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# ACORN LEAGUE HANDBOOK

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AUGUST 18, 2016  
**MANTECA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT**  
ELEMENTARY EDUCATION



# Acorn League



The Acorn league is established to have a developmental sports program in which students learn the fundamentals of the sport, rules and sportsmanship among Manteca Unified elementary schools in accordance with school board policy (6145).

The Acorn athletic league is to promote the physical, mental, social, emotional, and moral wellbeing of the participants. It is MUSDs desire to prepare students through a positive environment of athletics for an enriching and vital life.

Participation is open to all students regardless of individual differences. Through voluntary participation, the athlete gives time, energy, and loyalty to the sports program. He/she also accepts the training, rules, regulations and responsibilities, which are unique to an athletic program.

## **Organization:**

- The Acorn league shall be organized into 3 levels: Elementary Principals, Director of Acorn League, and Acorn Commissioner Board (High School Athletic Directors).
- Director of Acorn league will:
  - Preside over coaches meetings prior to each season.
  - Create schedules, playoff brackets and keep record of win/loss for each sport.
  - Enforce rules and procedures.
  - Hold coaches clinics for each sport.
  - Keep an open line of communication with elementary principals and coaches.

## **Purpose:**

- The Acorn League is established to :
  - Sponsor and govern instructional and competitive sports among the elementary schools in accordance with the Board Policy and Acorn League rules
  - Foster and sponsor sports to grades fourth through eighth, for all males and females who qualify for participation, and that each school may have a well-balanced program.
  - Foster high standards of sportsmanship at practice and contest.
  - Sponsor a developmental sports program in which students learn the fundamentals of individual sports, including preparation for performance and performance before spectators.

## **Divisions:**

- Sport divisions may be based upon geographic location, school enrollments, or other criteria agreed upon by the Director of Acorn League, elementary principals and coaches.
- Divided into divisions for the purposes of coordinating contest schedule and playoff brackets



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## Finances:

- Each school shall pay to support the Acorn League including uniforms, trophies and other expenses.
- Home team will be assigned the gate and fee proceeds will go toward their athletic teams. Must follow the MUSD gate fee. (Appendix E)

## Eligibility:

- Follow the MUSD Board Policy (6145)
- Student must be enrolled in an elementary school within MUSD. Enrollment in an Alternative Education programs (e.g., Independent study, etc.) is prohibited.
- Equivalent opportunity for all four through eighth grade boys and girls.
- Student must maintain a 2.0 GPA with no more than one "F" academic/elective grade and no more than two "U's" citizenship grade during a reporting period from two or more teachers.
- Eligibility and ineligibility become effective 5 school days at the end of a trimester.
- Student who is suspended from school for 5 days and/or suspended twice within a quarter are to be declared ineligible with a forty-five (45) school day loss of privileges. Less than 5 days is up to the coach and principal.
- Principal/teacher of a student in grades four through six can be deemed ineligible due to interference with behavioral status and or academic progress.
- Student must be eligible prior to transferring to another MUSD school.
- Student must attend at least two thirds of the school day on the day of a contest.

## Sports offered are:

Each sport will follow National Federation of State High School Rule Book (NFHS) which has been approved by the Director of Acorn and Acorn commissioners.

- Fall Season Trimester 1
  - Cross Country-Boys and Girls. (4-6 grade) and (7-8 grade)
  - Volleyball -Boys and Girls (6-8 grade)
- Winter Trimester 2
  - Basketball Boys and Girls (6-8 grade)
- Spring Trimester 3
  - Track and Field Boys and Girls (4-6 grade) and (7-8 grade)

**Cross Country-** National Federation Cross Country Rule Book shall be the official rules unless changes made by principal and Director of Acorn athletics.

- Tennis shoes with a rubber sole are permitted.



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- Each athlete must wear the provided school uniform.
- 4-6 grade will run one mile and 7-8 grade 1.8 miles for all races.

**Volleyball-** National Federation Volleyball Rule Book shall be the official rules unless changes made by principal and Director of Acorn athletics.

