**Lake City Boys Soccer**

**Team Handbook**



***“One Team; One Family”***

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**Purpose of Handbook:** The purpose of the Lake City Boys Soccer Parent Handbook is to share important beliefs, expectations, and details about the Lake City Boys Soccer program. We hope you take time to read through this handbook so you will better understand our philosophies and expectations of your son while he is a member of the Lake City Boys Soccer program. If you cannot find what you are looking for, or if you need further clarification on something, please contact Coach Palmer. We try to constantly create a “family atmosphere” within our program. We hope that you as parents always feel a part of the “Lake City Soccer Family” for years to come, even after your son has moved on from high school. We urge you to come to games to cheer on the Tigers, volunteer to help with team activities, and to stay active within our program. You will continue to be a vital part of the success of this program.

**Thank You:** First and foremost, you as parents deserve a huge “thank you” for all that you do. Parents are an integral part of any program, and we want to make sure we express our gratitude to you for everything you do for your son, our school, and our program.

**My Purpose Statement:** To instill in my players a sense of self value through hard work and integrity. To open my player's minds to opportunities in dealing with others that allows them to make a positive difference in other’s lives. To always be honest with my players and myself, making the individual, team and program better.

**Philosophy of Program:** The Lake City Soccer program will consist of individuals who respect one another. All members of the Lake City Soccer program will play with class, integrity and respect. We will work hard and we will play with great enthusiasm in practice and in games. We will have winning attitudes, do the right thing, will strive to learn at each moment and play with great intelligence. Most importantly, we are one TEAM and one FAMILY and each member of our TEAM is an extension of every other player, coach, and individual in our program and makes up our Soccer Community. In Summary:

1. **ONE TEAM**

* **Attitude:** Have a Winning Attitude and Do What is Right
* **Effort:** Play Hard, Play Smart and Be Tough

1. **One FAMILY**

* **Trust:** Trust your teammates.
* **Communication:** Use your words.
* **Pride:** Take pride in all that you and your teammates do.
* **Mentor:** Enhance others with your experience.
* **Lead by Example:** Be a role model.

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| **Coaches Contact Information:**  **Varsity Coach:** Patrick Palmer,  theotherpalmers@msn.com  651-927-9119 (Cell) | **Assistant Coach:** Dylan McDonnell  **Junior High Coach:** Kate Palmer  **LCYSA Coordinators:** Alydia Zemke & Patrick Palmer  [www.lakecitysoccer.com](http://www.lakecitysoccer.com) |

**Section I - Roles:**  *“Coaches coach, players play, bus drivers drive the bus.” - Author Unknown.* As coaches, parents, players, referees, or even bus drivers, we all have different roles in any athletic program. It is important that everyone understands their role and the expectations in their role.

**Coaches Roles:** Below are the expectations I have for myself as a coach and leader. I have these same expectations for all coaches in our program.

1. Teach valuable life skills through the game of Soccer.
2. Teach the game of Soccer.
3. Communicate roles and expectations with players. Communicate strengths and weaknesses with players. Be approachable.
4. Be program and TEAM orientated.
5. Be disciplined and prepared.
6. Be positive with players and officials.
7. Model positive sideline behavior.
8. Keep it simple.
9. Focus on what we can control.
10. Get the most out of the group we have. Be playing our best Soccer at the end of the season.

**Players Roles:** Below are the expectations that I have for our players. Please note that each and every player has control over these attributes.

1. Have a Positive Attitude
2. Be Committed, Prepared, and On Time
3. Be Coachable
4. Give your Best Effort
5. Have a One Team; One Family Mentality
6. Accept your Role and Realize that Roles change throughout the Season
7. Support and Encourage your Teammates; Be Accountable to your Teammates
8. Display Positive Sportsmanship

**Parents’ Roles:** Roles are important on any team. Parents have a very important role in the program. We feel that the following roles are very important for parents to follow:

