

# **KEYSTONE COBRAS**



## **High School Athlete Handbook 2013-2014**

**KEYSTONE SCHOOL ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT**

Welcome to the 2012-2013 athletic season at Keystone School. You are now part of the Cobra athletic program! Athletics, rightly understood as an integral part of education, and compliments our greater mission at Keystone. Lessons of commitment, teamwork, tenacity, and overcoming adversity are advanced on our courts and fields.

This handbook contains the philosophies, policies, and guidelines which govern the Keystone Athletic Program, as well as some of the more important rules and regulations required by the school and governing leagues. Although it is intended to be comprehensive in nature, there will inevitably be situations that occur that are not outlined in this handbook. Having a common understanding of the rules and regulations that govern athletics will assist in significantly reducing concerns and unforeseen problems.

We ask that you read this handbook thoroughly with your student-athlete(s). The athletic office must have a current, signed Acknowledgement Form (located at the end of the handbook) on file before a student-athlete can participate.

We look forward to another great year in athletics.

Go Cobras!!!

## **Athletic Program Profile**

**Mascot** – Cobras

**Colors** – Black & Red

**League** - Texas Association of Private and Parochial Schools (TAPPS)

**Classification** - TAPPS 3A

### **Sports :**

Varsity & Junior Varsity Volleyball

Varsity & Junior Varsity Boys Basketball

Varsity Girls Basketball

Soccer

Boys & Girls Golf

Softball

Boys & Girls Tennis

Boys & Girls Track & Field

### **Coaching Staff:**

Roxann Calderon- Varsity Volleyball, Asst. Girls Basketball, HS Athletic Director

Dr. Steve Haness- Asst. Varsity Soccer

Jody Hawk-Ridewood- 7/8 Volleyball, 7/8 Girls Basketball, 7/8 Softball, MS Athletic Director

Dawn LaVelle- Tennis

Ralf Petiton- Varsity Soccer, MS Boys Basketball, 7/8 Track and Field, HS Asst. Track & Field

Matt Schultze- 7/8 Soccer, Varsity and JV Boys Basketball, HS, Track & Field

## **Athletic Program**

The Keystone Family Handbook states that all high school students must earn 1 unit of physical education sports credit. Credit can be earned by participating in a competitive sport at Keystone or through managing a sports team. A ½ credit can be earned by participating in a major sport (i.e., volleyball, basketball, soccer, softball) for 1 full season. A major sport is a sport that meets for practices and games 5 to 6 times a week. ¼ credit can be earned by participating in a minor sport (i.e., golf, tennis, and track and field) or managing a team for 1 full season. A minor sport is a sport that meets for practices and games 3 to 4 times a week. Please review the Family Handbook for more details on this matter. Our athletic program shall be conducted in accordance with existing Texas Association of Private and Parochial Schools (TAPPS) and Keystone's policies, rules and regulations. Participation in Keystone athletics is a privilege. Consequently, if Keystone's ideals and standards are violated, this privilege can be revoked.

### **Team Level Philosophy**

Our high school athletic programs strive to develop fundamental skills, and focuses on excellence in execution. Players are put in positions to get the most out of their athletic talent, cultivate leadership skills and understand "team-first" responsibility. Try-outs are for the purpose of team placement based on skill, effort, and attitude. Cuts are discouraged, but permissible if based on facility or resource issues. At the junior varsity level, our goal is to have all players play each game. Please understand that this may not be possible. Playing time is at the discretion of the coach, and will be based on attendance, skill, effort, and attitude.

Creation and size of teams is determined by many factors including but not limited to the number of participants interested in a sport, facility availability, safety and coaching resources. Decisions will be made on a season-by-season, team-by-team basis if we cannot provide a healthy experience for all parties involved.

### **Multiple Sports and Activities**

We encourage athletes to be well rounded, Different sports challenge athletes in different ways, and the skills developed through the training methods used in one sport will often help the athlete in another sport.

Regarding multiple sport participation, student-athletes may not participate in multiple team sports at the same time. Student-athletes may, however, participate in a lifetime sport (track & field, golf, tennis) and a team sport at the same time. Good, open communication between the student-athlete, his/her parents, and the two coaches involved.

