” his academic and football work. This includes, but is not limited to; class work, tests and homework in all classes as well as system learning, drill work and conditioning in football.

SCHOOL WORK & FOOTBALL

All class assignments are to be turned in **on time**. **ALL REASONABLE ACADEMIC RESPONSIBILITIES TAKE PRECEDENCE OVER FOOTBALL ACTIVITIES**. Therefore, conflicts between football and academics are avoided by meeting classroom obligations eagerly and on time.

GENERAL DISCIPLINE

USE OF DRUGS AND/OR ALCOHOL

Being under the influence of alcohol or any other drug **without** medical approval is considered **unacceptable** behavior both on and off the campus. Players will be held accountable by self-admission, local police department authorities or Policy **227.1**, Random Drug Testing policy provided by Loyalsock Township High School administration. Any questions regarding the townships random drug testing policy can be reviewed at our high school website:

<http://www.ltsd.k12.pa.us/ltsd/cwp/view.asp?A=3&Q=300422>.

USE OF DRUGS AND/OR ALCOHOL (Cont.)

A player found in violation of the **alcohol and drug** guideline will be **suspended from game play for a time period of 30 school days**. The athlete may practice as part of the football team (unless otherwise stated by the LTHS administration) without unexcused absences but will not dress on game night. If, after attending all practices and completing his suspension, the athlete once again violates the **alcohol and drug** guideline, he will be **permanently dismissed from the team for this year**.

BULLYING AND HAZING

Bullying or **“hazing”** are identified and defined in the Policy 249 - Anti-bullying policy created by Loyalsock Township School District and revised December 3rd, 2008. Any player found in violation of this policy will be suspended for a minimum of **½ game and up to 3 games for the first offense** dependent on the discretion of the head coach. If the player violates the policy for a second time he will be **dismissed** from the team. Parents may also press charges on the player through legal avenues at their own discretion.

THEFT

A player found in the act of stealing equipment or personal property from another player or the LTHS Athletic Department or in possession of stolen equipment or personal property will be suspended from the team and have charges brought against him with the Pennsylvania State Police for theft.

DISRESPECT & INSUBORDINATION

Blatant disrespect (Meaning obvious disregard for authority) or insubordination by any player towards a teammate, coach, official, opposing teams or trainers shall be held accountable for their behavior. Players given personal fouls during a game will be evaluated by the coaching staff through film and referees version of the penalty. The head coach will make the decision if the foul was blatant and requires immediate removal from the game for a short period and/or if consequences will be issued. Consequences will be issued as follows:

| | | |
|--------------------|----------|---|
| 1st offense | = | will not start following game |
| 2nd offense | = | will not play first half of following game |
| 3rd offense | = | 1 game suspension |

LOCKER ROOM CONDUCT

All athletes must demonstrate common sense, maturity and self-discipline in the locker room, team room, weight room, training room and equipment rooms:

- All areas listed above must be maintained in a clean and orderly fashion.
- All football equipment must be securely stored in a neat and orderly fashion in the appropriate area designated by the coaching staff.
- Football cleats must be thoroughly cleaned **before** entering the locker room or team room areas.
- All tape and other waste must be deposited in garbage cans; **do not litter our team’s home!**

LOCKER ROOM CONDUCT (Cont.)

- Radios, CD players, iPods, etc. are **not** allowed in the above areas **unless first approved by the coaching staff**. Any music or videos played in the locker room or team room areas must exhibit good taste and be considered appropriate for a school setting **to be decided at the discretion of the head coach**.
- Players must demonstrate courteous, adult behavior. Loud, rowdy behavior is prohibited. Swearing and vulgar language is **not** permitted.
- **NO HORESPRAY IN THE LOCKER ROOM AND TEAM ROOMS.**

PRACTICE AND GAME CONDUCT

All athletes must demonstrate maturity and self-discipline on the practice field and game field:

- Players will be **completely** dressed in proper uniform **before** entering the practice or game field and will remain so for the duration of the practice or game. Football helmets **with mouthpieces** will be worn at all times. A player must ask the permission of a coach to remove his helmet while on the practice field. A player must **never** sit on his helmet.
- All players must be dressed in a common, appropriate team uniform while at practice and games. Players will **not** be allowed to draw attention to them by dressing differently than the team unless specified by the coaching staff. Players are **not** permitted to individually alter, change or decorate their uniforms in any fashion unless permitted by the coach.
- During practice, conditioning sessions and game day activities when football helmets are not required, **baseball hats or any other head covering may NOT be worn.**

SCHOOL CONDUCT

LTHS athletes must project the image of maturity, common sense, pride and discipline outside the “football environment”. We ask for and raise a great deal of money in the community for you and your football team. People will not be as generous if we cast a poor image in the community.