1. Support/encourage your son and the program. You might not always agree with every decision made by a member of the coaching staff, and you might not always agree with decisions made by players, but please be there to support your son and the program in a positive manner. We as coaches try to make decisions in the best interest of the program, our team, and the kids involved in our program, so please be supportive of your son and our Soccer program.
2. Be a “Lake City Tigers Fan”. Sometimes as parents we focus in too narrowly on our children (son in this case), and we become more concerned with the success of our own child, rather than the success of the team. Please remember to cheer for the Lake City Tigers TEAM and to be a fan of all members of the team when they are playing. Refrain from gossiping or talking about another player, coach, or program and engaging in negative conversation.
3. Display good sportsmanship. Please positively represent the Lake City community at each game by showing good sportsmanship towards referees, coaches, players, and fans from our school and other schools. We constantly ask our players and coaches to focus on what we can control. We believe that this is an extremely valuable life lesson that teaches responsibility.

***Finally, we want all of our players to Have Fun***. High school sports should be memorable experiences that foster life-long relationships and memories. We want to create an environment in which your son will have a positive experience that will be enjoyable for him.

**Section II - Team Philosophies and Playing Time:** Below you will find a description of each team and our philosophy for playing time with each team:

1. **7th and 8th Grade (JH):** The focus of this team is skill development and teamwork while implementing the Lake City Soccer system. Participation is very important at this level. Kids are still developing and growing into their bodies at this level. Playing time will be given to all players in grades 7 and 8. Coaches will do their best to provide quality playing time for all players. Playing time may be based on skill level, personnel, game situations, and other factors like attitude, conduct, and attendance. Playing time decisions are solely at the coach’s discretion and are not debatable.
2. **C-Squad Team (7th – 10th Grade):**  The C-Squad is an alternate team that will be run when participation numbers allow and will typically consist of high performing JH and JV players that aren’t quite ready for Varsity play. Players will be trained with their base (JH/JV) teams and coached by one of the three current coaches. In addition to commitments to skill development and teamwork, other factors such as skill level, attitude, conduct, and attendance are taken into account when determining playing time
3. **Junior Varsity Team (JV):** This team will typically consist of players advancing towards competing at the Varsity level. This team will continue to build upon the skills, teamwork, and expectations of our program that were introduced in JH Soccer. Playing time may not be equal at this level, and all playing time decisions will be at the coach’s discretion and are not debatable. In addition to commitments to skills and teamwork, other factors such as skill level, personnel, game situations, attitude, conduct, and attendance are taken into account when determining playing time.
4. **Varsity (V):** The Varsity Soccer team will be made up of the very best players in the entire program, regardless of grade level. The goal of varsity competition is to put together the best representative Soccer team that Lake City can provide. Those individuals who display strong Soccer skills and a solid commitment to the team will be players that have a strong chance of earning playing time at the varsity level. Decisions about playing time will be made based on what is best for the varsity team at the given moment during the season. These decisions will not be debatable, and these decisions are at the coach’s discretion. In addition to commitments to skills and teamwork, other factors such as attitude, conduct, and attendance are taken into account when determining playing time.

**Varsity Team Makeup:** Due to fairness to players, limitations with space/facilities, as well as coaching staff available, it may be necessary to have tryouts for the varsity Soccer team. This decision will be made on an annual basis by the coaching staff. In the event that tryouts are necessary, the varsity coach will clearly articulate the expectations for team makeup. The varsity coach will then sit down with each player individually and let them know their status on the team. The coach will try to help all players determine an appropriate role on the team and will help find other possible valuable roles for players who do not make the cut as a player on the varsity team (examples may include: film, manager, stats, etc.).

