

2020-2021 EVANS COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM ATHLETIC HANDBOOK

A resource for parents and athletes



Claxton High School does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, or age in its programs and activities. The following persons have been designated to handle inquiries regarding the nondiscrimination policies:

Mark Stroud
Director of Facilities and Athletics
102 N Clark Street
Claxton, GA 30417
912-739-3993

Dr. Toney Jordan
Assistant Superintendent
613 West Main Street
Claxton, GA 30417
912-739-3544

Staff 2020-2021

<u>Administration</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Email</u>
CHS Principal	Dr. Paul Mizell	pmizell@evanscountyschools.org
CMS Principal	Dr. Charlie Frazier	cfrazier@evanscountyschools.org
Athletic Director (CHS)	Mark Stroud	mstroud@evanscountyschools.org
Assistant Athletic Director (CMS)	Kenny Yanzetich	kyanzetich@evanscountyschools.org

	Fall	
<u>Sport</u>	<u>Head Coach</u>	<u>Email</u>
Varsity Cheerleading Football	Lindsey Minis	lminis@evanscountyschools.org
Varsity Cross Country Head Coach		
Varsity Football Head Coach	Tony Welch	awelch@evanscountyschools.org
C-Team Football Head Coach	Kenny Yanzetich	kyanzetich@evanscountyschools.org
Varsity Softball Head Coach	Samantha Howard	showard@evanscountyschools.org
C-team Softball Head Coach	John Floyd	jfloyd@evanscountyschools.org
Varsity Flag Football Head Coach		
E-Sports Head Coach	John Locke	jlocke@evanscountyschools.org
	Winter	
<u>Sport</u>	<u>Head Coach</u>	<u>Email</u>
Varsity Boys Basketball Head Coach	Eric Bluestein	ebloststein@evanscountyschools.org
C-team Boys Basketball Head Coach		
Varsity Girls Basketball Head Coach	Ryan Tomblin	rtomblin@evanscountyschools.org
C-team Girls Basketball Head Coach		
Varsity Cheerleading Basketball	Lindsey Minis	lminis@evanscountyschools.org
C-team Basketball Cheerleading	Kiley Hall	khall@evanscountyschools.org
Varsity Bass Fishing		

	Spring	
<u>Sport</u>	<u>Head Coach</u>	<u>Email</u>
Varsity Baseball Head Coach	Andy Yanzetich	ayanzetich@evanscountyschools.org
C-team Baseball Head Coach	Kenny Yanzetich	kyanzetich@evanscountyschools.org
Varsity Golf Head Coach	Mark Stroud	mstroud@evanscountyschools.org
C-team Golf	Dede Gordon	dgordon@evanscountyschools.org
Varsity Boys Soccer Head Coach	Nicholas Hodgson	nhodgson@evans.k12.ga.us
C-team Boys Soccer Head Coach	Geoff Atkinson	gatkinson@evans.k12.ga.us
Varsity Girls Soccer Head Coach	Chana Robinson	crobinson@evans.k12.ga.us
C-team Girls Soccer Head Coach	Alfredo Vicente	
Varsity Tennis Head Coach	John Floyd	jfloyd@evans.k12.ga.us

Purpose of Handbook

It is the purpose of this handbook to set forth the operating procedures for the students, parents, and athletic staff for the Evans County School System. It is hoped that a reference, such as this handbook, will facilitate the process of seeking information in regards to administrative policies and procedures as well as provide a framework within which the athletic department. Sometimes issues arise that are not covered in this resource guide, the administration and coaches will look at each situation and make a decision that is fair to all. .

We believe, as research indicates, students who are involved in co-curricular activities have a greater chance of success in school as well as in life. Many of the character traits required to be a successful participant in high school athletics are the exact same ones that will prepare one for a successful life after high school. We hope the information contained in this handbook will make you and your child's experiences at CHS/CMS more enjoyable.