Regarding multiple activity participation, student-athletes may participate in a non-athletic department program (i.e. upper school play, science fair, etc.) and on an athletic team at the same time if leadership from both activities gives permission to do so. Leadership from both activities will work closely together to minimize conflict, however, reserve the right to require, on rare occasion, sole commitment to their activity (i.e. playoff game, science fair presentation). Where there is dual commitment and schedule conflict, there must be a declared priority and agreements made between student, parents and team or department leadership before the seasons begin as to how the student will divide his/her time between the activities. The decision to participate in multiple sports or multiple activities should ultimately be decided by the parents and student.

## **General Policies**

### **Sportsmanship**

During home contests, we serve as hosts to the visiting team, its students, spectators, and officials. They are our guests, and they should be treated accordingly. At away contests, we are expected to act as invited guests. We will treat the home school's personnel and facilities with care and respect.

As participants and spectators, we want to cheer for our team, and not against the opponent. Any member of the Keystone community who is a participant or spectator at an event, who uses profanity, engages in inappropriate behavior such as fighting or similar misconduct will be dismissed from the event and is subject to disciplinary action by the school.

### **Scheduling**

The athletic department does its best to schedule games and practices well in advance of the season. Because we cannot control district changes or changes made by an opponent when we travel to their home court/field, changes to schedules will inevitably occur. Game and practice schedules will be posted online through [www.keystoneschool.org](http://www.keystoneschool.org). Addresses will be posted online as well.

### **Transportation and Travel**

Keystone will provide transportation for all athletes to every away game and off campus home games. Athletes are required to travel with the team to every away game and off campus home game. Parents can pick their child up from the site; we only ask that we have notice, either verbally by parent or written, before they leave the site. If the parent is not at the site to pick up their child by the time the team is ready to return to Keystone, the child must ride back with the team and can be picked up at Keystone.

### **Severe/Inclement Weather**

Any changes to published schedules due to bad weather will be updated on our website as soon as an affirmative decision can be made. If lightening is present during an outdoor event, all parties must be moved indoors. The event can only be resumed if 30 minutes have passed since the last visual evidence of lightening. For outdoor practices, heat and humidity are closely monitored. Where possible, practices will be scheduled in the coolest times of the day. Practices will not be held outside in a heat index of 110 or above.

### **Soccer Policy**

Keystone is a member of TAPPS which allows girls to play on the boys soccer team. Wanting to provide the most opportunities possible, we have elected to pursue this option of including girls in the soccer programs for grades 7-12.

There are a couple of important considerations as we make this change, and which put limitations on this policy. First, Keystone has neither the staff resources nor sufficient numbers of students to field a full soccer team for girls in addition to the existing sports we have. Second, as we make this opportunity available, we want to avoid displacing boys from the soccer program, for we feel it is important to make sure that they have this opportunity. To address these two considerations, there will be limits on the total number of girls who can participate in the soccer program.

The following parameters will guide the participation of girls on the soccer teams:

- Girls can participate in the soccer program as long as there are 24 or fewer students in the program who wish to play soccer.
- When there are fewer than 24 boys who wish to play on a team, but more girls than the team can accommodate, the girls interested in playing will have a tryout for the team.

- Any girl who makes a team on a given year will automatically be given a spot on the team the following year, as long as she is physically prepared for the start of the season. This will apply even if there are 24 or more boys on a team in a given year.

Coaches will make decisions regarding tryouts, and will also make decisions about playing time for games. Girls on a team will be given the same playing time opportunities, and held to the same standards, as boys.

## Requirements for Participation

Each student wishing to participate in Keystone athletics must have the following completed and signed. These documents must be on file in the athletic office before the first day of participation in any given sport:

- **Acknowledgement of Athletic Handbook**

- **Physical Examination/Medical History Form** – The physical exam form must be completed by a physician and submitted to the coach or the Athletic office *prior* to participation. The exam will be valid for one year from the date it was obtained.

- **Medical Release Authorization** – Each athlete's parent shall complete an emergency medical release form, giving permission for treatment by a physician or hospital when the parent(s) is not available. Furthermore, if an athlete has been seen by or referred to a physician, that athlete must return with a note from the physician with detailed information regarding the athlete's activity status. Once an athlete is under a physician's care, Keystone needs a release from that physician before allowing the athlete to return to activity.