- Volleyball court for all contest shall have boundary lines and 10 foot line clearly marked.
- Net antennas shall be secured to the net.
- Game ball shall be SVL18 and leathered covered official volleyball. Both teams must agree on the ball being used.
- Games are determined best two out of three games. Rally score will be used to 25 points for the first 2 games and the third game till 15 points.
- Tennis shoes with a rubber sole are permitted.
- Each athlete must wear the provided school uniform.
- Athlete wearing illegal equipment shall not be permitted to play in the game unless equipment is changed prior to the start of the game. No Jewelry.
- It is preferable that an adult is to handle the score book and score board, provided by the home team or each team provides one
- Officials will be assigned for all league games.
- Each team shall provide a line judge for all games.

**Basketball –** National Federation Basketball Rules shall be the official rules unless changes made by principal and Director of Acorn athletics.

- Game time shall be two twenty minute halves (no quarters) with a running clock first half. Second half clock stoppage ONLY during the last two (2) minutes. There will be no clock stoppage if one team is leading by 20 or more points during the second half.
- Overtime period shall be two (2) minutes in length with only one (1) time-out allotted to each team, regardless of the amount of time-outs left in regulation play.
- Press is permitted provided that coaches use good judgement to avoid “blow-out” games. If up by 20 points, NO Press.
- Game ball shall be leathered covered official basketball. Both teams must agree on the ball being used.
- Tennis shoes with a rubber sole are permitted.
- It is preferable that an adult is to handle the score book and score board, provided by the home team or each team provides one.



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- Each athlete must wear the provided school uniform.
- Two (2) officials shall be assigned for all league games.

**Track and Field** - National Federation Track and Field Rules shall be the official rules unless changes made by principal and Director of Acorn athletics.

- Each athlete must wear the provided school uniform.
- Athletic/running shoes and track shoes WITHOUT spikes are allowed.
- All equipment (batons, shots, etc.) must comply with proper length, weight, and be devoid of any external materials which may give unfair grip advantage.
- Athletes must remain off the field until it is time for their event.
- Warm up location, and run-throughs shall be determined by director at the track meet and will be discussed prior to each track meet.
- Athletes are limited to four events per track meet.
- Lane assignments will be determined by “Clerk of the course” in all preliminary contest. Lane assignments will be made by qualifying times for the finals.
- Coaches are not allowed on the field or in competition areas during the meet. Athletes not involved in an event are not allowed on the inside track area.
- Coaches must work their assignments at all track meets.

## **Playing time**

- All athletes shall participate as fairly as possible throughout the season.
- Exception to this rule is player illness, injury, absence, player discipline, ineligibility, or lack of player preparedness.

## **Rule Updates:**

- Coaches shall notify the Director of Acorn League with recommendations for changes for the next season at the conclusion of the final league game.
- The Acorn League Commissioners will consider the recommendations and make a ruling. The Director of Acorn will communicate and changes will be made in the handbook.
- The ruling of the Athletic Commissioners shall be final.

## **Compliant/Protest:**

- Must be in writing, signed by the principal and coach of the protesting school, and must be received by the Director of Acorn no later than one school day after the contest.
- Will be reviewed by the Director of Acorn and Acorn commissioners (high school ADs)
- Director of Acorn must resolve the protest within five school days.



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- No protest may be made upon decisions of the referee or other game official in regard to judgment.
- Misinterpretation of rules, player eligibility may be made after the contest no later than one day after the contest.
- The decision of the Director of Acorn shall be final.

## Win/Loss records:

- Home coach will be required to send the results by an email to the Director of Acorn
- Records will be kept for each division and playoff brackets will be created off of overall records.
- In the event of a tie within a division it will be determined by the following order:
  - Head to head competition. Example Team A and Team B have identical win-loss records however Team A defeated Team B during regular season, Team A is named division champion.
  - Team C and Team D have identical win-loss records. Those two teams will have a play-off game to determine division champion.

**Communicable Disease Precautions**-In accordance with NFHS standards, the procedures given below shall be followed for all sports:

1. When a player, coach, and/or official, is bleeding, they shall be prohibited from participating in the game until appropriate treatment has been administered.
2. When a player, coach, and/or official, has blood on his/her uniform, the uniform must be properly disinfected or uniform changed before the payer, coach, and/or official may participate in the game.
3. In the event of circumstances occurring as described in items "1" and "2" above, the game shall be stopped to permit medical care or treatment. If medical care or treatment can be administered within a reasonable time, the player, coach, or official would not have to leave the game. The length of time that is considered reasonable shall be the judgment of the official. The player may re-enter the game at the first opportunity and/or during a legal substitution period.
4. Each coach shall have a First Aid Kit on hand at the time of each game. The kit shall include appropriate materials to render first aid, such as but not limited towelettes, bandages, and disinfectants.