Vision Statement

The Evans County School System Athletic Department will strive to provide a nurturing environment, allowing students to acquire lifelong learning skills, to develop positive working relationships, to promote self realization, and to become mature, productive members of society.

The athletic staff will promote diligence, sportsmanship, integrity and discipline while instilling pride and tradition in Tiger athletics; while helping all student athletes reach their academic and athletic potentials.

Administration and Supervision of Games

Security and Supervision of games are very important. The Athletic Director will work closely with each individual coach to ensure that a plan is developed by each sport to arrange proper supervision of student athletes until they leave the campus. Naturally, school administrators cannot possibly attend every event throughout the course of the school year; therefore it becomes important to develop a sound supervisory plan between staff and coaches to ensure the safety of the student-athlete and all in attendance.

It is important to realize that participation on any athletic team is a **privilege** and that the viewing of athletic contests is also a privilege. Any action that substantially interferes with the normal course of a game or match by a player or spectator will result in suspension of that person and/or removal from the campus.

Athletic Opportunities

Evans County School System offers athletic opportunities for students in grades 6-12. ECSS currently sponsors the following activities for fall, winter, and spring.

<u>Fall</u>	<u>Winter</u>	<u>Spring</u>
Varsity	Varsity	Varsity
Cheerleading	Basketball (B & G)	Baseball
Cross Country (B & G)	Cheerleading	Golf (B & G)
Fastpitch Softball	Bass Fishing	Soccer (B & G)
Football		Tennis (B & G)
Flag Football		Track (B & G)
E-Sports		E-Sports
Junior Varsity	Junior Varsity	Junior Varsity
Football	Basketball (B & G)	Baseball
		Soccer (B & G)
Middle School	Middle School	Middle School
Fastpitch Softball	Basketball (B & G)	Soccer (B & G)
Cross Country	Cheerleading	Track (B & G)
Football		Golf (B & G)
Cheerleading		Tennis (B & G)
		Baseball

JV teams may be composed of students in grades 8-11. Once an 8th grader has participated with the JV, he/she may not go back and participate in the same middle school sport.

Academics and Athletics

The number one reason that student athletes are in school is to succeed academically. While athletic teams are important co-curricular activities, they will always take the back seat to academics. Therefore, all the problems that arise will be viewed through an academic lens before any solutions are contemplated. Remember to keep this in mind before any actions are taken and understand that the administration at Claxton High School and Claxton Middle School will always look at what is best for the student from an academic perspective.

Clearinghouse

The NCAA clearinghouse is a service provided to potential college-bound athletes to ease their transition to college athletics. It is mandatory that students seeking to play college athletics go through the clearinghouse. The guidance office at Claxton High School has many helpful publications concerning the NCAA clearinghouse. There is also information online at www.ncaaclearinghouse.net.

Discipline and Team Membership

Participation in extracurricular activities at Claxton High School/Claxton Middle School is a privilege. Coaches will maintain discipline within their respective programs. Any misbehavior during the school day, off campus or on school sponsored activities may result in removal from the team and/or school consequences. The head coach or administration will be responsible for making that decision based on the facts of each individual case.

- **Dismissal-** If an athlete is dismissed from a team, he/she cannot practice with or join another team until the season of dismissal is over.
- **Suspended Indefinitely-** Before dismissing a student athlete, a coach may suspend indefinitely said student for a period of time determined by the head coach.
- **Quitting-** An athlete quitting for any reason during the season will not be permitted to try-out/workout for another team until the sport he/she quits is complete. If the coach of the team feels the student-athlete is better off playing another sport, the coach can ask the athletic director for the student-athlete to begin another sport without penalty. If a student is participating in multiple sports during a season and quits one team then the other sport is also over. For example, a student is participating in tennis and track and the student quits track then the tennis season is also over.

