

2014 Laguna Creek High School



LC MEN'S
VOLLEYBALL

Varsity Men's Volleyball
Program Handbook

February 11, 2014 Season

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Welcome to the Laguna Creek Volleyball Program. My name is Scott Ellison and I am the Varsity Men's Volleyball head coach here at Laguna Creek High School.

The Laguna Creek Volleyball team will compete in the Delta Valley Conference League in the Sac-Joaquin Region of the CIF. Our spring sports season officially began on Monday, February 4th and will continue into May. Your Cardinals will compete at the varsity level only as EGUSD has removed our entire Freshman and many JV level programs. The goal of the program is to develop and relentlessly pursue a fun, sound, effective and competitive volleyball program.

Mission Statement

The Laguna Creek High School competitive volleyball program is dedicated to advancing the personal and athletic development of young volleyball players. It is the philosophy of LCHS to instill work ethic and competitive spirit in each girl and in doing so create a positive team atmosphere. We will assist all players in reaching their individual volleyball goals, whether their focus is solely on their high school career or if their goals lie beyond their senior year.

Commitment

We request that LCHS Volleyball be a priority, after schoolwork. You should reconsider your choice to commit to the program if your schedule or your family's schedule has too many conflicts. We are intent on finding players that are committed to reaching their full potential and striving for excellence on and off the court. Volleyball is unique among traditional high school sports in that success on the court depends absolutely on team cohesion. That bond between players must be nurtured and will not develop if players do not maintain volleyball as a priority in their busy schedules.

What it Takes for Success

Success is defined as the achievement of something desired, planned or attempted. Everyone attempts to win but not everyone exerts the daily effort necessary to achieve this result. To become successful, coaches, athletes and even parents must exert maximum effort towards our program's common goal of developing athletes to compete. Players especially must be relentlessly willing to give their effort to the program, their team and to each play. Despite fatigue, frustration, an over burdened schedule and personal issues, successful athletes exert maximum effort into their program's training, learning and bonding system diligently and consistently. Effort will become our mantra for success.

Guiding Principles

Conditioning When possible will stress athletic conditioning in our program. A better-conditioned athlete can beat a superior skilled athlete who is not in top shape. All players will be asked to play at 100%, regardless of skill or talent requiring a properly conditioned body. We want to build a reputation of being the best-conditioned athletes in the state. If a match goes to the deciding game, there should be no contest. We want to take pride in winning every third or fifth game of a match because we can out work our opponents. This commitment must be made outside of practice and players must lead the charge to develop themselves outside of the gym.

School

School should be the highest priority in every athlete's life. Athletes that fail in school, almost certainly fail in volleyball. Being successful in school does not only mean passing classes, but also means passing with above average grades. Academically, volleyball teams consistently rank at or near the top of school lists compared to other team sports. We will expect nothing less here at Laguna Creek. Students not working to their maximum ability in school will be counseled and warned regarding their grade point average. Students endangering the team's goals due to poor academic performance will be asked to leave the program.

Maturity

Becoming a well conditioned athlete requires a high level of emotional commitment and maturity. Players must learn to ignore the pressures and pitfalls of teenage life to sustain maximum effort and participation within the program. If a player cannot commit to this endeavor, then they should reconsider participation in the LCHS Volleyball Program. Maturity, like conditioning and skill development is a learned and developed characteristic. It can be taught and developed like anything else. The key factor in an athlete's level of maturity is the athlete's willingness to develop themselves for their own sake as well as for the betterment of the team.

Team

Being chosen to become a member of the Laguna Creek Volleyball Program is a privilege, not a right. As a member of the program, there is inherent responsibility. You have chosen to make a commitment to the community, the program, your team, your teammates, and your coaches. You have chosen to put the goals and welfare of the team before your own in many instances. The selfish and individualistic goals that many hold true will not be tolerated within our program. We will be a program that demands team focused ideals and goals.

Philosophy

Coaches: Be hard, but regularly laugh out loud. Being tough doesn't mean being loud or punitive. Being silly doesn't show weakness, but rather a well planned response to a stressful situation. Saying, "Good Job" is not positive coach but a poor excuse for positive feedback. Telling a player, "You shanked that one bad!" is not always negative, especially when you both laugh at how far out of bounds the ball went. Coaches must communicate clearly to offer exactly what a player needs to hear at critical moments of the learning and competing process. Know when to criticize, when to give a pat on the back, when to give a speech and when to stay deathly silent are the coach's tools of the trade.

