



THOMAS  
MACLAREN  
SCHOOL

# Student Activities Handbook

## Upper School (6-12)

**Approved March 23, 2023**

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## **OUR VISION AND MISSION STATEMENTS**

### **Vision Statement**

We believe all students should be immersed in the best our tradition has to offer. We believe all students can be active and useful participants in the ongoing and enduring conversation that is a vibrant civilization. We believe all students can be formed in a habitual vision of greatness that makes lifelong learners of the doctor and the mechanic, the homemaker and the professor. Thomas MacLaren School strives to build a lasting community of learners in which each student is the agent of his or her education.

We at Thomas MacLaren School believe that all young men and women deserve the same quality education, regardless of their ethnicity, gender, or socioeconomic background. All students, not only those wealthy enough to attend private schools or to earn places in specialized public schools, deserve to study the best that the Western tradition has to offer.

### **Mission Statement**

From the seminar to the science lab, from the music room to the playing field, Thomas MacLaren School begins with the conviction that *all human beings can know truth, create beauty, and practice goodness*. To that end, we expect students to develop basic tools of learning, ordered basic knowledge, moral seriousness, breadth and depth of imagination, artistic ability and sensitivity, and a sense of wonder.

We believe all students can be active and useful participants in the ongoing and enduring conversation that is a vibrant civilization. Jacques Maritain, the French philosopher, described education as a human awakening. The goal of Thomas MacLaren School is to develop young men and women who are fully human and fully awake to the world.

## **ATHLETICS PHILOSOPHY**

At MacLaren, the student athlete is first and foremost a student. Coaches, team captains, and faculty work hard to promote excellence on the court or the field and not produce an athletics subculture in the school. An unhealthy preoccupation with athletics can produce an athletics elite, which would ultimately be divisive and detrimental to the community of learners. While always secondary to the academic life of the school, a healthy athletics program is nevertheless an important aspect of life at Thomas MacLaren School.

The athletics field or court is a kind of classroom where students learn lessons about teamwork, fair play, healthy competition, honorable victory, gracious defeat, respect for opponents and courtesy. The goals and objectives of the athletics program include:

- To seek victory through skill, teamwork, stamina, courage and commitment.
- To develop healthy bodies, agility, strength, endurance, mental discipline and athletic skill.
- To foster the growth of personal character by demanding the highest standards of good sportsmanship, by teaching loyalty and perseverance and by encouraging personal sacrifice for the sake of the team.

- To allow students the opportunity to participate on a team striving to excel, which may mean try-outs or unequal playing time at certain levels.

### **ACADEMIC COMPETITIONS**

MacLaren will occasionally sponsor teams to participate in academic competitions with other schools. These single-event competitions and the activities leading up to them will be sponsored by the school at the discretion of the Head of School based on their contribution to the academic mission and culture of the school. All such activities will be supervised by a faculty member or approved school volunteer appointed by the Head of School.

### **STUDENT CLUBS**

MacLaren also supports the formation of extracurricular student clubs. These clubs are for the purpose of:

- Extending and supplementing the curriculum and academic culture of the school.
- Allowing students to pursue common interests in an organized way.

All clubs must be free-standing, locally autonomous entities. They must not be parts or chapters of larger organizations. All clubs must be financially self-supporting through member fees, dues, or fundraising. MacLaren School will, however, provide escrow services for club funds. All club activities must be supervised by a faculty member or an approved school volunteer. All clubs may schedule school facilities during regular business hours for their meetings and activities, following the scheduling procedures set by the Head of School. All clubs may advertise their activities in school newsletters, bulletin boards, and so on, which have been designated by the Head of School for this purpose. Athletic clubs must coordinate facility use with the Athletic Director; leaders of these clubs are required to have additional training appropriate to athletic oversight.

All clubs must be approved annually by the Head of School by submitting a written application that includes: a) the club name, b) name of the club leader/supervisor, c) statement of the club purpose, d) description of club activities, meeting frequency, and so on, e) description of how the club plans to fund its activities, and a description of what the club will require of its members.

### **ELIGIBILITY**

All students are encouraged to participate in the MacLaren athletic program and other extracurricular activities. However, academic responsibilities are always the top priority. In addition, student athletes and students taking part in non-athletic activities are public representatives of MacLaren, which makes disciplinary matters relevant. Students may be removed from teams or clubs for academic or disciplinary reasons. For example, students who accumulate 1.5 hours of detention in one semester may become ineligible for extracurriculars that semester, including athletics. The Head of School oversees this process.

Moreover, students involved in any MacLaren extracurricular club or sport need to remain academically eligible for participation. To ensure that a sport is not taking away from a student's academic performance, student-athletes are expected to perform well in all of their classes. Faculty members will review group rosters regularly and advise the Head of School of any student they are concerned about due to that student becoming deficient in any class. The

standard for a student to remain eligible is to have no deficiencies: if a student has a D or F in any course, he or she will become ineligible subject to review on a weekly basis. Exceptions may be made by the Head of School.

