



LINN-MAR HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL HANDBOOK

#TEAMFIRST

“Developing **CHAMPIONS** today; and, preparing **LEADERS** for tomorrow!”

- A. The ultimate goal of our football program is to have the type program the entire student body and community can be proud of, both on and off the football field. We expect to build our program with young men who embody character, self-esteem, self-discipline, and academic achievement. We will teach good work habits, leadership skills, teamwork, commitment, and strive to reach our highest potential. We will be LINN-MAR FOOTBALL in mind, body and spirit. Attitude and Effort based program - player driven ownership to build the most caring, inspired, & unified team in HSFB

B. **PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY & CORE VALUES**

#TEAMFIRST - Every decision we make, will be made with what is best for the team. No one is bigger than the team.

P.R.I.D.E. Core Values

P - Perseverance
R - Responsibility
I - Integrity
D - Discipline
E - Excellence

- a. Our MISSION STATEMENT is bigger than Football. Our Core Values are Non-Negotiable.
- b. The Program comes first, in everything.
- c. Embrace your Role - whatever it is!
- d. BE A MULTI-SPORT ATHLETE
- e. Be where your feet are - That is the only place that matters today!
- f. Control what you can: Attitude - Effort - Toughness - Discipline - Compete
- g. Love: It starts and ends with Love!

- C. **MULTI-SPORTS STANDARD:** Part of being involved with Linn-Mar Football is to be diverse in your exposure to other sports. We strongly encourage our athletes to be Multi-Sport Athletes. It not only makes them better athletes, it helps other programs in this school get better, and it reduces the risk of injury. Being a one sport athlete is SELFISH! It is our player's job to improve everyday in the classroom and as an athlete.
- D. **WEIGHT ROOM:** It is our player's job to improve in the weightroom. If you want to be the best you can be as a player, you will be in the weight room. Off-season Lifting is 3 days a week and in-season Lifting is 2-3 days per week. Lifting TOGETHER as a team develops our chemistry: Iron Sharpens Iron!

FOOTBALL COACHING PHILOSOPHY

- E. **COACHING PHILOSOPHY:** To create an atmosphere of pride and to teach each player the importance of attitude, confidence, character, knowledge, goal setting, and how these factors apply to life as well as football. Our job as coaches is help each player to achieve their greatest potential through relationships that are formed by respect and hard work! Develop Champions today and prepare Leaders for tomorrow!!
- F. **OFFENSIVE PHILOSOPHY:** To create an offensive system which has the potential to be balanced in the running game and passing game. We want to effectively make our opponents defend the entire football field, and to be multi-dimensional in our attack. We will be physical in all positions on offense, and be very sound fundamentally.
- G. **DEFENSIVE PHILOSOPHY:** To create a defensive system which is sound against the run and pass, and effectively be able to adjust to sets, shifts, and motion. We will stress running to the football, tackling, proper "alignment to assignment" and collision football at every position.
- H. **SPECIAL TEAMS PHILOSOPHY:** To create a special team system which our opponents must practice to be concerned with. We want to develop a sense of pride with our special teams where our best and most deserving players strive to be part of this special teams effort. We want our special teams to be a threat every time we line up.
- I. **HANDLING PROBLEMS:**
 - a. Be proactive, plan ahead. Have a plan of action for substitution.
 - b. Explain the decision process of the team.
 - c. Players need to talk to their position coach, or the head coach on their progress, role, playing time, or other problems.
 - d. Players may talk to team captains, unity council members, or coaches with regard to positive or negative situations on the football team.
 - e. Explain that feeling upset at times will occur with some players, but complaining to parents and teammates hurt the team.
 - f. Open door policy- Important for players to use this policy, or know it's available for them. Encourage players to talk.

- g. Stay away from gossip. If you are not part of the problem, or part of the solution—do not say anything.