Athletes: Show up to play every ball, not just game point. Take a day off after the season ends. What you learn today, try it on the court tomorrow? Compete with yourself, compete with your team and enjoy the competition. When you make a mistake, laugh at yourself while you are grabbing yourself by the scruff of the neck and forcing yourself to do it again. If you don't get better, then we don't get better. Your effort is everything, without it, we are just pretending to be competitors.

The Web Site

We will use our team's web site [<http://www.igotgamefilms.com/lc>] for communication purposes within the team and to the general public. Game dates, match scores, etc. will be updated regularly and displayed on the web site. Contacting the coach or the athletic director can also be done through the site via e-mail.

Team Managers

Each team will have a student(s) manager who will work with the team just as a player would. In many cases, these managers will be volleyball player. Their responsibilities are to make sure the team is supported in its endeavors. This may mean keeping statistics, setting up, contacting parents about events, etc. Managers are an integral part of the team dynamic and are full members of the program.

Volunteering

It takes a lot of time and effort to run a quality sports program. In order to meet the needs of our program this season, we will need many people to volunteer their time, energy, and skills to the program. There will be many opportunities for parents and friends to get involved. If you are interested in getting involved as a volunteer, please contact Coach Ellison with your availability and special skills if applicable.

Videotaping

Our program goal is to have every match recorded. Having online footage of each match provides us with valuable footage to analyze for learning purposes. Our staffing is limited so we coaches do not have the time to video the matches ourselves. This requires that we obtain parental help to get matches taped. In addition to using the footage for learning in practice, the sale of these DVDs to all of you as mementos of the competition is a wonderful program fundraiser. In addition, compiling a DVD for the entire season makes a wonderful highlight reel featuring each of the team's highs and lows. If you are willing to help videotape and/or have a digital recorder please contact Coach Ellison.

Off-Season Training

It is highly recommended that players wishing to play high school volleyball take part in a summer strength and conditioning program, along with playing and practicing volleyball. There are many summer camps and open gyms that will allow players to do this and players should seek out these opportunities. Players having a high level of versatility and athleticism are very valuable to a team, so continuing to improve strength, conditioning, and volleyball skills whenever possible is extremely beneficial. The most efficient way to develop volleyball skills in the off-season is to participate in a club volleyball program. There are many throughout the area. We will try to offer a list of the local clubs via our website.

Tryouts

Every year we evaluate many athletes during tryouts. Athletes are tested with some generic physical tests: jump test, sprints, etc. as well as being evaluated on volleyball skill execution. The ability to pass, set, serve, and hit are the main skills assessed during tryouts. However, players are also watched very carefully for their demeanor and conduct during game situations for other traits such as: "coachability," willingness to be a team player, kindness, "positivity," work ethic, drive, competitiveness, and effort. After tryouts the coaching staff will convene and determine which girls will be offered spots on our rosters. School teams can often fluctuate at the beginning of the season and some players may be asked to continue practicing with the team in a "conditional" fashion if roster fluctuations are anticipated. Many times these "conditional" positions can become permanent positions on the team. Other players that do not possess the skills to earn a uniform may be offered a spot as a team manager. The huge benefit in this position is that it offers that player a full season to practice with the team, learn the program and improve their skills for the following season. Players cut from the program will be done with dignity and a degree of privacy. It is not easy to make cuts nor is it to be cut so this process will not be taken lightly.

Team Assignment

Players will be assigned to the team after tryouts. That assignment is at the sole discretion of the head coach. If at any time it is deemed in the best interest of the program to cut a player after the tryout period, the coach may do so. The head coach holds sole responsibility for the welfare and management of the team. For more information about the role of a coach within Elk Grove Unified School District, please consult the handbooks available for download at <http://blogs.egusd.net/athletics/handbooks/>

Returning Players

Returning athletes must attend tryouts each season to compete for a position as do all players. However, returning players have the distinct advantages over new players as their skill level, personality, and general performance has already been calculated. Returning players will be initially treated as continuing members of the program but are not guaranteed a spot on any team. Roster spots must be earned.