**Management of Concussion in Sports**- NFHS suggested guidelines

A concussion is a traumatic brain injury that interferes with normal brain function. To have suffered a concussion an athlete **does not** have to have suffered a direct blow to the head to lose consciousness (be "knocked out").

**Common signs and symptoms of Concussion include:**



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Appears dazed or stunned	Is unsure of game, score or opponent	Answers questions slowly
Forgets an instruction	Moves clumsily	Is confused about assignment or position
Confusion	Loses consciousness (even briefly)	Can't recall events prior or after hit/fall
Headaches or "pressure" in head	Shows mood ,behavior or personality changes	Double or blurry vision
Nausea or vomiting	Balance problems or dizziness	Sensitivity to light and/or noise
Concentration or memory problems	Does not "feel right" or is "feeling down"	Feeling sluggish, hazy, foggy or groggy

### **Suggested Concussion Management:**

- No athlete should return to play (RTP) or practice on the same day of a concussion.
- Any athlete suspected of having a concussion should be evaluated by an appropriate health-care profession that day.
- Any athlete with a concussion should be medically cleared by an appropriate health-care professional prior to resuming participation in any practice or competition.
- After medical clearance, RTP should follow a step-wise protocol with provisions for delayed RTP based upon return of any signs or symptoms at rest, while doing school work or with physical activity.

### **Coaches Responsibilities:**

- Attend Coaches meeting
- Become familiar with the Acorn League rules, skill progression and sport rules.
- Current CPR and First Aid card
- Fingerprint clearance from both DOJ & FBI (exclude certificated employee)
- Obtain Activity Supervisor Clearance Certificate-ASCC (exclude certificated employee)
- Attend 1-2 coaches clinic in your sport
- Attend all practices and scheduled sporting events.
- Read, sign and turn in Code of Ethics form
- Collect all student forms (Appendix F liability form, Appendix A Student/Athlete guidelines)
- Check eligibility list for all athletes
- Coordinate transportation to games/practices and must ensure all athletes are back in the control of parent/guardian.
- Send in required paperwork through district mail (Appendix B- Code of Ethics, Appendix C-Team checklist, Appendix D-Team Roster) to Director of Acorn-Tevani Liotard

### **Administrative Responsibilities:**



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- Find a certified, classified MUSD employee or parent to coach and send the name to the Director of Acorn League
- Cross Country/Volleyball-home school Admin
- Basketball-One Administrator/Designees from each team
- Track Trials/finals- One Administrator/Designees from each team
- Home team assign a person to do the gate with school cash box

**Student Responsibilities:** required to complete the student guidelines form (Appendix A). Students from the respective schools should support their teams through good sportsmanship and constructive behavior. Parent/guardian provides transportation to all practices and contest.

Students shall demonstrate the following sportsman-like behaviors by:

1. Treating opponents, game officials, visiting students, and spectators as guest.
2. Accepting graciously the decision of the officials.
3. Demonstrating sportsmanship at all times by displaying self-control before, during and after all contest.
4. Demonstrating respect for public and private property.
5. Properly using and placing signs/posters which promote school spirit without derogatory words/statements toward the other team in designated areas. Take down the sign upon leaving the area

Cheerleaders/student section shall promote sportsmanship and school spirit by:

1. Leading organized cheers which are both complimentary and appropriate.
2. Respecting the visiting cheer leaders and student rooters by refraining from activities while they are performing.
3. Not stomping and/or kicking bleachers, using artificial noise makers during any league contest.

Home and visiting schools should be responsible for the following:

1. Keeping clear of the playing area, court or track during play, unless part of a team and participating in the game.
2. Picking up any litter left by team and spectators prior to leaving the event.
3. Exiting the playing field and spectator areas in an orderly and timely manner, particularly when another contest follows.
4. Providing certificated supervision, in addition to the coaching staff at all contests.