J. COACHING GUIDELINES:

- a. Fundamentals **MUST BE STRESSED** throughout the program (7-12). Everyone must teach proper blocking & tackling along with all football fundamentals. Practices will consist of warm-up, individual technique, group session (inside run/skelly, etc.) and team periods.
- b. Defensively, everyone will run our Varsity base defense (4-2-5) and stunts incorporated. Our philosophy is simple: Play fast, play physical and play free. That means to align correctly, set the edge, and fly to the ball without thinking. Zone and man coverage will be taught at all levels.
- c. Offensively, everyone will run our Varsity Offense. We are a Pro Style Offense. Every level will be taught the same techniques, using the same wording.
- d. Each coach should have a practice schedule made out before starting practice. My suggestion is that the Middle School staff should meet once a week to discuss personnel, implementation of offense/defense/specials teams, weekly and daily practice schedules and other important matters.

K. PLAYING TIME:

- a. **Middle School** - At this level it's very important to play everyone to promote football, and to try to give each player a good learning experience. Fundamentals, teamwork, and basic concepts should be stressed in the framework of the high school system. The goal should be to start as many players (in the first half) on offense/defense and special teams as possible. Our 7th and 8th grade teams should have as many players starting either on offense, defense or special teams. In the second half, coaches can dictate more the playing time of each player. Coaches always reserve the right to limit playing time due to lack of effort, missed practices or for other disciplinary reasons.
- b. **Freshman/JV** - Fundamentals, teamwork, and technique will be stressed, along with the offensive, defensive and special teams' philosophies. This level of competition is primarily for preparing underclassmen to move up in the program by continually working on skills, technique and concepts. Playing time will not always be equal, but coaches will try to play as many players as possible that deserve to play. Emphasis will be stressed on learning the varsity offensive, defensive and special teams' schemes. Again, winning is important, but individual and team improvement are stressed. The goal is to start as many players as possible in all three phases of the game (O/D/ST).
- c. **Varsity** - Naturally, more emphasis is placed on winning at the varsity level. However, winning is NOT the end-all goal! As our philosophy of Earn Everything implies, our players who "EARN" their spots through daily work and attendance will be looked on as valuable assets in the program. Fundamentals, teamwork, skills, concepts, and technique will be stressed. Learning offensive, defensive, and special teams' schemes and concepts are very important. Our coaching staff will expect players to commit to our speed, strength and conditioning program. Players will be expected to be

involved in our camps, passing leagues, and clinics to improve their skill level. Coaches will evaluate players and the team through daily practices and game-like situations. Playing time will not be equal, and will vary from player to player, and possibly game to game. Our LINN-MAR FOOTBALL philosophy will always come first!

L. Off-Season Strength Training

- a. If you are a member of our program, you will be in the weight room. Playing time has to be earned. Putting time in the weight room invests in yourself and shows your teammates they can trust you! Football is a game of violent collisions. You hit and get hit from every conceivable angle. An effective strength & conditioning program will minimize (not eliminate) the threat of serious injury. Off-season conditioning will assist the student athlete to reach their peak strength, speed, agility, flexibility, and cardiovascular conditioning levels. The sole objective is to properly prepare your child to best meet the physical demands of playing football. Weight room hours during the school year will be at the discretion of the Coaching Staff. Athletes will be taught the core movements and lifts required for the program. The players will then work through the program under the supervision of the coaching staff. If corrections need to be made, the coaches will continue to teach the proper technique and form for the safety of the athletes. Dedication in the weight room shows our Coaching Staff that football is important to them.
- b. **Summer Attendance:** This is our MAIN time to improve together. We lift together, do speed school together, and do skills and drills together. Everyday you miss is an opportunity to grow as a person, player & teammate. To be on our Football Poster you must be at 80% of the workouts. We earn everything. The highest levels of attendance will be rewarded with special perks and helmet stickers only they will get. Friday Night playing will most definitely be impacted by your work, or lack thereof, in the summer! We value those who take time to invest in our program and will clearly recognize those who embody The Covenants of Linn-Mar Football!

LEVELS OF COMPETITION

Varsity -	May consist of seniors, juniors, sophomores.
JV -	May consist of sophomores, juniors & seniors.
Freshman -	Consists only of freshmen.

Our Coaching Staff will determine the level at which a player participates. The Head Coach will have the final decision regarding personnel. Players may play at more than one level. Pulling up student athletes to Varsity or JV level will be decided on both merit and need. Parents will always be a part of the discussion.

M. LETTER REQUIREMENTS- To earn a varsity letter in Football at Linn-Mar High School a player must meet the following criteria.