Multi-Sport Athletes

All multi-sport athletes will be supported at Laguna Creek High School. However, sport of season will take priority if conflicts arise. Players choosing to ignore this protocol maybe be asked to leave the program due to lack of commitment. In turn, volleyball athletes will not be asked to miss meetings, practices, etc. during the off-season. The issue of multiple sports/outside activities can be complex issue and each athlete will be handled on a "case-by-case" basis with each coach.

Although Laguna Creek supports and encourages multi-sport athletes, we also understand the current climate and depth of high school athletics. In pursuit of a high level program, the coaches in the Laguna Creek High School Volleyball Program highly suggest all volleyball players participate in an off-season volleyball club program to continue their skill development throughout the spring.

Practice

Practice schedules will be regular and consistent. Times, dates and locations of practice will be posted on our website. Times may fluctuate throughout the season for various reasons and families are asked to be flexible if last minute changes occur.

Each team will have a set practice schedule "block" everyday that we do not have a match. If you must miss a practice, please inform your coach as soon as your conflict arises. Ample notification of an absence is 24 hours. This notification allows the coach to plan practice appropriately based on attendance. No accommodations will be made for students before or after practice has ended. Please ensure arrangements are made so that your child can arrive to practice on time and leave promptly after its conclusion.

Practice is our opportunity to develop our athletes and to work on their skills without worrying about outside influences. To enhance this opportunity, practices are closed to other students, friends, siblings, parents, etc. Please understand that we are not trying to hide anything, just trying to limit distractions for our athletes.

Athletes are expected to be dressed, have training needs addressed, and have the nets set up before practice is scheduled to begin. We want practice conditions to mimic game conditions as much as possible. "Practice uniforms" are required at every practice. The practice uniform consists of shorts, t shirt and court shoes.

Some coaches work for the school district and from time to time their duties may cause them to be late for practice. If this should occur, athletes are expected to warm up and stretch on their own to the best of their ability.

Practice Protocol

1. Be on time! In fact, come early as often as you can. Be ready to practice.
2. No Gum, candy or food right before practice. Save your snacks until just afterwards.
3. No Jewelry.
4. Volleyball "uniforms" only - T-shirt, training shorts and court shoes. No exceptions.
5. Cell Phones will remain off during practice hours.
6. Water bottles and training room needs are performed **before** the start of practice.
7. Water Breaks are not social time. Quench your thirst/hydrate and return to the court.

Absence from Practices

Excused Absences

An absence is excused if the player notifies the coach in advance and head coach **“approves”** the absence. Absences are strongly discouraged as it disrupts the team dynamics, chemistry, drills, etc. Excused absences might include but are not limited to – family emergencies, medical emergencies, special academic opportunities, and once in a lifetime opportunities. Illness or injury is not an excused absence unless a signed note from a doctor is provided to the coach. Injured players are expected to attend practice for rehabilitation and physical therapy if possible as well as emotionally supporting our team. Work or other non-school activities will not be accepted as excused absences. Athletes that miss practice with excused absences due to scheduling conflicts will not play for one game for each excused absence.

Unexcused Absences

An absence is unexcused if the player does not notify the coach before the absence occurs, or does not provide the proper written documentation indicating the reason for absence signed by the parent/guardian of the player. If an unexcused absence occurs, the player will not be allowed to play in the following match. If missing practices become habitual, then the athlete’s commitment to the program will be evaluated. Athletes may receive counseling and/or possible solutions to remedy the situation or immediate dismissal from the team.

Uniforms

The LCHS High School Volleyball program has two uniform protocols.

1. **Purchased Uniforms:** Teams that choose to purchase a uniform package must purchase their uniforms with the consent of the Athletic Director and head coach. Uniform packages must be purchased as a single unit and items within the package must be identical. Players are completely responsible for the care of uniforms ensuring team continuity. If a player cannot afford and does not raise the entire cost of the uniform package, that team must use school uniforms.
2. **School Uniforms:** School uniforms can and will be provided to all players at the beginning of each season. Players are absolutely responsible for this uniform. Black shorts court shoes are the responsibility of the player. Uniforms will be checked out to players just as library books are loaned through the library. Uniforms not returned to the program at the end of the season will result in students having their report cards held, being placed on the “No Activities” list as well as possible further consequences.