Athlete Code of Conduct

A. Code of Conduct: A firm policy of enforcement is necessary to uphold the regulations and standards of the athletic department with the Evans County School System. The welfare of the student is our major consideration and transcends any other consideration. Another consideration is instilling honor, duty, loyalty, and values within the students that participate in athletics. All athletes shall abide by a code of ethics, which will earn them the honor and respect of that participation in athletics is a privilege. Any conduct that results in dishonor to the athlete, the team, or the school while in season, out of season, on or off campus, will not be tolerated.

B. Penalty for Unacceptable Conduct: Due to the seriousness of this rule, the coach, athletic director and principal shall meet and determine the penalty according to the degree of the infraction. The penalty shall range from a minimum of one game/contest suspension in the season or succeeding season to a maximum of permanent denial of participation.

C. Definitions of terms for unacceptable conduct (these are examples):

- **Theft**-stealing, borrowing without permission, or taking of personal property that belongs to another person, school, team or organization.
- **Vandalism**-willful or malicious breaking, destruction or defacement of public or private property.
- **Disrespect**- actions that show or express lack of high regard or reverence for others (your fellow students, opponents, and those who have earned a position of honor (teacher, coach, official, administrator, parent, adult). This includes the use of unacceptable language (cursing) in addressing others. Profanity will not be accepted.
- **Immorality**- any action that shows or expresses a disregard of right or wrong.
- **Hazing**- any action that humiliates, degrades, abuses, or endangers another person, regardless of that person's willingness to participate. These actions may include initiation rituals into a team or club.
- **Sexual Harassment**- actions, comments, threats, verbalization coercion, jokes, teasing, or intimidation that are sexual of nature, and are unwelcome by those exposed to them, whether they are staff members, visitors, or other students.
- **Social Media**- posts can fall into multiple categories, such as hazing, sexual harassment, immorality and etc...

D. Individual Coaches' Rules: Coaches may establish rules and regulations with the approval of the athletic director and principal for their respective sports. For example, each head coach may have his/her absent policy for games and practices. These rules must be given in writing from the coach to all team members and explained fully from the start. Penalties for violations must be kept in writing and administered by the coach. They will retain a signed statement from the athlete and parent stating they have read all rules and regulations. Penalty phases shall include but are not limited to running, extra work, or behavior contract.

High School Eligibility

High School eligibility is regulated through the Georgia High School Association

GHSA Eligibility Requirements

For updated eligibility requirements, go to

<https://www.ghsa.net/sites/default/files/documents/Constitution/Constitution2018-19Complete.pdf>

1.21 To be eligible to participate and/or try-out for a sport or activity, a student must be enrolled full time in grades 9-12 inclusive at the school seeking eligibility for that student.

(a) Enrollment is defined as follows:

(1) Fall Semester: when the student participates in a practice or contest before classes begin, or the student attends classes.

(2) Spring Semester: when the student attends classes.

(3) A student may be enrolled in only one (1) high school at a time.

(b) The student must be in regular attendance.

(c) The student must be taking courses that total at least 2.5 Units that count toward graduation.

1.53 Students must **accumulate Carnegie units towards** graduation according to the following criteria:

(a) **First-year students** (entering 9th grade) are eligible academically. Second semester **first-year students** must have **passed courses carrying at least 2.5 Carnegie units** the previous semester in order to participate.

(b) **Second-year students** must have **accumulated five (5) total Carnegie units** in the first year, **AND passed courses carrying at least 2.5 Carnegie units** in the previous semester.

(c) **Third-year students** must have **accumulated eleven (11) Carnegie units** in the first and second years, **AND passed courses carrying at least 2.5 Carnegie units** in the previous semester.

(d) **Fourth-year students** must have **accumulated seventeen (17) Carnegie units** in the first three years, **AND passed courses carrying at least 2.5 Carnegie units** in the previous semester.

(e) Students may accumulate the required Carnegie units for participation during the school year and eligibility will be reinstated at the beginning of the next semester.

1.52 Students gain or lose eligibility on the first day of the subsequent semester. The first day of the fall semester shall be interpreted as the first date of practice for the first sport.

(a) Exception: Students who successfully complete summer school to maintain eligibility become eligible the last day of summer school.