## **ATHLETIC DIRECTOR-PARENT-COACH-ATHLETE-COMMUNICATION / EXPECTATION GUIDELINES**

Both parenting and coaching are very challenging vocations. Through effective communication, each group is better equipped to accept the actions of the other and thereby provide greater benefit to our student athletes. Parents have a right to understand the expectations that are upon their child upon entering the Thomas MacLaren School Athletic Program. Both parents and coaches have a right to clear and open communication concerning the student athlete. In an attempt to clearly communicate with each other, we have set specific guidelines in order to benefit all involved.

The Head of School sets the fees for participation; the Head of School oversees all fundraising opportunities to ensure the adequate funding of all programs.

### **I. Communication Expected from the Athletic Director**

1. The Athletic Director hires the coaching staff.
2. The Athletic Director oversees communication about registration for each sports season.
3. The Athletic Director determines the practice and contest schedule in coordination with the coaching staff. Any changes or cancellations will be communicated by the Athletic Director.

### **II. Communication Expected from the Coach**

1. Expectations the coach has for your student athlete and all athletes on the team.
2. Discipline that results in the denial of your student athlete's participation.
3. Locations and times of all practices and contests.
4. Team requirements (fees, special equipment, etc.).
5. Injury procedures should your student athlete be injured during a practice or contest.

### **III. Expectations of Players**

1. Understand the coach's expectations of you on and off the playing field.
2. Be prepared to give the coach your full attention and consistent effort in practice and in competition.
3. Figure out when and where it is the best time to discuss problems with the coach.
4. Learn to take criticism. Always ask, "What can I do to improve?"
5. Speak to the coach directly rather than behind his/her back. Schedule an appointment to discuss any problem after giving full consideration to the coach's point of view.
6. Evaluate your problem carefully and practice stating it without becoming emotional.
7. Notify the coach of any schedule conflicts well in advance.
8. Communicate about any injury or illness. Bring a doctor's note if applicable. A doctor's note is required for all head injuries.

9. As the student athlete becomes involved in our athletic program, he/she will experience some very rewarding moments. As with any life situation, there may also be times when things do not go well. Discussion with the coach is encouraged at all times.
10. Athletic participation is a privilege, not a right. Any student not abiding by the MacLaren code of conduct may face removal from our athletic programs.

**IV. Expectations of Players**

1. Be a strong supporter of your student athlete, win or lose.
2. Encourage your student athlete to communicate directly with the coach.
3. Be a positive role model at home and at games.
4. Refrain from criticizing coaches in a public setting.
5. Remember that your speech, attitude, and actions toward a coach will influence your student athlete's opinion of the coach.
6. Address issues with the coach directly (See Part V. below).

**V. Appropriate Concerns to Discuss with Coaches**

1. The treatment of your student athlete's mental and physical health.
2. Strategies to help the student athlete improve.
3. Concerns or changes in your student athlete's behavior.
4. For questions about playing time, wait 24 hours after a competition before speaking with the coach.

It is very difficult to be objective about our children. It is also difficult to accept your student athlete's not playing as much as you may hope. Coaches are professionals. They make decisions constantly, based on what they believe to be best for all athletes involved. As you can see from the list above, certain items can be and should be discussed with the coach. Other items must be left to the discretion of the coach. **There is to be no contact between parents/players and coaches on Sunday.**

**CYBER IMAGE POLICY: See Parent-Student Handbook, page 31.**

**BEGINNING-ENDING AN ACTIVITY & ATTENDANCE**

**Reporting:** A student who wants to join a club/team after the official start date will be required to discuss that with the club leader or head coach and Athletic Director or Clubs Coordinator prior to joining the club/team and it will be handled on a case by case basis. Please refer to the school website, [www.maclarenschool.org](http://www.maclarenschool.org), for information regarding start dates and practice times.

**Attendance:** Student athletes/extracurricular participants are expected to attend all practices, meetings, and games. In cases where it is unavoidable to miss a practice, meeting or game, the coach/sponsor must be contacted personally prior to the absence. Individual coaches/ sponsors will establish rules of discipline for unexcused absences, in coordination with the Athletic Director or Clubs Coordinator. Students who miss more than one (1) school period, without a prearranged excuse, during a day will not be allowed to participate in a practice that same day.

**Playing Time:** At the sub varsity level (6th-JV teams), efforts will be made to allow athletes to participate and develop their skills. Participation during contests will be emphasized. At the varsity level, however, winning will be pursued, but not at the expense of academics, ethics, sportsmanship, or the health and well-being of the student athlete.

**Dropping a Sport:** All student athletes are strongly encouraged to complete a sport season that is started. When it is determined that circumstances necessitate dropping a sport, the athlete must make it known to the coach their intent to drop the sport prior to the time that they quit. All issued equipment must be turned in at that time. A student athlete may transfer to another sport only by agreement of the involved coaches. The student athlete will be required to meet the CHSAA required practice days in the sport to which he/she transferred in order to be eligible for competition in that sport.

### **ALCOHOL, DRUGS, OR TOBACCO**

Specific training rules are established by each sponsor and coach in accordance with the individual requirements for the particular activity or sport. Students involved in activities and athletics are expected to be aware of and to obey all training rules. Additionally, the following rules apply to all extracurricular activities offered at Thomas MacLaren School.