Match Day

General

It is not advised for players to leave school on match days. Match days can be long and students should pack an after-school meal to eat before and/or after matches. It is suggested that parents coordinate their efforts, especially for varsity players, to deliver a small meal/snack for players before or after the match.

School apparel should be worn before and after matches to represent our school and program with pride. We are representing our school and community at each match and best behavior and highest levels of decorum are expected.

Home

Immediately after-school, players and managers are to complete the pre-match set up as quickly as possible and then proceed to the assigned team meeting area. Conversely, players are required to clean up the facilities after the conclusion of each home match. This includes but is not limited to putting away balls, nets and standards. Returning chairs and bleachers and sweeping the gym for trash. Athletes will be expected to take care of Laguna Creek as they do their home.

Matches

Bus rides are usually short but can be productive units of time. Bus rides to matches should be used to study or prepare for match play. This preparation is different for every player and the needs of all players will be supported on the bus. We encourage athletes to bring homework, mp3 players, etc to make bus rides as comfortable and productive as possible.

Tournaments

Our program will participate in a few tournaments each year. Tournaments are almost always held on Saturdays and are all-day events. Tournaments are a great way to obtain lots of match experience in a short span of time. However, tournaments are marathon events and can be exhausting. There are few accommodations for athletes at these events and athletes must find ways to entertain and comfort themselves during down times between matches. Players should come to tournaments well prepared to sit all day in an uncomfortable environment. Players should come with a travel chair, blanket, books, mp3 player, food and snacks, plenty of water and a few layers of clothing. The more prepared the athlete, the more comfortable and thus the better the performance will be on the court. Travel to tournaments will almost always be "on your own" travel. Athletes are expected to arrive on time in the morning usually by 7:30am. Tournaments are also community wide events and an excellent modicum of behavior is expected from all LCHS athletes.

There will be very little "travel" in the LCHS Volleyball season. Occasionally our teams will take on larger tournaments out of the area but these types of trips are the exception and not the rule. Most matches will occur within 50 miles of our community. Making short bus rides the main extent of our travel.

Away

Travel

Nutrition/Health

Hydration is one of the main ways for an athlete to stay healthy. Training forces the body to constantly repair itself and the main element necessary in that repair is water. Soda and coffee are not substitutes for water and can in fact deprive the body of water. Dehydration is the primary foe in athletic training. All athletes are expected to carry a 32oz water bottle at all times. Sports drinks are not allowed at practice.

Another key element to developing a successful athlete is rest and sleep. A body in training must heal and this is primarily done in the "prone" or laying position. A major part of the body's healing must be done when the major organs are horizontal or static. Athletes must ensure that they get at least eight hours of sleep each night to ensure the body receives the rest it needs.

To be effective as athletes, we must stay healthy and free from viruses and colds. The best way to keep illness at bay is to keep our hands away from our face as much as possible and avoid sharing cups and water bottles. Touching your face and sharing water bottles provides bacteria and viruses with direct and unnecessary access to our bodies.

Please come prepared on match days and bring healthy food to consume before and after matches. It is the player's responsibility to be sure that they have eaten properly prior to playing. This is not a parental duty. Parents may wish to drop off group meals/snacks for player(s.) If meals are dropped off, please no fast food, and make sure meals are dropped off well before match time.

Social Media

Social media is a part of our world. However, having restrictions on social media and its uses with young people is important. These guidelines are to be used within our school and our program.

Guidelines

1. Laguna Creek High School and its' programs will not and may not be portrayed in any negative fashion, whether planned or accidental, within any social media context.
2. Coaches and players will not directly interact within the realm of social media.
3. The use of social media during competition is prohibited with the exception of informing the Press.

Social media has become so large that it is being used as a tool to learn about university candidates and job seekers. In addition, the courts have begun using social media entries as evidence in trials. What is posted to the Internet, does not leave the Internet. With these concepts in mind, the following suggestions are offered to parents and students.