(1) Summer school is an extension of the previous semester and courses may be:

a. remedial in nature where a previously-taken course is repeated in its entirety with a new grade being given.

b. enrichment in nature where a new course is taken that results in new credit being earned.

(2) A maximum of two (2) Carnegie unit credits earned in summer school may be counted for eligibility purposes. NOTE: Additional credits may be earned in credit recovery programs or make-up programs.

(3) Summer school credits earned in non-accredited home study programs or non-accredited private schools may not be used to gain eligibility. Accreditation recognized under the rule shall be from the Georgia Accrediting Commission (GAC) or a regional accreditation agency (such as SACS) or the Georgia Private School Accreditation Council (GAPSAC).

(4) An independent study course taken in summer school must be regionally accredited and accepted by the school system for graduation credit.

(b) Courses completed after the beginning of a new semester may not be used to gain eligibility for that semester. Example: night school classes, correspondence courses, etc.

(c) Independent study courses taken during the school year must meet the criteria of 1.52 (a) 4.

Middle School Eligibility

Middle School eligibility is regulated through their Middle School Athletic League and not by GHSA. All students to be eligible must meet grade and age requirements.

1. Students must be enrolled full time at CMS and shall take a minimum of 7 classes carrying credit toward grade promotion during the grading participation of participation.
2. Student eligibility shall be determined on the first day of a semester.
3. A student must pass 5 subjects carrying credit toward grade promotion during the preceding semester to be eligible for the next semester.
4. A maximum of 2 subjects in summer school and carrying weight towards grade promotion can be counted for eligibility purposes for participation in the first semester.

Insurance

The Evans County Board of Education does not provide insurance for each individual athlete. Parents may purchase insurance directly from the insurance provider the county district is using for that school year. These policies (commonly referred to as school day policies) often have available riders that will cover athletes after school in their respective sports. Each parent of an athlete (in the registration packet) must make a declaration regarding what insurance they have or do not have. Please the Human Resource office for more information.

Attendance and Practice

1. A student must be in school for at least half a day (4 class periods for high school and middle school students in order to practice or play).
2. A student assigned to out of school suspension (OSS) may not participate in a practice or a game until the OSS has been satisfactorily completed. OSS is effective from the time the punishment occurs until the beginning of the first day that the student is back in school.
3. A student that has been given in school suspension (ISS) cannot leave school early to participate in a game. ISS is considered over at the end of the school day.
4. A student who goes on a school related function is not considered absent from school but they must attend practice.
5. Administration can clear a student to practice or play for unforeseen circumstances.
6. All athletes are required to attend all scheduled team practices and contests unless specifically excused for medical, religious or other reasons deemed appropriate by the coach.
7. Athletes should be prepared to practice on Saturdays and during school vacations. Outside commitments that restrict practice attendance on Saturdays and during school vacations are not acceptable. Athletes who miss practice will be subject to discipline by the coach and possible loss of playing time.
8. Athletes cannot miss practices or events to attend other extracurricular activities (without prior approval of respective coaches). This is a sacrifice of a student -athlete.
9. It is asked that parents plan vacations so as not to conflict with their son's/daughter's participation on a team. Schedules are provided in advance to avoid any conflicts.

High School Awards

All high school athletic teams will have end of season banquets to celebrate accomplishments. At this time, coaches will give players certificates of participation or athletic letters, team and individual awards.

Awards are left to the discretion of the coaching staff (i.e. some seasons MVP awards may not be given out or multiple MVPs may be given out).

Academic Awards are given to students who have grades in all classes no lower than B's as recorded in Powerschool. .