**Section III - Communication:** We will do our best as coaches to communicate information to players and parents as soon as possible. Many times, dates, and details are outlined on the Soccer Homepage, but if there are changes, the coaches will let the players know about those changes as soon as possible. Here are some specific instances that involve communication, and then our policies for each instance:

1. **Excused Absences:**  All players in our program are making a commitment to their coaches and teammates to be a member of the TEAM. Attendance at practice and games is mandatory unless a player is ill or has an extenuating circumstance that has been cleared with the coach. If a player is going to be absent from a game or practice, they must work to contact the coach ahead of time. Valid reasons for a player to miss a practice or game may include: Family Emergency, Medical appointment, Faith event, or School related event. Unacceptable reasons to miss a practice or game include: haircut, work, etc. Players who miss practice for unacceptable reasons may risk playing time and team membership (coaches decision is final in this regard). Players must be in attendance for a full day of school or have an excused absence in order to practice or play in a game that evening. Reasons for missing a part of the day that would constitute an excused absence would be a funeral, appointment, etc. as per school policy.
2. **Sickness:** If a player is sick for any part of the school day and misses any portion of school for sickness, he is not eligible to participate in practice or a game that evening.
3. **No Secrecy:** If parents wish to discuss their son, he will be present. If an issue needs to be discussed, a parent and the player need to be present, keeping in mind the Chain of Command described below.
4. **Riding the Bus Home After Games:** All players are expected to ride the bus home after games. If there is a situation when a player needs to ride home with a parent from a game (family emergency, other school activity, etc.), the player will be excused to leave with a parent only if a parent provides a written signature in advance to the Activities Director excusing the player to ride home with them or to the coach at the event.
5. **24 Hour Rule:** After games, please refrain from approaching a coach to discuss an issue regarding your son, the game, or anything related to Soccer. Instead, please wait until the next day to contact the coach. Often times after games, the adrenaline is flowing for all involved, and discussing the situation the next day is more beneficial for everyone. Also, please contact a coach at school via phone or e-mail to set up a time to meet.
6. **Chain of Command:** Players and parents are expected to follow the proper chain of command when dealing with a problem or concern:
   1. Player talks to the coach at their level (JH, JV, V)
   2. Player and parent talks to the coach of their team
   3. Player talks to the varsity coach
   4. Player and parent talks to the varsity coach
   5. Player and parent talks to the athletic director
7. **Contacting a Coach:** Please contact a coach using the contact details listed on the Soccer Homepage.
8. **Discussion vs Decision:** The coaches are open to discussions on all topics, minding the rules above. However, decisions on program activities are at the sole discretion of the Coach.

**Section IV - Expectations and Policies:** The following is a list of expectations and policies specific to the Lake City Soccer Program.

1. **Academics:** Academics are priority #1. It is important that Lake City Boys Soccer players take pride in academic work in the classroom. Your education will carry you farther than Soccer. We follow the academic eligibility expectations set forth by Lincoln High School. Players who are not committed in the classroom risk practice time, playing time, and team membership. Players are expected to communicate with their coach if Academic eligibility is in danger.
2. **Be On Time:** This means you’re on the field, wearing appropriate gear, prior to the start of the practice.Opportunities will be given for tardiness (5 Burpees/Minute).
3. **Team Membership:**  Team membership is a privilege. Players are expected to meet the rules, policies, and expectations of the MSHSL, School District, and Lake City Soccer Team. Any player that has a severe infraction of these expectations or a repeated pattern of behavior that is detrimental to the team may be suspended from team activities or removed from the team. Any player who chooses to quit during the season will lose team membership for the rest of the season. The team and program come first. The coach’s decision will be final.
4. **Player Conduct:** Our players and coaches are expected to be ambassadors of the Lake City School Community. They are expected to represent the Lake City Community with class, pride, and respect:

* The boys Soccer team will abide by the high standards set by Lincoln High School. Any behavior that is deemed unbecoming of a Lake City student-athlete will be dealt with following the MSHSL and Lake City Public Schools code of conduct.
* We expect our players to always display good sportsmanship; players are told not to argue a call from a referee. We as coaches will address any situations with referees.
* Players are to provide a positive image to the rest of the school and community. You are looked upon in very high regard by many people in the community, especially the younger kids, always remember this and represent the team in a positive manner.
* Lake City Soccer players will not partake in any substances that will hurt themselves and others. We will abide by school policy for conduct and consequences for any substance abuse issues concerning alcohol, drugs, and tobacco. Please refer to the good conduct policy for consequences.
* Any act of conduct or style which detracts from your performance, hinders your teammates, or causes disrespect to you or the team is cause for suspension or risk of team membership. The boys Soccer program and varsity coach reserves the right to not play a player or allow a player to be part of the team for any violation seen as inappropriate.

