

OKEECHOBEE HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETIC HANDBOOK



**INDIVIDUALLY WE ARE UNIQUE. TOGETHER WE ARE
BRAHMANS!**

AS BRAHMANS, WE WILL:

MODEL THE PILLARS OF P.R.I.D.E. BY:

ENCOURAGING PERSEVERANCE

FOSTERING RESPECT

EXPECTING INTEGRITY

DEMONSTRATING DEPENDABILITY

INSTILLING ETHICS

CREATE A COMMUNITY OF GRADUATES AND LIFELONG LEARNERS.

LIVE AS THE EXAMPLE WE WANT TO SEE IN OTHERS.

**BUILD A SUPPORTIVE CAMPUS ENVIRONMENT TO GROW AS A BRAHMAN
FAMILY.**

BE OF SERVICE TO THOSE IN NEED, ON AND OFF CAMPUS.

MOVE FORWARD AND BE GREAT!

#GoBRAHMANS

#TheBRAHMANWay

Okeechobee High School student/athletes and their parents/guardians are urged to read this handbook. If you have any questions, please contact the Athletic Department.

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OKEECHOBEE HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETIC HANDBOOK

Welcome to Okeechobee High School Athletic Program. We believe that participation in sports at OHS provides a wealth of opportunities and experiences. We are concerned with the educational development of boys and girls through athletics, and feel that a properly controlled well-organized sports program meets the students' needs for self-expression, mental alertness, and physical growth.

The sports programs currently offered at OHS are as follows:

Fall

Volleyball (Girls)
Cross Country (B&G)
Football (Boys)
Golf (B&G)
Swimming (B&G)
Cheerleading
Rodeo (B&G)

Winter

Basketball (B&G)
Soccer (B&G)
Weightlifting (Girls)
Wrestling (Boys)

Spring

Baseball (Boys)
Flag Football (Girls)
Softball (Girls)
Tennis (B&G)
Track & Field (B&G)
Lacrosse (G)

FINAL FORMS WEBSITE

ELIGIBILITY BEGINS BY REGISTERING AT THE [FINAL FORMS WEBSITE](#) (CLICK THE LINK) TO COMPLETE ALL REQUIRED FHSAA AND OHS DOCUMENTS FOR ATHLETIC PARTICIPATION.

Incoming Ninth-Graders Eligibility

First Semester – Incoming ninth-graders are eligible for sports during the Fall Semester.

Second Semester and Thereafter – All athletes must maintain a cumulative GPA of 2.0 or above on a 4.0 unweighted scale in ALL courses.

All 10th, 11th, and 12th Graders

Eligibility is determined at the beginning of each semester [per FHSAA rule](#). 10th, 11th, 12th graders must maintain a cumulative G.P.A. of 2.0 or above on a 4.0 unweighted scale in courses taken (Florida Statute 1006.15(3)(a)). A student in the ninth or tenth grade will be permitted to continue to participate in interscholastic competition each semester provided the student earned a 2.0 in the previous semester, signs the “Academic Performance Contract for

Athletic Eligibility” (FHSA Form EL5), continues to maintain a 2.0 in each semester following, and attend summer school as needed.

EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES OF PARTICIPATION IN ATHLETICS

1. PHYSICAL GROWTH

- A. ACHIEVING PERSONAL FITNESS
- B. LEARNING TO DEAL WITH STRESS
- C. LEARNING FUNDAMENTAL SKILLS OF THE SPORT
- D. LEARNING GOOD HEALTH HABITS

2. EMOTIONAL GROWTH

- A. GAINING SELF-CONFIDENCE, SELF-WORTH, AND SELF-DISCIPLINE
- B. LEARNING TO ACCEPT CRITICISM AND ACCEPT RESPONSIBILITY FOR YOUR ACTIONS
- C. LEARNING TO ACCEPT SUCCESS AND FAILURE
- D. LEARNING LEADERSHIP QUALITIES
- E. DEVELOPING A STRONG WORK ETHIC AND MENTAL TOUGHNESS

3. SOCIAL GROWTH

- A. DEVELOPING INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIP SKILLS
- B. DEVELOPING LOYALTY TO A GROUP
- C. LEARNING TO WIN/LOSE GRACIOUSLY
- D. LEARNING TO WORK IN A GROUP -TEAMWORK
- E. LEARNING SPORTSMANSHIP -FAIR PLAY
- F. LEARNING RESPECT FOR TEAMMATES, OPPONENTS, COACHES, AND OFFICIALS
- G. REPRESENTING YOURSELF, YOUR TEAM, AND YOUR SCHOOL IN A POSITIVE MANNER