- **Transportation Form** – Keystone requires a transportation form to be completed *prior* participation in any sport to allow the athlete to travel with the team or authorized person.

- **Acknowledgement of Rules Form** – TAPPS requires each athlete and parent to complete and submit this form *prior* to participation of any upper school sport.

If forms have not been turned in before the first scheduled day of participation, the student-athlete cannot participate in the sport desired. All of the documents can be found in hard copy form in the athletics office. **IMPORTANT** – No student-athlete will be allowed to go to their next sport if uniforms have not been turned in.

## Student-Athletes

### Code of Conduct

Being a Keystone athlete is a student's choice and thereby a privilege. Student-athletes shall conduct themselves in a way that brings positive recognition Keystone School, their team, their sport and themselves. A Keystone student-athlete reflects the mission and identity of the school, no matter where he/she is. Student-athletes are expected to behave at all times with consideration for others.

### Academic Requirements

A student who misses school due to athletic competition is responsible for keeping up with his or her schoolwork. Any work that is due during a period that the student will miss should be turned in before the class period. Any tests that the student will miss should be taken ahead of time if possible. Otherwise, the student is responsible for working out an arrangement with the teacher ahead of time for making up the test. Under no circumstances should a student fail to talk with a teacher whose class he or she will miss at least a day ahead of time.

## **Participation**

Participating in athletics is a privilege and is contingent on the following:

- 1) *In good academic standing* - Student-athletes may not participate in practices or games if they have failed to achieve the minimum academic requirement or are suspended from school.
- 2) *Practice and Game attendance* – Student-athletes must attend at least 3 consecutive academic periods the day of a practice or game in order to play. The only exception to this rule is if the absence is caused due to a school event (field trip, college visit, etc.). Parents and student-athletes need to recognize that absences from practices and games will hinder playing time, skill development, physical conditioning as well as jeopardize team unity. Time missed from a sport team practice will influence an athlete's performance and often his/her position with the team. When a personal or social event conflicts with a practice or game, we expect students to honor their commitment to the athletic program and their teammates. When a family event causes the student-athlete to be absent from a practice, the situation should be communicated to the coach at the earliest possible moment, preferably at the beginning of the season and not the same day of the conflict (this does not include family emergencies which are unpredictable and managed differently).

## **Time Commitments**

Up to five to six day a week commitment, depending on sport. Practice length for all sports will not exceed 2 hours per day during the school year. Soccer and volleyball will have up to three hour practices in pre-season before the school year begins. No team related events will be held on Sundays. Practices and/or games may be held on Saturdays and across some school holidays depending on the sport and season. No games will be played during mid-year exam week or final exam week.

- Volleyball and Fall Soccer – Team practices start August 6<sup>th</sup>, a week and a half before school starts. If a game is scheduled on the day immediately following a Monday holiday (i.e. Labor day, Columbus day), practice can be held on that holiday.
- Basketball - Practices may be held during the first three days of Thanksgiving week. District games may start the first week of December. With no games being played the week of finals, practices may be held during the winter holidays to prepare teams for district competition. If a game is scheduled on the day immediately following a Monday holiday (i.e. MLK day, Presidents day), practice can be held on that holiday.
- Practices may also be held before school. Coaches will not have practices begin before 7:00 a.m.

## **Departure from Team**

There are three types of departure from a team.

- Leaving a team – season ending injury, poor health status, family emergency all may lead to permissible departure from the team only after being discussed between parents, the head coach and/or Director of Athletics. A student-athlete may still be eligible for an athletic credit in this circumstance.
- Quitting a team – If at any time, an athlete quits, he/she gives up all rights to any honors and credit which he/she has earned but has not yet received. If the athlete quits, he/she must meet the head coach. The athlete must turn in all issued equipment and bring a letter or email from his/her parents stating that they are aware of the student athlete's decision.
- Being dismissed from a team – Any player who is dismissed from a team for conduct, rules infractions or disciplinary reasons will give up all rights to any honors and credit which he/she has earned but has not yet received.

## **Injuries**

Injured athletes must be seen by a doctor for evaluation before being released for participation. Injured athletes are still required to attend practice unless treating and/or rehabilitating an injury, or as approved by the Head Coach. Athletes may return to practice with a written release from their doctor. It is the player's responsibility to communicate with the coach.