1. **Lake City Social Media Policy:** In the past, students that participate in co-curricular activities have been suspended from competitions and practices due inappropriate use of online social networking sites. Every student that participants in a co-curricular activity is required to follow student handbook guidelines and MSHSL policies, even though an event may happen off school property or after school hours.

Social Networks: Social network sites such as Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat, Google Plus, and other digital platforms and distribution mechanisms facilitate communicating among students. Participation in such networks may have both positive appeal and potentially negative consequences. It is important that our students be aware of these consequences and exercise appropriate caution if they choose to participate.

Students are not restricted from using any on-line social network sites and digital platforms. However, users must understand that any content they make public via on-line social networks or digital platforms is expected to follow acceptable social behaviors and comply with federal government, state of Minnesota, Lake City, and MSHSL rules and regulations. Students are accountable for the guidelines for in the Lake City Student Handbook as well as Minnesota State High School League (MSHSL) regulations.

**Behaviors to Avoid:**

1. Derogatory language or remarks about teammates, other students, coaches, teachers, administrators, or representatives of other schools.
2. Demeaning statements about or threats to any third party.
3. Incriminating photos or statements depicting violence; bullying; hazing; sexual harassment; vandalism; stalking; underage drinking; selling, possessing, or using controlled substances; or any other inappropriate behaviors.
4. Creating a serious danger to the safety of another person or making a credible threat of serious physical or emotional injury to another person.
5. Indicating knowledge of an unreported felony theft or felony criminal damage to property.
6. Indicating knowledge of an unreported school or team violation—regardless if the violation was unintentional or intentional.

**Guidelines for Students Who Participate in Lake City Co-Curricular Activities**

The below guidelines are intended to provide a framework for students to conduct themselves safely and responsibly in an on-line environment. Students should:

1. Be careful with how much and what kind of identifying information is posted on social networking sites. Virtually anyone with an email address can access personal pages. It is unwise to make available information such as: date of birth, social security number, address, phone number, cell phone number, class schedules, bank account information, or details about daily routine. All of these can facilitate identity theft or stalking. Social media sites provide numerous privacy settings for information contained on its pages. Use these settings to protect private information. Keep in mind that once information is posted, the information becomes property of the website.
2. Be aware that potential current and future employers and college admissions offices often access information that is placed on social networking sites. Consideration should be given before any information is posted on social media sites, potentially providing personal images to a prospective employer or school. This information is considered public information. Students should use caution by maintaining a self-image that will be considered respectful and dignified now and years from now.
3. Be careful in responding to unsolicited e-mails asking for passwords or PIN numbers. Reputable businesses do not ask for this information in e-mails.
4. Avoid having a false sense of security about rights to freedom of speech. Students should be mindful that freedom of speech is not unlimited. On-line social network sites are not places where people can say and do whatever they want without repercussions.
5. Remember photos posted on social network sites become the property of the social network. They may be deleted from a given profile, but they remain on the server. Internet search engines such Google or Yahoo may still find images long after they have been deleted from a profile. Think long and hard about representative photos before posting.

Although not every social media misstep makes the national news, users should always be sensitive to how others might perceive their profiles. A private joke isn’t so private when it’s accessible to millions across the internet, and it can easily offend someone who doesn’t understand the context.

The bottom line is that caution and safety should be foremost in mind when creating or consuming social media information.

Doug Vaith

Activities Director

Lake City Public Schools

1. **Lettering:** In order for players to earn a varsity letter, one of the following requirements must be met:

* All seniors on the varsity roster who have played all four years of their high school career will letter.
* If a player plays at least 10 minutes in half of all Varsity matches/games during the varsity season, he will earn a letter. (Anyone who fails to acquire the minimum time and halves due to an injury, but in the opinion of the coaches would have lettered, will be eligible for a letter as well.)
* All managers, film managers, and statisticians who have worked at least 12 games will earn a varsity Soccer letter.
* A letter can be earned at the Coach’s discretion for a significant contribution to the team.
* If at any time a letter winner behaves in a manner which is disrespectful to himself or his teammates or breaks team rules, he may lose his right to letter and earn post season awards. This is solely at the coach’s discretion.