- a. You must attend all practices and games. If you cannot be at a practice/game, you must clear your absence with the head coach. If you are injured, you are still required to attend all practices and games if you are physically able. Again, you must clear your absence with the head coach.

- b. There will be consequences for missed practices and weights during the season:**
- i. Unexcused Late to practice or weights in-season:
 1. 1st Time = Reminder
 2. 2nd Time = Reminder and will sit $\frac{1}{4}$ of the next eligible game
 3. 3rd Time = Reminder and will sit $\frac{1}{2}$ of the next eligible game
 4. 4th Time = Welcome to attend practice, but no role given
 - ii. Unexcused Absence (No communication):
 1. 1st Time = Reminder and will sit $\frac{1}{4}$ of the next eligible game
 2. 2nd Time = Reminder and will sit $\frac{1}{2}$ of the next eligible game
 3. 3rd Time = Welcome to attend practice, but no role given.
 - iii. These situations can be avoided by communicating with your coaches via Hudl, Email, Text, or Face to face conversations.
- c. To earn a varsity letter in Football, a player must participate in at least one play in nine different quarters during the season. Seniors who have been part of our Football program for the last three years who fall short on nine quarters may letter with the “good standing” with your coaches and teammates.
- d. If you are suspended for disciplinary reasons, you are required to practice in all practices, unless you have been permanently dismissed from the team. If you played enough to earn a letter prior to suspension, you will lose your letter, or be dismissed from the team. These decisions will be made by our school administration and football coaching staff.

N. TRAINING RULES AND SUGGESTIONS

- a. Consumption of tobacco (smoking/chewing tobacco), drugs, or alcohol will not be tolerated. Players will be judged according to school policy (code of conduct). Stay away from situations in which illegal activity is taking place (smoking, drinking, and drug use).
- b. All players are expected to be on time for all meetings and practices. Any unexcused absence may result in being held out of the upcoming game. If you miss practice, you must notify your head coach (varsity-Coach Lovell). We may schedule Saturday “shake-outs” or practices, all will be scheduled in advance. Varsity players will have an afternoon walk-thru/practice during the season on Mondays during the season. Lifting sessions will be available during the season.
- c. If you need to make-up school work, you must notify Coach Lovell, not another player or coach. You will be expected to come to practice ASAP when your school work is completed. Please use mornings when possible to make-up school work.
UNEXCUSED ABSENCES will result in the following: 1st time – 1 qtr of varsity or JV play sat out. 2nd time – The previous consequence doubles! 3rd time – Meeting with Coaches to determine if this is the right place for you, possible dismissal from the team.
- d. NO HAZING, PERIOD! We expect all our players to respect each other. Hazing will not be tolerated at any level, and will result in the maximum punishment by the school administration and football staff.
- e. The use of profanity will not be tolerated in school, the locker room, at practice, or at games.
- f. Earrings or any type of jewelry will not be worn during practice or games.

- g. Players should be dressed appropriately in school, the locker room, weight room or football functions.
- h. Eat balanced meals and get plenty of sleep.
- i. Take care of yourself- mentally, morally, and physically.
- j. Stay away from other physical activities that could jeopardize your ability to participate on our team.
- k. All players are expected to wear the appropriate football equipment and attire for practices, games, and team functions. All players will wear the proper game socks, football shoes, and equipment for all games (**no ankle socks will be allowed for games, only calf-high black socks**).
- l. Black Cleats Only = #TeamFirst
- m. Practice attire- Practice jersey, Red or Black shorts, Linn-Mar t-shirt under your shoulder pads, helmet, football shoes, and mouthpiece. NO CUT-OFFS!
- n. Drink plenty of fluids (water, low-calorie sport drinks, etc.) and stay away from pop as much as possible
- o. Each player is responsible for his equipment and locking his locker.

O. TRAVELING TIPS AND DRESS

- a. While traveling, we impress everyone with whom we come in contact. Players will be expected to conduct themselves in the appropriate manner. All team members will wear the proper attire on our road games. No shorts, unless specified by the Coaching Staff You are responsible for any trash, or belongings you bring on the bus. If a problem arises regarding transportation, contact Coach Lovell. We will ALWAYS leave our opponents locker rooms cleaner than when we found it.