1. Use of illegal drugs will not be tolerated. The use of tobacco (including but not limited to vaping & chewing tobacco), illegal use of alcoholic beverages or prescription drugs, unless prescribed by a physician for the student athlete, **will not be tolerated**. If you are attending a gathering where alcohol, drugs, tobacco, etc., are being consumed illegally in your presence, you must leave the gathering immediately. If such activities are witnessed by school staff, students or adult members of the community at any time, and it is confirmed by the School administration, or if a student is convicted of a drug or alcohol related offense, the following disciplinary measures will be taken:
  - A. 1st Offense: Suspension from the next 20% of scheduled competitions or events. If the suspension is not completed during the current season, then it will carry over into the next season. Athletes are expected to practice during the suspension. (If you play on multiple levels, (i.e., JV and Varsity) you will miss 20% of each level of games/events in which you would have played).
  - B. 2nd Offense: Suspension from all scheduled competitions/events for one calendar year from the time of the offense. You may re-gain eligibility prior to the calendar year under the following conditions:
    - Suspension for the remainder of the current season if in-season.
    - Suspension from next 40% of the competitions/events in the next activity/sport.
  - C. 3rd Offense: Suspension from all scheduled competitions/events for the remainder of your high school career at Thomas MacLaren School. Following a third offense, student may appeal to the Head of School.
2. The severity of the circumstances may result in expulsion for the season or year, upon review by the School administration.
3. We do not differentiate between in season and out of season. As a participant of an extracurricular activity, we expect commitment throughout the year.

## **TRANSPORTATION**

Thomas MacLaren School does not provide transportation for students. Guardians must provide or arrange travel for their students. Please contact the Athletic Director or Clubs Coordinator if you have any questions or need further clarification.

## **OUT OF SEASON ACTIVITIES**

Each coach/sponsor, whether coaching that season or not, should encourage athletes/participants in the current season. No practices shall be conducted at any time that conflicts with other seasons. When a coach is sponsoring opportunities during the school year, the following guidelines shall be followed:

1. The opportunity will not occur at a time of day when the “in season” sport is holding regular practices. Open gyms, weight room sessions, etc. should be in the evening after regular practice times or early in the morning before the regular practice times. Only students not in-season are eligible.
2. Thomas MacLaren School contracted coaches will provide practice and workouts only (no parent, volunteers). No coach engaged by Thomas MacLaren School will form teams or take individuals to outside competitions that would conflict with any in-season sport.
3. The practice and workout opportunities provided will begin only after the “in season” sport season is at least one month (30 days) into their sport season.
4. If an activity is coach sponsored then a coach must always be present and the student athlete may not be left alone when using school facilities or equipment.

## **DUAL SPORTS PARTICIPATION**

Dual sports participation involves an athlete participating in two sports whose competitive seasons are simultaneous or have some portion overlapping. This policy does not allow a student involved in a sport to participate in “open gym” type activities while in another school sport.

1. If a student athlete desires to participate in dual sports, he/she must notify the Athletic Director in **advance** of the sports season’s official starting date.
2. The Athletic Director will at this time arrange a meeting involving the athlete and the head coaches of both sports. The guardians of the athlete will be invited to the meeting and may attend if they desire.
3. At the meeting, the group will consider the request of the athlete to participate in dual sports. The stated philosophy and goals of Thomas MacLaren School Athletic Programs will be considered as the group works to accommodate the student’s request.
4. They will arrive at a conclusion that determines if the request is a workable situation and will be in the best interests of all athletes and coaches affected by the decision.
5. The athlete must indicate the sport that will be the “primary sport” in the case of a conflict on competition and/or practice days. The athlete would then be required to attend that “primary sport” event on the day of the conflict.

### **COMPETING AT ANOTHER SCHOOL**

Thomas MacLaren School is a member of the Colorado High School Activities Association (CHSAA). If Thomas MacLaren School offers an athletic program, then a student **cannot** participate at the same level of play offered at another school. If, however, Thomas MacLaren School does not offer a program or certain level within a program, a student may try out for teams at another school that is located within the same district boundaries as Thomas MacLaren (D11) or is located within the district in which the student resides (if not D11). If Thomas MacLaren School offers a varsity team but not a JV team, a student can play for a JV team at another school but would NOT be able to play at the varsity level for another school. The process for doing this is:

1. Speak to the Athletic Director at Thomas MacLaren School prior to the start of the season to discuss CHSAA policies regarding this.
2. Speak to the Athletic Director at the school that you want to play at to get information on their policies and details about the particular sport.
3. Bring the schedule of games to the Head of School to discuss early release dates. The Head of School must give permission for early release and will communicate this permission with the family and the front desk staff.
4. The other school may want you to bring in weekly grade checks for eligibility purposes. The Athletic Director from the other school will contact the MacLaren Athletic Director who will provide the academic standing.

### **REGISTRATION**

Registration typically opens three weeks in advance of the first official practice; the deadline is usually the Friday before the first practice. All registration is through MySchoolBucks.