4. INTELLECTUAL GROWTH

- A. LEARNING A SENSE OF PRIDE IN ACHIEVEMENT
- B. LEARNING COMMITMENT TO A GOAL
- C. LEARNING TIME MANAGEMENT SKILLS

Core Beliefs of Brahman Athletics

- Open lines of communication is vital for a quality program and growth.
- Athletes are students first. Coaches are teachers first.
- The coaching staff, athletes, administration, parents, and fans should always act in a manner that would enhance the positive image of the school and community. (Exhibit great sportsmanship).
- The needs of the team must come before the needs of the individual.
- Participation is for those who potentially have the skills, attitudes, and willingness to work hard to improve in their respective sports. The best players, regardless of age, should play on the varsity team.
- Athletic participation is a privilege, not a right.
- Playing time in scheduled contests has to be earned! Work ethic, ability, academic standing, and behavior are all vital factors.
- Athletic participation is intended to benefit all athletes by teaching fundamentals, strategies, and behavior that will enable our teams and athletes to be successful.
- High school participation is not intended to be an avenue for college scholarships or professional contracts. If those opportunities become available, the coaches and school will assist however possible.
- Winning is nice, but preparing everyday to be in a position to win at the end of the season is better!

BECOMING A PART OF BRAHMAN ATHLETICS AS A PARENT:

JOIN THE [BRAHMAN ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION](#)

OKEECHOBEE HIGH SCHOOL WILL ABIDE BY THE RULES SET FORTH BY THE FLORIDA HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION. HERE IS THE LINK TO THE WEBSITE FOR EXPECTATIONS, POLICIES, BYLAWS AND SPECIFIC SPORTS HANDBOOKS:

[FHSAA WEBSITE](#)

OKEECHOBEE COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD CODE OF STUDENT CONDUCT

Athletes will abide by the Okeechobee County School Code of Student conduct. Each athlete and parent should familiarize themselves with the handbook and understand that these rules apply at ANY school event, on or off campus.

[English Code of Conduct](#)

[Spanish Code of Conduct](#)

ATHLETIC GOALS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

An athlete must develop self-discipline, respect for authority, and the spirit of hard work and sacrifice - to place the team and its objectives higher than personal desires. The attainment of this goal carries with it certain traditions and responsibilities that must be maintained. A great athletic tradition is not built overnight. It takes the hard work of many people over the years. As a member of an interscholastic squad of Okeechobee High School, you have inherited a wonderful tradition, a tradition you are challenged to uphold. We desire to win, but only with honor for our athletes, our school, and our community. Such a tradition is worthy of the best efforts of all concerned. It will not be easy to contribute to such an athletic tradition. When you wear the colors of Okeechobee High School, we assume that you not only understand our traditions, but are willing to assume the responsibilities that go with them. The contributions that you make should be satisfying accomplishments for you and your family.

ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT POLICIES

1. *Dropping or Transferring Sports* - Athletics is a privilege, not an educational right. There is no place in athletics for quitting on a program or teammates. A student/athlete that quits a sport is not eligible for the next sport until the season of the current sport season (quit sport) is over. A pattern of quitting could result loss of athletic participation in future sports.
On occasion, however, an athlete may find it necessary to drop or switch a sport for a good reason. If an athlete wishes to change sports during a season, he/she must receive approval of both coaches concerned. If this is the case, the following procedures must be followed:
 - a. the athlete must talk with their current head coach;
 - b. the head coaches must confer and report their decision to the athletic director;
 - c. the athlete must contact the athletic director if they want to appeal the decision.
 - d. Failure to follow this procedure in dropping a sport can result in loss of all athletic privileges.
2. *Equipment* - School equipment/uniforms checked out by the student athlete is his/her responsibility. They are expected to keep it clean and in good condition. Loss of any equipment is the athlete's financial obligation.
3. *Missing Practice* - An athlete should always consult the coach before missing practice. Missing practice or a game without good reason, such as sudden illness or a family emergency, should be dealt with by the head coach.
4. *Travel* - All athletes must travel to and from out of-town athletic contests in transportation provided by the athletic department, unless permission is granted by the head coach to travel from the game with a parent or guardian. Permission will be granted only if the following documentation is supplied:

- a. Students are permitted to ride home with parents only after away contests. or:
 - b. written documentation from the parent stating that they remove responsibility for transportation from the coach and school and transfer that responsibility to the parent/ guardian named. This document must also include the date, time, and activity concerned as well as the name of the student athlete.
 - c. Athletes will remain with their squad and under the supervision of the coach when attending away contests. All school bus rules will be followed. Dress will be appropriate and in good taste.
5. *Conflicts in Extracurricular Activities* - An individual student who attempts to participate in too many extracurricular activities will eventually be in a position of a conflict of obligations. The athletic department recognizes that each student should have the opportunity for a broad range of experience in activities, and for this reason will attempt to schedule events in a manner so as to minimize conflicts. If a conflict should arise, the sponsors should be informed so that they might work toward a solution. If a solution cannot be found, the athletic director will have to make the decision based on the following:
- a. relative importance of each event;
 - b. importance of each event to the student;
 - c. relative contribution made by the student;
 - d. length of time each event has been scheduled;
 - e. parent input;
 - f. coach's or sponsor's input.
 - g. Once the decision has been made and the student has followed that decision, they will not be penalized in any way by the faculty sponsor.
6. *School Attendance* - In order to participate in an athletic contest or practice, an athlete must be in attendance for at least half of the school day (four class periods), on the date of the practice or contest. Athletes must maintain the minimum attendance requirements of OHS. If a pattern of attendance develops, the athletic director or administration can take steps to address concerns including suspension from athletic programs until attendance expectations are met.
7. *Awards/Lettering Requirements* - The lettering requirements for each sport will be given to each athlete at the beginning of the season. The school awards MVP and BRAHMAN Awards in each varsity sport. A varsity athlete who letters will receive the following:
- a. 1st year - letter with emblem and stripe and certificate.
 - b. 2nd year – stripe and certificate (2nd year plaque will be awarded to seniors)
 - c. 3rd year - stripe and certificate (3rd year plaque will be awarded to seniors)
 - d. 4th year - stripe and certificate (4th year plaque will be awarded to seniors)

An athlete will receive a letter after the first season of qualification in a varsity sport, and may earn only 1 stripe per year. They will receive an emblem for a sport the first season of qualification for that sport. A junior varsity or freshman athlete who completes a season will receive a certificate of participation. Any varsity athlete who maintains a weighted 3.5 GPA during their season of participation will be named as a Brahman Scholar Athlete and will receive a patch for the year.

ATHLETIC SEASON PASSES

For \$35.00, any student can purchase an "Athletic Season Pass". This pass can be used for free admission to all regular season home games. This excludes parking if applicable. NOTE: It is beneficial to get an Athletic Card and/or the Athletic Season Pass at the beginning of the year.

* The athletic Season Pass is not valid for District, Regional, and State contests.

OKEECHOBEE HIGH SCHOOL DRUG TESTING POLICY

Okeechobee High School is conducting a mandatory drug testing program for all students that drive to school, participate in athletics, and participate in clubs. Its purpose is threefold: (1) to provide for the health and safety of all students; (2) to undermine the effects of peer pressure by providing a legitimate reason for the students to refuse to use illegal drugs; and (3) to encourage students who use drugs to participate in drug treatment programs.

NCAA Clearinghouse

Students who feel that they have the potential to compete at an NCAA Division I or Division II school must have both your academic and amateur status certified by the NCAA Initial Eligibility Clearinghouse. The Clearinghouse is an organization that works with the NCAA to determine a student's eligibility for athletic participation in his or her first year of college. Students who want to participate in college sports during their first year of enrollment at a Division I or II college or university must register with the clearinghouse. Registration should take place at the beginning of the junior year. More information can be found at www.ncaaclearinghouse.net or in the high school guidance office.

VARSITY LETTERING

All first year lettermen receive a varsity letter, the emblem of the sport or sports lettered in, a stripe for the year, and a certificate. For each lettering year thereafter, an athlete receives a stripe and a certificate. An athlete may letter in more than one sport per year. A maximum of four stripes and one emblem for each lettered sport may be earned during an athlete's four years of eligibility. At the end of each season, seniors will be awarded a plaque for multi-year participation in a sport.

In the event there is a dispute over lettering, the information shared with parents at the initial meeting prior to the season will be considered. If nothing regarding lettering was previously shared, administration/athletic director will make the final decision.

PARENT/COACH COMMUNICATION

Research indicates that students involved in co-curricular activities have a greater chance for success during adulthood. We believe Okeechobee High School's Athletic program helps develop the character traits that promote a successful life after high school. Both parenting and coaching are extremely challenging vocations. By establishing an understanding of each position, we are better able to accept the actions of each other, providing greater benefit to children. As parents, when your children become involved in our program, you have a right to understand what expectations are placed on your child. This begins with clear communication from the coach of your child's program. If a situation arises which requires a conference between the coach and the parent, this is encouraged. It is important that both parties involved have a clear understanding of the others position.