At the end of the school year, the athletic department votes on three awards for both girls and boys. These awards are Most Outstanding Male and Female Athletes, the Male and Female Tiger Awards, and the Wendy's High School Heisman Awards for a Male and Female Athlete. The criteria for the awards are the following:

1. Most Outstanding Male and Female Awards

- a. 9-12 th grader eligible
- b. Must play 1 or more sports (if one sport is played, player must be dominant)
- c. Must align with the athletic department's mission

2. Male and Female Tiger Awards

- a. Must be a senior
- b. Must participate in 2 sports seasons
- c. Must be an A-B student
- d. Must compete within the spirit and letter of the rules
- e. Must align with the athletic department's mission

3. Wendy's High School Heisman Male and Female

- a. LEARN - have a cumulative grade point average of 3.0 or higher
- b. PERFORM - participate in school sponsored athletics
- c. LEAD - Be a leader in the school and in the community and serve as a role model

Lettering Policy

The determination of whether or not a letter is awarded to a student participating in a varsity sport is the responsibility of the head coach in each sport. Each coach will work with the athletic director to make sure the criteria for lettering is met. A student may be awarded a letter by completing the season in a varsity sport only and it should be earned through dedication and commitment to that sport and by making a significant contribution to the total team effort throughout the entire season. The criteria for lettering will include the athlete completing the varsity season in good standing as determined by the head coach of the sport.

Each student that completes their team's season in good standing will be awarded either a:

- (1). Certificate of participation for Junior Varsity competition,
- (2). Certificate of participation for Varsity competition, or
- (3). Varsity letter for varsity competition

A student athlete being awarded a high school letter is eligible to purchase a letterman's jacket at his/her expense. Letter jackets are ordered twice a year after a school-wide fitting.

Middle School Awards

The middle school will have an end of the year program to celebrate team and individual successes.

Multiple Sport Participation

Many of the athletes in the ECSS participate in more than one sport. This is encouraged; however, this may be a problem when the sports overlap or are in the same season. For these sports, **students must have the agreement of both coaches** in order to participate in two sports in the same season. It is the general consensus of most coaches that this is not a problem; however, there will be some circumstances when it is very difficult to participate in two sports simultaneously.

If one of the coaches does not agree with the terms, the administration will inform the student of his/her need to pick one sport or the other or continue in the one sport to completion before starting the other. Competing teams take precedence over non competing teams.

Parent/Coach Communication

Parents/Guardians are encouraged to speak with the coach of their athlete's team with concerns they might have throughout the season. Our coaches want every player to have a positive learning experience being a part of our program. Healthy communication can play a vital role in the quality of each student-athlete's experience.

We do encourage players to have conversations with their coaches about any issues before a parent contacts the coach.

Before approaching the coach, we ask that parents:

1. Ask your child. There is a good chance he/she will be able to answer your question.
2. If your concern is playing time, please remember that our coaches are doing what they believe is best for the program. Many times the parent may not agree with the coach. The conversation should focus on encouraging a method of getting the player closer to the level that everyone would like for him to be.

Appropriate concerns to discuss with coaches

1. The treatment of your child, mentally and physically
2. Ways to help your child improve
3. Concern about your child's behavior

Coaches are professionals. They make judgment decisions based on what they believe to be best for all students involved. As you have seen from the list above, certain things can be and should be discussed with your child's coach. Other things, such as those listed below, must be left to the discretion of the coach.

Issues not appropriate to discuss with coaches

1. Team strategy
2. Play calling
3. Playing time
4. Other student-athletes.

There are situations that may require a conference between the coach and the parent. These are encouraged. It is important that both parties involved have a clear understanding of the other's position. When these conferences are necessary, the following procedure should be followed to help promote a resolution to the issue of concern.

If you have a concern to discuss with a coach, the procedure you should follow is:

1. Call to set up an appointment. Please do not attempt to confront a coach before or after a contest or practice. You need to wait 24 hours before speaking with the coach concerning issues.
2. If the coach does not return your call in an appropriate amount of time, call the athletic office to help facilitate the meeting.
3. If meeting with the coach did not provide a satisfactory resolution, call and set up an appointment with the Athletic Director to discuss the situation.