Suggestions:

1. Students always exhibit respect and class when posting text or images online.
2. Students question their posts as if they were themselves 10 years in the future. For example, "Would the 25 year old me like that I posted that image?"
3. Social media should be used for positive ventures. If you have something negative to express, keep it away from social media.

Playing Time

We do not guarantee equal playing time on any team or at any event. Once tryouts are over, playing time is decided solely by the coaches. Generally, playing time at tournaments is more equitable since so much match time is on hand and the primary purpose is to gain experience. However, as a general rule, the LCHS Volleyball Program will not guarantee a player will play, nor will it state that others will not. Starting lines ups, substitutions, etc. are at the sole discretion of each team's coaches. Players not receiving the playing time they believe they deserve should consult with their coach about suggestions to improve their number of minutes on the floor. Parents concerned with this issue should work through their child to find solutions rather than bypassing the athlete to confer with or confront a coach. Discussions regarding playing time will not be held after competitions.

Rules and Regulations

All athletes are expected to behave in a responsible and representative manner. Once offered a place within the LCHS Volleyball Program, athletes are expected to attend all practices and events and commit to total participation. Attendance at practices is mandatory. Proper conduct is expected by all members of the program, this includes athletes, parents and supporters. It is also expected for all members of the Program to be courteous and respectful of other teams' parents and supporters. Athletes/Parents are expected to contribute to the goals of the program as much as possible providing a superior athletic experience for everyone involved. Athletes should not leave or match sites until excused by the coach. This is for athletes' safety as well as common courtesy to our coaching staff. Athletes may not leave a tournament or match site until all officiating assignments and team meetings are complete. Every player is required to stay until the team duties have concluded. Please do not ask for preferential treatment by requesting to leave early. We are all responsible for the program that we create.

Player Conduct

Every athlete is expected to conduct himself appropriately at all times. You are a representative and ambassador of LCHS. Show respect at all times to coaches, teammates, officials at tournaments, and parents. Be competitive, but not disrespectful toward other teams and/or clubs. Disrespect to anyone will not be tolerated!

Parents

Line of Communication

This is one of the most important areas to emphasize in this handbook. The **lines of communication outlined here will be strictly followed** within our program, as well as by the athletic department. The staff truly believes that if all of us are conscientious in following this protocol, we will not have any problem that can not be resolved in a smooth and efficient manner. If any player or parent is having frustrations or problems of any kind it is very important that communication time with the head coach be arranged. This appointment is usually best outside of the standard practice time unless prior arrangements have been made. If after speaking to the coach, the player or parent does not feel like the problem has been resolved, then the chain of communication should be followed as displayed in the EGUSD Players handbook found at <http://blogs.egusd.net/athletics/handbooks/>. As a final note, neither parents nor players should assume a meeting will be granted by a coach simply by approaching them before or after a practice or match. Professionalism mandates that a set time and place should be planned for a serious discussion that anticipates positive outcomes. To facilitate resolutions, parents and athletes will wait 24 hours after a specific incident, match, or event, before contacting the coach to discuss matters. Athletic competition is a stressful by nature and can lead to heightened emotions which are not the best for resolving conflicts. A 24 hour wait period is an excellent protocol to allow all parties a collect their thoughts and gain some perspective regarding the transpired events.

Grievances

Competitive athletics by its very nature will not allow all people involved to be happy at all times. The line of communication protocol is utilized to ensure needs are met and a clear understanding is had by everyone. In the heat of the moment, people can say things that they do not plan to say which can cause irreparable damage. Parents should utilize the 24 hour "cooling" rule to help gain perspective before a grievance is sought. The coach will walk away from a situation where parents are asking a coach to defend a coaching decision especially directly after a match. The coach will not participate in discussions regarding coaching decisions. In the event you or your child has a grievance, you should follow the line of communication protocol in search of solutions and/or answers.

Many conflicts arise when there is a simple miscommunication between coach and player. When discussing matters such as these, it is extremely helpful to have the player present to resolve the issue rather than deal with, "he said" and semantics. If a simple meeting does not solve the conflict then, a meeting with the coach, player, parent, and Athletic Director may be needed. In regards to complaints: Parents are asked to refrain from negative comments around your child or any other athletes. Young players are vulnerable to negative communication and it will sabotage their commitment to the program if they hear complaining about the coach, the coach's style, or Program in general. If you, as a parent, are unhappy about something, you should follow the line of communication protocol to resolve the matter. Repetitive complaining to the athlete's or third parties (other parents/supporters) will interfere with the Program's goal to provide athletes with an effective, competitive, athletics environment. Parents and players not committed to the Program's ideals of resolving conflict and maintaining a positive outlook may be dismissed from the program.