**End of Season Awards**

1. Varsity - Offensive Player of the Year
2. Varsity - Defensive Player of the Year
3. Varsity - Mr. Moxie
4. Varsity or Jr. Varsity - Breakthrough Player of the Year
5. Jr. Varsity – Offensive Player of the Year
6. Jr. Varsity – Defensive Player of the Year
7. Jr. High - Offensive Player of the Year
8. Jr. High - Defensive Player of the Year
9. **Playing Time Policy: *“It is amazing what can be accomplished when no one cares who gets the credit”*:** One of the hardest jobs of a coach is determining playing time. All of our players work hard at improving their skills, trying to earn playing time to help the team win. Unfortunately, not every player has been blessed with the same skill/ability level. As players progress through each level of Soccer, the competition improves, and some players find it hard to keep up. We do not guarantee playing time, but rather we believe that playing time should be earned through hard work, attitude, commitment to Soccer, commitment to the Team, understanding of system, and consistent effort. Each player needs to understand and accept their role. Players need to also understand that roles can and will change throughout the season. Some players will play the majority of the game. Some players will play mostly JV and play a vital role scrimmaging varsity in practice or have bench responsibilities during a game. All roles are crucial in a successful team and successful teams always have players who accept their roles for the betterment of the TEAM. Even though we do not guarantee playing time, here are three promises that we will make concerning players:

* We will not quit on any player. It does not matter if a player plays every minute of the game, or no minutes in a game, we will not quit working to help that player improve.
* We will be honest with each player in our assessments of their skills. The coaches will determine strengths and weaknesses of each player, and we will attempt to help the player improve weaknesses, while helping strengths to flourish.
* We will communicate as clearly as we can. It is our job to communicate roles and information to each player, and we will give our best effort to communicate to each player.

1. **Game Day Expectations:** At school on game days, each player is expected to follow the attire that the team has agreed upon for game days. In addition, all Team members should sit together at lunch. During the game Players should remove all jewelry, wear soccer-specific cleats and shin guards and have the appropriate kit with them, as requirements to play.

**Team Guidelines When Traveling:**

* Follow all school policies.
* Wear only appropriate clothing.
* Be respectful and appropriate on any school vehicle.
* Leave opposing locker rooms cleaner than we found them.
* Be respectful to all fans, players, coaches, and staff from other schools.

1. **Registrations:** All Registration items must be complete in advance of the first day of practice.
2. **Physicals:** All boys that want to participate in Soccer must have an updated physical form on file with the athletic director in order to participate.
3. **Injuries:** Athletes need to report any injuries to a coach immediately so the coach can help determine the severity of the injury. If an athlete needs to be taken to the hospital, a school official will accompany the student if possible.
4. **Off-Season:** The off-season is where players get the opportunity to really improve themselves as individual players. One of my favorite sayings is what was found on soda bottles years ago, “No Deposit, No Return”. Another way of saying this is that as a player, what you are going to get out of Soccer is tied directly to what you put into Soccer. We will provide numerous opportunities for individual skill and conditioning development. These will include information on summer leagues, summer camps, weight room, and more. However, the great thing about the sport of Soccer is that in order to get better you only need a ball and your own self-determination.

**Section V – Links:**

MSHSL Soccer: <http://www.mshsl.org/mshsl/activitypage.asp?actnum=413>

Hiawatha Valley League website: <http://www.hvlconference.org/g5-bin/client.cgi?G5genie=10>

Lake City Soccer Website: <http://www.lake-city.k12.mn.us/page/2526>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/BoysLCSoccer>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/BoysLCSoccer>

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/boyslcsoccer/>