All football players must maintain good grooming and proper appearance in public and adhere to the Dress Code of LTHS. Remember that a well groomed player looks good and when you look good, you feel good and when you feel good, **YOU PLAY GOOD!**

Any **“gang” or “gang-related” attire or behavior** are strictly prohibited on the LTHS campus and therefore is prohibited in the LTHS Football Program.

PERSONAL HYGINE & CARE OF EQUIPMENT

The basic concepts of personal hygiene, health and cleanliness must be adhered to daily by every athlete:

1. Athlete must shower with hot water and soap after every practice session and game, properly washing and drying their hair. Showers may be taken at home.

PERSONAL HYGINE & CARE OF EQUIPMENT (Cont.)

2. Athletes must launder their practice gear a minimum of **once a week**. More often if the weather dictates.
3. Athletes must rinse the interior of their helmet with clear, clean water at least **once a week**, more often if necessary.
4. Clean and dry t-shirts and shorts are to be worn under your football gear for each practice or game. **You must feel good to play good!**
5. Each athlete is responsible for the proper maintenance of his equipment. Inspect your equipment daily and report any damage to the head coach. Damaged equipment is **unsafe and must not be worn**. Athletes are **not** to repair their own equipment.
6. Athletes are responsible for maintaining their football shoes in good order. If necessary, new laces and/or cleats replaced. **DO NOT CHEAT YOUR FEET!**
7. Athletes who damage their game uniforms when laundering them at home or in any other fashion will be **billed for the replacement cost of the item**.

ANY ATHLETE PERFORMING AN ACT NOT SPECIFICALLY OUTLINED IN THIS BOOKLET ... THAT CONTRADICTS THE SPIRIT AND PHILOSOPHY OF THESE DISCIPLINARY GUIDELINES OR DETRACTS FROM THE APPROPRIATE IMAGE OF THE LOYALSOCK FOOTBALL PROGRAM WILL BE HELD ACCOUNTABLE FOR THEIR DECISION AND BEHAVIOR AT THE DISCRETION OF THE HEAD FOOTBALL COACH.

EQUIPMENT & SECURITY

Athletes must respect their own and their teammate's equipment, as well as the effort by all of the generous people that worked to purchase it. Our football equipment is the best that money can buy and is supplied to you with your health and safety as a primary objective. Each athlete is completely responsible for his individual gear and personal property. Safety and security is the duty of each athlete. All athletes must be diligent in maintaining their equipment and keeping it in a safe, secure place.

RESPECT YOUR EQUIPMENT AND TREAT IT PROPERLY IT MAKES FOOTBALL A SAFE GAME FOR YOU!

1. Any athlete finding equipment or personal property that does not belong to him must immediately return the items to their proper owner or to a member of the coaching staff. Any athlete found in the possession of missing or stolen equipment or personal property shall be temporarily suspended from the team until investigation can decide the consequence.
2. Athletes are NOT permitted in the team room, training room, storage areas, coach's office, equipment room or any other secured areas unless given permission by or immediately supervised by a coach.
3. **Never** share your locker or locker combination with another athlete or student.
 - a. It is highly recommended that athletes **purchase a combination lock and** that athletes **"double lock"** your locker.
 - b. Athletes are encouraged to check the area around their locker to make sure that all of the equipment is secure. Always double check locker and "spin the dial" to make sure that the locker is completely locked before leaving the area.
4. Athletes are expected to bring **ALL** of the equipment they need to practice **every day**. An athlete who has forgotten or lost a piece of equipment will be issued a replacement item and **immediately billed** for

EQUIPMENT & SECURITY (Cont.)

the missing equipment. If the “original issue” piece of equipment is found or brought to practice on a subsequent day. The replacement item must be returned promptly to the head coach and upon return the equipment bill for the replacement item will be cleared.

5. All athletes are responsible for the **return of all equipment** issued to them by the LTHS Football Program. Equipment is to be returned at the end of the season on the **date designated by the head coach**.
6. Equipment for which an athlete has been “billed” **must be returned to the appropriate head coach and NOT** the main office. Once the equipment is returned and inspected, the head coach will clear the equipment bill with the cashier.
 - a. When an athlete is “billed” for a piece of equipment he will be billed for the **replacement cost** of the item which will **INCLUDE** the **sales tax and shipping costs**. Athletes and parents are reminded that certain items and vendors have rigid “ordering deadlines”. A piece of “billed” equipment **cannot** be returned by the athlete **after** the vendor’s ordering deadline has passed.

LOSS AND THEFT CAN BE COMPLETELY AVOIDED BY THE RESPONSIBLE AND CAREFUL ACTIONS OF THE ATHLETE! PURCHASE AND USE QUALITY COMBINATION LOCKS FOR YOUR TEAM ROOM AND LOCKERS.

FINALLY...

**NO EXCUSES
ALWAYS TELL THE TRUTH!**

**What you have done ...
whether right or wrong ...
... is your own doing.**

TEAM GUIDELINES ESTABLISHED & WRITTEN BY THE 2011 LOYALSOCK FOOTBALL TEAM & COACHES.