## **Athletic Uniform and Dress Code**

Uniforms are to be worn in the appropriate manner. Uniforms are for games only. If a student-athlete is missing a uniform or uniform piece the day of a game, another uniform will not be issued. You are responsible for tuning in all equipment issued to you. Your grades will be held until the equipment is turned in or paid for.

Volleyball players will need to purchase 3 practice t-shirts. These shirts will be worn for practice only and will stay at school for the entire season. The coach will make sure the shirts are washed and ready to be worn for practice every day. At the end of the season, the players will be able to keep their shirts.

## **Parents**

Without a doubt, parents are the most influential models for young athletes. From a parent's conduct to the place sports plays in the family lives, parents make the biggest impact on a young person's athletic experience. Not only are parents influential, they are critical to the success of our athletic programs. The guidelines that follow are an attempt to provide a foundation for our joint effort to guide your sons and daughters through the challenging yet wonderful experience of high school sports.

### **Presence at Games, Practices**

The coach's classroom is the court or field, usually with undefined walls, making it easy for parents to naturally move close to the action. Parents should be interested, supportive observers from a distance. The coach needs room to be able to instruct and the player to perform without distraction from the stands. Distraction only yields poor results. Cheer them on, yes! Coach or yell at them, no!

Practices, which are considered valuable instructional and evaluation time, are closed to all non-team or program personnel, unless previously approved by the Head Coach. Invited guests are expected to refrain from disrupting tryout or practice sessions, and from interacting with players and/or coaches.

### **Coach as a Leader**

Parents and student-athletes must trust that coaches try to make the best decisions for the team as well as the individuals that make up the team. Coaches are with the team on a daily basis in practice and in competition, evaluating character and performance, and therefore will make judgment decisions based on what they feel is in the best interest of the team. Playing time, players' positions, and strategy should be left to the discretion of the coach. Parents should help their child understand that being a team member means accepting the coach's decisions even when he or she does not agree with them.

It is also important to remember that neither coaches nor parents are infallible evaluators of talent, nor are either perfect play-callers. A team does not function well with non-coaches trying to coach. Parents should not place a child in a tough spot of having to decide who they are going to listen to, their coach, or their parent.

### **Communication-Internal**

Direct communication between the coach and players is very important, and is usually the best way for any questions to be answered or conflicts to be worked through. Inevitably, there will be times when a meeting between a parent and coach is warranted. Please call or e-mail the coach to arrange a convenient time for a phone conversation or meeting. Try to exercise the 24-hour rule – wait 24 hours before placing that call or sending that email. Too often our emotions get the best of us. And remember, before or after practices or games is never an appropriate time to approach a coach. Coaches will be happy to meet with you, but it may be a few days before a convenient time can be arranged.

A meeting with the coach is an opportunity to exchange information and respectfully discuss any concerns or questions that you may have. Hopefully the meeting will promote better understanding and communication, but the meeting should not be viewed as an opportunity to convince the coach that your child should be playing more, playing a different position, or that the coach should be employing a different strategy. After the meeting,

just as before the meeting, your support of the team and the coach is expected. If there is a significant issue that you believe requires additional discussion, then the Director of Athletics, coach and parent can meet together to resolve the issue.

If issues cannot be resolved after meeting with the Director of Athletics, then a meeting involving the Upper School Head, along with the Director of Athletics, coach and parent should take place. Any unresolved or escalated issues should then be taken to the Head of School.

**Communication-External**

All press releases must be approved by the Athletic Director or a coach within the athletic department (calling in box scores to the local newspaper is considered a press release and should be the responsibility of the Head Coach or his/her appointed contact person). Parents should never contact opposing schools, officials or the TAPPS office to voice complaints over athletic contests, opposing players, coaches or fans, or officials. All concerns and/or opinions should be communicated directly with Keystone's Athletic Director.

## 2012-2013 Parent & Student Acknowledgement

I have received, read and understand the Athletic Handbook for the 2012-2013 school year and I agree to abide by its rules and guidelines.

Please Print Name:

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Student-Athlete

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Grade

Please SIGN:

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Student-Athlete

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Date

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Parent

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Date