P. CLASSROOM CONDUCT, BEHAVIOR AND GRADES

- a. Each member of the Football Program is vital. Be loyal to your team, school and community. Focus on being positive. All players are expected to be a positive role model in the classroom, school, and community. Classroom behavior, study habits, and performance are a major focus of our team. Playing time may be affected by failing grades (according to District Policy), or poor student behavior in the classroom, school setting, or **SOCIAL MEDIA**. Remember, you represent the **LINN-MAR FOOTBALL TEAM** wherever you go, both on and off the football field. **DO NOT LET OUR TEAM DOWN!**

Q. Expectations of Parents:

- a. Our expectations are the same for the parents as they are the student athletes. Code of Conduct is universal for all those who are a part of the Program.
- b. Social Media use is expected to be done in a way that positively represents our program, school, and community. Parents are not above the rules and are expected to set a good example for their players!

R. Coaching from the sideline

- a. This Staff is fully committed to challenging your sons to become the very best football players they can be. This will involve us getting them to play/practice outside their comfort zones at times and asking them to perform skills that they might not be 100% comfortable with. This stress will ultimately push them through barriers and

enable them to maximize their potential in football. Being out of their comfort zone is one thing, but coupling that with parental instruction during this time can be detrimental to the developmental process. Please refrain from giving your coaching advice during games & practice. A good rule I have found to be true over the past several years is this: Be a parent and support your son, his teammates, and coaches.

S. Parent/Coach Communication:

a. Appropriate topics of discussion with Coach

- i. The treatment of the athlete mentally & physically
- ii. Ways to help the athlete improve
- iii. Concerns about the athlete's behavior

b. Inappropriate topics of discussion with Coach

- i. Playing Time
- ii. Team Strategy
- iii. Play Calling
- iv. Other Student-Athletes
- v. Discussion demands directly following a game

c. Unique Situations

- i. The following procedures should be followed by the parents to help promote resolution to a unique issue of concern:
 1. Call the Head Coach to set up a time to discuss (if he is not available go to #2)
 2. Call Main Office to set up a meeting with the Head Coach
 3. Do not Email the Head Coach or other Staff Members. If it is important to you, do not email your concerns. Face to face communications are always best and leaves no room for error.
 4. If the parent/coach meeting does not provide satisfactory resolution, a meeting between the Athletic Director and/or Principal should be set to discuss the situation.

T. GENERAL RESPONSIBILITIES FOR ALL 7-12 FOOTBALL COACHES

a. You are responsible to the Head Coach for:

- i. Philosophy
- ii. Equipment- Helping with check-out and check-in.
- iii. Evaluation- Varsity- The varsity head coach will do an evaluation of the (7-12) coaches. All (9-12) assistant coaches will evaluate the head coach as well.

b. You are responsible to the Administration for:

- i. Keys.
- ii. Professional conduct.
- iii. All players must have a completed physical before practicing, along with other pertinent concussion and medical forms.
- iv. Health and Injury Consent Forms

- v. Report any player violations of the student code of conduct or major discipline problems to the Head Coach, who will inform our Activities Director.
- vi. Be aware of Athletic Procedures and Policies regarding training room, emergency protocols, concussions, and severe weather.
- vii. Provide Parent Letter for situations that may occur during sports participation.

c. Public Relations

- i. Report games to the local paper. Emphasize the score, highlights, and outstanding efforts.
- ii. Turn into the Head Coach and Activities Director your end of season report (includes team record, statistics, records broken, and season summary).
- iii. Turn in a list to the Head Coach/Activities Director of all players who finished the football season.

d. Code of Conduct

- i. Go over the code of conduct, dangerous situations and player handbook, with all players.

e. Supervision

- i. Coaches must supervise the locker rooms—period. No player will be allowed to be unsupervised in the locker room or on the football field.
- ii. If players are waiting for rides, a COACH must stay and wait until the player gets a ride home.
- iii. Buses-
 - 1. Coaches will ride to and from all away games on the bus with the team.
 - 2. Players must be seated when the bus is in motion.
 - 3. Players must always enter and exit the bus from the front door. The rear door is only used for emergencies.

- 4. All players are to ride to and from the game with the team. Any exceptions require verbal and written requests from the parent and clearance from the activities office.