Parents have a key role in high school athletics. Parents can influence both players and coaches by creating constructive, not confrontational, dialog. Parents should encourage their students to ask coaches about techniques and skills to help their child improve and gain more playing time. Parents should never argue coaching philosophies, because it is simply not their place. Parents can consistently encourage their athlete to stick to the program philosophy and to make positive strides to become part of the team by supporting coaching decisions. Here are some important questions you should ask yourself when questioning a coaching decision, the overall philosophy of the program or your role in your child's athletic career:

- Do I understand the game well enough and have the expertise to complain about what I see?
- Do I have a clear understanding of player positions and roles to determine playing time?
- Do I want what is best for my child or best for the team?
- Is a negative confrontation in the best interest of your child? The team?
- What does my child want in this situation?
- Have I told my child I am proud of their effort today?
- Have I hugged my child today?

Injury/Illness

Illnesses and doctor appointments related to an injury or current illness are legitimate excuses for missing a practice or match. Eye doctor, dentists, orthodontics, and other doctor appointments are not. There are days throughout the season when these can be taken care of, please plan accordingly.

If during the school day an athlete leaves school because of illness, please send a text to the coach informing him of the illness/absence.

If your daughter has an injury that requires medical attention, she will need a doctor's release to resume practice or play. A physician's note must be turned into your coach to resume any degree of play.

Curfew

It is expected that players will make every reasonable effort to get eight (8) or more consecutive hours of sleep each night. While the teams do not have mandated curfews, parents should monitor their player's nighttime activities to ensure regular sleeping patterns. With proper planning, any school, religious, athletic, and social activities should not interfere with the training athletes' need for sleep.

Picking Up Your Son

The coaching staff is not responsible for athletes not picked up after scheduled practice time. Arrangements must be made in advance for rides to and from LCHS Volleyball events. Your timeliness and good communication will eliminate the need for the coach to make the tough decision of going home to be with their families or staying beyond the events schedule to make sure the athlete is safe. If you are late in picking up your athlete, please communicate your condition immediately to help the coaching staff make accommodations if possible. Athletes that chronically do not have arrangements made may be dismissed from the team.

Chemical/Substance Abuse

Illegal chemical or substance use undermines the cohesion of a team and development of the athlete. Substance abuse indicates that the player is putting themselves before the team. All players are expected to devote themselves to the team dynamic which often means putting the team first. The consequences for use of illegal chemicals or substances are clear in CIF guidelines. Substance abuse of any kind will not be tolerated at Laguna Creek High School.

Academic Eligibility

As an athlete, you will be visible on and around campus. You will be expected to give priority to your schoolwork. Your schoolwork can be enhanced by athletic participation. However, your schoolwork should never be used as an excuse to miss a team event. If you are a true student-athlete, then you will take care of schoolwork in a timely manner to be sure neither your school nor your athletics suffers. In the term Student-Athlete, student comes first but doesn't exist without being an athlete.

Lettering Criteria & Awards

Students completing the season with a team will receive a letter. For most athletes, it is a black and white process but for some there are complications. Each situation requires a unique set of decision making and ultimately, Lettering will be decided by coaches, the Program Director and Athletic Director.

At the end of the season, team and site awards will be given. There are many awards given at Laguna Creek High School and all players are evaluated all season long. Awards are generally given at an end of season banquet or dinner celebrating the conclusion of the season.

Recruiting/ Scholarships

It is our goal at Laguna Creek High School to enhance each athlete's possibility of attaining a place on a collegiate squad and/or earning a college scholarship. We make no guarantees to any athlete under any circumstances. If you hope to play in college, we will assist you in your endeavors as best we can. It is your responsibility to inform your coach and the Program Director of your goals. There are many steps to take towards playing volleyball in college and a wealth of information can be found on the NCAA's website. <http://www.ncaa.org>