Communication you should expect from your son/daughter's coach

1. Philosophy of the coach
2. Expectations the coach has for your child and other players on the squad
3. Locations and times of all practices and contests
4. Procedure should your child be injured during participation
5. Discipline that result in the denial of your child's participation

Communication coaches expect from parents

As Okeechobee High School athletes become involved in the athletic program; they will experience some of the most rewarding moments of their lives. It is important to understand that there may also be times when things do not go the way an athlete wishes. At these times, discussion with the coach is encouraged.

1. Concerns expressed directly to the coach
2. Notification of any schedule conflicts well in advance
3. Information regarding any medical, physical or emotional concerns.

4. Volunteering to assist at events.

Appropriate concerns to discuss with coaches

It is very difficult to accept as a parent your child's not playing as much as you may hope. Coaches are professionals. They make judgment decisions based on what they believe to be best for all students involved.

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

Issues not appropriate to discuss with coaches

While there are certain things, which can and should be discussed with your child's coach, there are other things, which must be left to the discretion of the coach.

1. Playing time
2. Strategy
3. Play calling
4. Other student-athletes

Grievances/ Chain of command

Below is a chart illustrating the athletic chain of command. If a parent, or student has a problem of concern you should take it to the person at the appropriate level beginning with the coach of that sport. If you feel you have not received proper consideration at the immediate level, then it is proper to take the situation to the next higher level.

The chain of command is as follows:

1. Head Coach
2. Athletic Director
3. Assistant Principal
4. Principal

ATHLETIC INJURY PROCEDURE

OHS WILL FOLLOW ALL POLICIES AND PROTOCOLS OF THE FHSAA IN REGARDS TO STUDENT INJURY.

BY ITS NATURE, PARTICIPATION IN INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETICS INCLUDES RISK OF INJURY, WHICH MAY RANGE IN SEVERITY FROM MINOR SCRAPES AND BRUISES TO DEATH. ALTHOUGH SERIOUS INJURIES ARE NOT COMMON IN SUPERVISED SCHOOL ATHLETIC PROGRAMS, IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO ELIMINATE ALL RISK.

PARTICIPANTS HAVE THE RESPONSIBILITY TO HELP REDUCE THE CHANCE OF INJURY. PLAYERS MUST OBEY ALL RULES, REPORT ALL PHYSICAL PROBLEMS TO THEIR COACHES, FOLLOW A PROPER CONDITIONING PROGRAM, AND INSPECT THEIR OWN EQUIPMENT DAILY.

WHEN AN ATHLETE IS INJURED, OUR STAFF WILL ASSESS THE INJURY AND TAKE THE PROPER STEPS OF NECESSARY FIRST AID. ALL INJURIES SHOULD BE REPORTED TO THE COACH, **WHO WILL THEN COMPLETE A STUDENT INJURY REPORT AND TURN IT IN TO AN ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL.** IN CASE OF SEVERE INJURY, 911 WILL BE CALLED.

IF AN ATHLETE NEEDS TO BE TAKEN TO A HOSPITAL, THE FOLLOWING STEPS WILL BE TAKEN:

- IF THE PARENTS ARE PRESENT, THEY WILL MAKE THE NECESSARY DECISIONS AS TO AMBULANCE OR NO AMBULANCE, AND ACCOMPANYING THE ATHLETE.
- IF THE PARENTS ARE ABSENT, THE COACH WILL CALL THE PARENTS OR EMERGENCY CONTACT. IF THE PARENTS ARE UNAVAILABLE, A SCHOOL REPRESENTATIVE/COACH WILL ACCOMPANY THE ATHLETE TO THE HOSPITAL. IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT PARENTS ARE ALWAYS ACCESSIBLE IN CASE OF INJURY. COACHES WILL HAVE YOUR EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION (ON PHYSICAL FORM) AT ALL TIMES.

IF AN ATHLETE HAS SEEN A DOCTOR, A DOCTOR'S CLEARANCE IS REQUIRED TO RESUME PARTICIPATION IN THE SPORT.

ATHLETIC INSURANCE (SUPPLEMENTAL)

Athletic insurance is provided to all athletes, who are enrolled at Okeechobee High School. **This coverage is secondary to all other insurance** carried on the student athlete and is not guaranteed to cover 100% of any medical costs. In order for any claims to be paid, the insurance form available at the time of injury needs to be filled out by the parent and returned to the address listed on the form.

Supplemental insurance forms can be obtained from an Assistant Principal after an injury, requiring medical attention, has occurred.