Sportsmanship at all times:

- On the field, athletes are respectful in actions and language toward their teammates, opponents and officials. They abide by all the rules of the game. They are modest in victory and gracious in defeat.



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- On campus, athletes should set an example of good citizenship for their classmates. They should help promote school spirit and be positive leaders in school activities.
- In the classroom, athletes show respect for teachers and for their fellow students. They maintain good attendance, satisfactory academic progress and good citizenship.

## Sportsmanship:

Student Participation in athletic contests is a privilege. As a student athlete, you are expected to conduct yourself in an exemplary manner at all times.

All schools and the district are committed to enforcing a code of behavior that encourages good sportsmanship and provides for appropriate consequences for un-sportsmanlike conduct. Therefore, the schools agree to enforce the following:

1. Any student/fan who steps to the court or playing field to start or join in a fight is to be automatically ejected from the gym or playing area. Disciplinary action is expected on the next regular school day.
2. Any player ejected from an athletic contest for fighting will be removed from the next regularly scheduled contest and may be subject to any or all of the following disciplinary actions imposed by all:
  - a. Suspension from school
  - b. Removal from the team
  - c. Removal from the athletic programs for a period of time to be determined by the school.
3. Any team or group of players that leaves the bench while a fight is in progress may cause the game to be forfeited. In the event that groups of players from both teams leave the bench while a fight is in progress, a double forfeit may be imposed.
4. Any individual athlete participating in a fight shall be removed from the contest and the next regularly scheduled contest and may be subject to any or all of the following disciplinary actions imposed by the schools:
  - a. Suspension from school.
  - b. Removal from the team.
  - c. Removal from all athletic programs for a period of time to be determined by the school.

## Parent/Spectator responsibilities:

- Abide by all guidelines of the Acorn Athletic League.
- Read, sign and return the spectator guidelines form to athletes coach (Appendix A)
- Display sportsmanship at all times
- Pick up athlete in a timely manner after practices and games.



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PURSUING VICTORY WITH HONOR

Acorn League is operating with the principles of the CIF:

1. Participation in school sports programs is a privilege, not a right. To earn that privilege, student-athletes must abide by the rules and they must conduct themselves, on and off the field, as positive role models who exemplify good character.
2. All participants in sports must consistently demonstrate and demand scrupulous integrity and observe and enforce the spirit as well as the letter of the rules.
3. The importance of character, ethics, and sportsmanship should be emphasized in all communications directed to student-athletes and their parents.
4. School Boards, superintendents, school administrators, parents and school sports leadership must ensure that the first priority of their student-athletes is a serious commitment to getting an education and developing the academic skills and character to succeed.
5. School Boards, superintendents, school administrators and everyone involved at any level of governance is the CIF must maintain ultimate responsibility for the quality and integrity of CIF programs. Such individuals must assure that education and character development responsibilities are not compromised to achieve performance goals and that academic, social, emotional, physical, and ethical well-being of student-athletes is placed above desires and pressures to win.
6. Everyone involved in competition including parents, spectators, associated student-body leaders, and all auxiliary groups have a duty to honor the traditions of the sport and to treat other participants with respect. Coaches have a special responsibility to model respectful behavior and the duty to demand that their profane or belligerent trash talking, taunting and inappropriate celebrations.
7. To safeguard the health of athletes and the integrity of the sport, school sports programs must actively prohibit the use of alcohol, tobacco, drugs, and performance enhancing substances, as well as demand compliance with all laws and regulations, including those related to gambling and the use of drugs.

This form will be given to the parents of athlete: (parent packet)

Student/Athlete Parent/Coach

Communications



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Both parenting and coaching are extremely challenging vocations. By establishing an understanding of each position, we are better able to accept the actions of the other and provide greater benefits to students.

## **COMMUNICATIONS YOU SHOULD EXPECT FROM YOUR CHILD'S COACH:**

- Coaching philosophy and team rules.
- Expectations the coach has for your child.
- Locations, times for all practices and games.
- Team requirements-shoes, shorts etc.
- Transportation requirements.
- Procedures to follow should your child be injured during participation.
- Discipline that may result in the denial or your child's participation.

