McLean High School Athletics Handbook



Welcome to McLean Athletics

Athletics are an important part of the educational experience at McLean High School. Participation in sports provides students with opportunities to develop leadership, teamwork, resilience, time-management skills, and lifelong relationships.

At McLean, we are committed to providing a positive and inclusive athletic experience that reflects the diverse interests and backgrounds of our students. Our programs are built on four core principles:

- Leadership
- Communication
- Support
- Community

We believe that participation in athletics helps students grow both on and off the field while preparing them to become responsible and engaged members of their communities.

Our Philosophy: Student First, Athlete Second

McLean Athletics embraces the philosophy that student-athletes are students first and athletes second.

Academic success remains the top priority for every student-athlete. Participation in athletics is a privilege that comes with responsibilities in the classroom, on campus, and within the community.

Our coaches are educators who use athletics as a vehicle to teach valuable life lessons, including:

- Accountability
- Discipline
- Teamwork
- Resilience
- Leadership
- Integrity

Our goal is to develop outstanding young people while pursuing excellence in competition.

Athletic Eligibility

All student-athletes must meet Virginia High School League (VHSL) eligibility requirements.

To participate in athletics, students must:

- Be enrolled in at least five courses
- Have passed five courses during the previous semester
- Meet all VHSL age requirements
- Be enrolled and in good standing at McLean High School
- Complete all transfer eligibility requirements if applicable
- Have a current VHSL physical on file
- Complete athletic registration before participation

For registration and physical information, please visit the McLean Athletics website

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Tryouts

We are committed to providing a fair and transparent tryout process.

Tryout Expectations

- **Transparency:** Coaches should discuss the criteria for making the team and expectations for all athletes before tryouts begin.
- **Selection:** Every student should receive a fair, unbiased evaluation. Cuts will be handled with professionalism and sensitivity by our staff, and the standards used to make cuts provided to parents and student-athletes upon request. Previous experience in travel/select/AAU leagues will have no bearing on whether or not an athlete makes the team.
- **Duration:** Athletes are afforded three days of tryouts commencing on the publicized start date. For instance, if tryouts are scheduled to begin on February 22nd, athletes will be provided the 22nd, 23rd, and 24th to participate in the tryout process. Coaches reserve the right to give more than three days of tryouts for individuals they feel need further evaluation, and the criteria used to make this determination will be provided at the time of notification. If an athlete is hurt/sick during tryouts they may

work with the coach to set up a time to tryout once the athlete returns to health, but three days of tryouts will not be guaranteed. Makeups for any other reason for missing a tryout will be at the discretion of the coach.

Attendance Expectations

Commitment is an important part of being a member of a McLean athletic team.

Student-athletes are expected to attend:

- Practices
- Competitions
- Team meetings
- Other team-related activities

Absences due to family emergencies or academic obligations may be excused when communicated in advance.

Unexcused absences may result in disciplinary action, including reduced playing time or removal from the team.

Participation in Multiple Sports

We encourage multi-sport participation whenever possible.

Students may participate in both school and community teams; however, school team commitments always take priority when scheduling conflicts occur.

Participation on two school teams during the same season requires approval from both coaches and the Director of Student Activities.

Playing Time

Playing time is one of the most frequently discussed topics in athletics.

Freshman and Junior Varsity

At the freshman and JV levels, the primary focus is player development. Coaches strive to provide meaningful opportunities for athletes to grow and gain experience.

Varsity

At the varsity level, playing time is earned based on:

- Skill development
- Effort
- Attitude
- Team needs
- Commitment

Varsity playing time is not guaranteed and remains at the discretion of the coaching staff.

Sportsmanship and Conduct

McLean student-athletes and coaches are expected to represent the school with pride and integrity.

We expect:

- Respect for officials
- Respect for opponents
- Respect for teammates
- Respect for the game

Athletic facilities are an extension of the classroom. Profanity, discriminatory language, unsportsmanlike conduct, and behavior that reflects negatively on the school may result in disciplinary action.

Hazing Policy

McLean High School maintains a zero-tolerance policy regarding hazing.

Any student involved in hazing activities will be removed from the team and may face additional school disciplinary consequences.

Any staff member who encourages, permits, or ignores hazing behavior will be subject to disciplinary action.

Communication Guidelines

Strong communication is essential to a successful athletic experience.

Communication Pathway

1. Student-Athlete to Coach
2. Parent to Coach
3. Administration if needed

We encourage student-athletes to advocate for themselves whenever possible.

Parents are welcome to discuss concerns related to their child's physical or emotional well-being. Decisions regarding playing time and game strategy remain the responsibility of the coaching staff.

The 24-Hour Rule

We ask that parents and coaches wait at least 24 hours after a contest before discussing concerns. This allows time for emotions to settle and promotes productive conversations.

Social Media Expectations

Student-athletes and coaches represent McLean High School at all times.

Social media posts should reflect the values of our athletic program and school community.

Posts that are offensive, discriminatory, harassing, or unsportsmanlike may result in disciplinary action.

Varsity Letters and Team Awards

To earn a varsity letter, athletes must:

- Complete the season in good standing
- Meet team attendance requirements
- Demonstrate positive sportsmanship and citizenship

- Follow team and school expectations throughout the season

Sports that have no F/JV level, may have stricter lettering requirements that will be communicated by the head coach. Additional team awards are determined by individual coaching staffs

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Off-Season Opportunities

McLean Athletics offers a variety of off-season training and development opportunities.

Participation in off-season activities:

- Open to all students
- Voluntary
- Does not guarantee future team selection

Schedules and opportunities are posted on the McLean Athletics website.

Supporting McLean Athletics

Fundraising plays an important role in supporting our athletic programs.

Funds raised help provide:

- Equipment
- Uniforms
- Facility improvements
- Travel opportunities
- Enhanced student-athlete experiences

While participation is encouraged, no student-athlete will be denied an opportunity to participate based on fundraising involvement or financial circumstances.

The continued success of McLean Athletics is made possible through the support of our families, alumni, community members, and booster organizations.

Together, we are building a tradition of excellence for current and future Highlanders.