Off Season Practices

Those practices held during the off-season may not be mandatory or a prerequisite for participation. While rewards or incentives for attendance may be offered, participation in these practices may not be required. Please note that the GHSA does permit some off-season practices to occur in some sports. Please call the Athletic Director if you have any questions about these special instances. Visit

<https://www.ghsa.net/sites/default/files/documents/Constitution/Constitution2018-19Complete.pdf> for more information.

Objective Criteria for Team Membership (Tryouts)

Each athletic team in the ECSS will have in place the most objective method possible to pick teams for the sports that have tryouts to reach their final roster. The criteria for selection will be communicated to all potential team members in writing prior to the beginning of any tryout sessions.

The goals of the tryout process are as follows:

1. To judge the relative ability of the athletes and determine which athletes are likely to contribute the most to the program
2. To select the athletes that are aligned to the athletic department's mission statement
3. To maintain a roster size that maximizes participation and playing opportunities
4. If a student transfers into the school system, he/she may be given an opportunity to a tryout upon approval of the administration.

Non Essential Team Items

Coaches may give players the opportunity to purchase non essential equipment such as t-shirts, sweats, hand gloves etc... The team shall provide a fundraiser to help athletes earn the money or athletes can pay without fundraising. For athletes who are in financial need, fees may be waived.

Essential uniform items will be provided by the athletic department.

Required Athletic Forms

In order to try out for a sport, valid physical, insurance, permission, cardiac and concussion forms must be on file with the athletic office. These forms may be viewed or downloaded from the athletic website or a hard copy can be picked up from the athletic office.

This is the first year in going paperless and we are asking parents to visit the athletic website and look for Family ID to view and upload all athletic forms. If you are unable to do so, please visit the front offices at CHS/CMS for assistance.

Team Commitment

Being part of a team carries a responsibility to being loyal. Individuals should not be disparaging of the team or teammates in any form. Any actions by the student athlete that brings negative light to the team, teammates, coaches or the school can lead to discipline, including dismissal from the team. Social media is not an outlet for negativity towards teammates, coaches or opposing teams.

Once an athlete commits to being part of a team, he/she is expected to complete the season with the team. The athlete will complete their commitment to one team before joining another, unless mutually agreed by both head coaches and athletic director. Athletes that quit one sport may not participate in another sport until the season of the originally committed sport is completed.

Transportation

Students involved in all athletic activities in the ECSS will be provided transportation to and from all away events. The athletes will have a bus provided by the Evans County Board of Education and a trained driver to drive this bus. These buses routinely undergo inspections and are without a doubt the safest way for your son or daughter to get to and from events. Any parent wishing to not utilize the transportation to or from an event must have permission from the coach and an Extra-Curricular Transportation Release Form on file with the coach.

Inclement Weather Policy

The Evans County School System policy in regards to contests and practices conducted on days when school has been cancelled or dismissed early to unsafe weather conditions or threats of safety and pandemics are delineated below:

1. No practices or games for any level
2. Head coaches must obtain permission from the athletic director, principal and/or superintendent to practice or travel for games during special circumstances (such as multiple days out of school due to power outages)
3. The Athletic Director, Athletic Trainer and Head Coaches will be monitoring the weather via Weatherbug App and constantly communicating.

Thor Guard Lightning Prediction System

Thor Guard is a lightning prediction system that gives advanced warning to lightning in the area. Thor Guard is located at Tiger Town and is accessible to all athletic fields via electronic devices. When the horn goes off everyone should seek shelter immediately. Athletic teams have a plan of action of where to go and all other non team personnel should seek shelter in a building or vehicle. A horn will go off three times for the all clear. For athletic fields not Tiger Town, the athletic trainer or coach designee will blow an air horn for 10 seconds and that tells team personnel to follow the action plan for inclement weather or heat restrictions.

Concussion Protocol

ECSS uses concussion protocol set forth by Optim Healthcare. Any athlete, regardless of a doctor's note will not be allowed to participate until cleared by the athletic trainer. The athlete will have to go through a series of tests and pass these tests before being cleared to return to practice or games.