## **COMMUNICATIONS THAT COACHES EXPECT FROM PARENTS:**

- Concerns expressed directly to the coach.
- Specific concerns with regard to the coaches' philosophy and/or expectations.
- Notifications of any illness or injury or missed practices.

## **APPROPRIATE CONCERNS TO DISCUSS WITH THE COACHES:**

- Treatment of our child, mentally and physically.
- Ways to help your child improve.
- Concerns about your child's behavior.

It is very difficult to accept your child not playing as much as you may hope. Coaches are teachers. They make judgement-decisions based on what they believe to be the best for all students involved. As you have seen from the above list, certain things can and should be discussed with the coach. Other things, such as the ones listed below, must be left to the professional judgement of the coach.

## **ISSUES NOT APPROPRIATE TO DISCUSS WITH THE COACH:**

- Playing time
- Team strategy
- Play calling
- Other student-athletes

There are often situations that may require a conference between the coach and the parents. The student/athlete will attend and be involved in these meetings. To resolve the problem, we must have



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everyone's help and involvement. These meetings are encouraged. **The student should be excluded only if the meeting is about personal issues not pertaining to his/her involvement with the team.**

IF THERE IS A PROBLEM:

- Have your son/daughter talk to the coach one on one.

IF THIS DOES NOT RESOLVE THE PROBLEM, THE PARENTS SHOULD:

- Call the school and request a return call or a face-to-face meeting with the coach.
- Coaches will make time available in their day to meet with students and parents.

PARENTS MUST **NOT**:

- Confront the coach before or after practice.
- Confront the coach before or after a game.
- Coaches are teachers. A parent would not walk into a classroom during class time and yell at the teacher about a poor grade, so please do not confront the coach in public. There are proper ways to communicate and have your concerns addressed. Practices and games are highly emotional times for everyone involved. Issues and concerns DO NOT get resolved when emotions are high.

WHAT TO DO IF THE MEETING WITH THE COACH DID NOT PROVIDE A SATISFACTORY RESOLUTION:

- Contact the principal and put in writing the issue, the principal will attempt to mediate a resolution.
- The principal will investigate and make a finding. The principal's finding are not appealable.

We hope this information helps make your child's and your experience with the Acorn athletic program less stressful and more enjoyable.

## HOW TO ESTABLISH RAPPORT WITH YOUR ATHLETIC CHILD

Here are some Golden Rules:

1. Make sure that your child knows that win or lose, scared or heroic, you love them, appreciate their efforts, and are not disappointed in them. Be the person in their life they can look to for positive-reinforcement.
2. Try your best to be completely honest about your child's athletic capability, their competitive attitude, their sportsmanship and their actual skill level.
3. Be helpful but do not "coach" them on the way to the track, court or field.....on the way back...at breakfast...and so on.
4. Teach them to enjoy the thrill of the learning the sport and competition, to be "out there trying", to be working to improve their skills, and attitudes...to take the physical bumps and



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come back for more. Do not say, “Winning does not count,” because it does. Instead, help them develop the feeling for competing, for trying hard, for having fun.

5. Try not to re-live your athletic life through your child in a way that creates pressure; you fumbled too, you lost as well as won. You were frightened, you backed off at times, and you were not always heroic. Do not pressure them because of your pride. Find out what they are all about and do not assume they feel the same way you did, want the same things, and the same attitudes. You gave them life, not let them learn to handle and enjoy it. Let them need you on their terms.
6. Do not compete with their coaches. The young athlete often comes home and chatters on about “coach says this and coach says that.” I realize this is often hard to take, especially for the father or mother who has had some experience coaching. When a certain degree of disenchantment about the coach sets in, some parent’s side with the youngster. This is a perfect opportunity to discuss (not lecture) with the youngster the importance of learning how to handle problems, react to criticism, and understand the necessity for discipline, rules, regulations, and so on.
7. Do not compare the skill, courage, or attitudes of your child with that of other members of the team. If your child shows a tendency to resent the treatment they get from the coach, or the approval of other team members get, be careful to talk over the facts quietly and try to provide fair and honest counsel. If you play the role of the overly protective parent who is blinded to the relative merits of your youngster and his/her actual status as an athlete and individual, you merely perpetuate the problem.

The Acorn league developmental sports program is for all MUSD students.