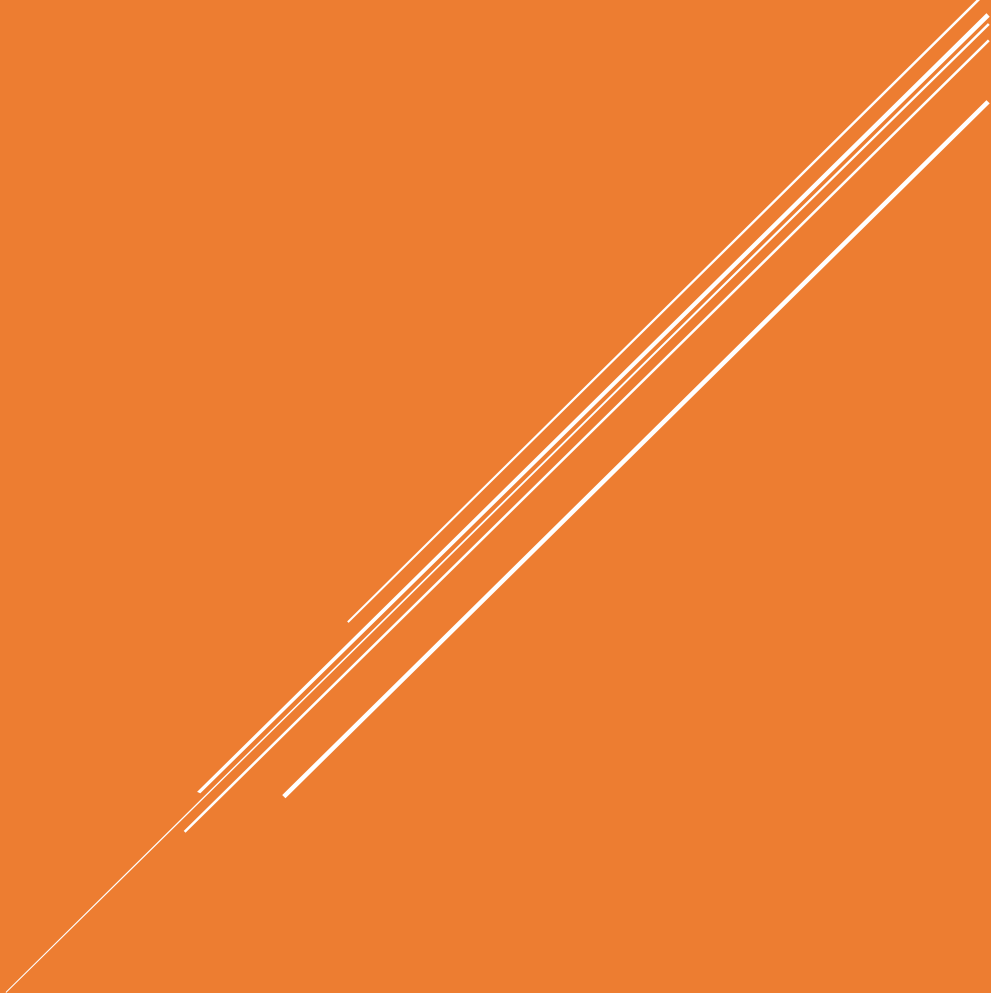




# SEVEN LAKES SPARTAN WRESTLING

2026-27 Wrestler's Handbook

# Seven Lakes High School Wrestler's Handbook 2026-27

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## **Welcome to Seven Lakes Wrestling**

The Spartan Wrestling Staff is glad you are here with us. This has always been a highly successful program since it first began in 2005. As a team, we have won 387 boys' team dual competitions, 202 girls' team dual competitions (we have only had girls' duals since 2014), 6 District Team Championships, 1 Regional Team Championship, 3 Regional Team Runner Up Finishes, and have consistently placed at the UIL State Championships. All combined, we have won 11,885 matches and scored over 69,000 team points. Individually, we have had 67 wrestlers win District Titles, 17 win Regional Titles, 86 qualify for State, 27 have placed at the State Championships, and we have had 4 wrestlers win State Championships (three of those State Champions going undefeated for the year). Our team and individual history of success is well documented all over our training facility. You can also check our team website with tons of statistics. The point behind this bragging is so that you know you are in the right place if you want to win. It is also imperative

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that you understand that all our individuals that were so successful all started out just like you. They were young, scared, and overwhelmed. Just like you, they assumed all the great wrestlers up on the walls were super blessed athletes with advantages they did not possess. All our success is attained through a carefully planned out and constantly reworked system. Believe in the system, commit to success, and you will be up on that wall too. *I am talking to you!*

This handbook is for you to reference and use throughout your time here as a Seven Lakes Wrestler. You will not find many rules or regulations here. Most of this handbook is advice and hints to help you attain your goals.

## The Purpose of Athletic Training

Why are we doing this? What is the end game here? In any quality scholastic athletic program, the goal of athletic training is to build young people of high character and teach life skills that will make those young people successful in any future life endeavor. So, how does doing a double leg properly translate into character building? Or how does winning in wrestling help you get that fancy job 15 years from now? The answer is simple. Wrestling skills are extremely difficult to learn, master and perform. It doesn't come easy for anyone. You will have to work hard, train, problem solve, overcome obstacles, and then work harder. There is no cheat code. You must do it the hard way. When you learn that extremely important life lesson and you have the skills to accomplish that in wrestling, you will be able to do anything in life. I never double legged a prospective boss in an interview, but wrestling helped me get, keep, and excel at every job I have ever had. Being able to wrestle will be very important if you compete in college or plan to coach, but being able to run a proper cradle won't help you much in the rest of your life. The process of learning how to run that cradle is everything. Nowhere in your young life will you be held as accountable as you will be in wrestling. Wrestling (like most sports training) is training for life.

## The SLHS Wrestling Definition of Success

The #2 program objective here at Seven Lakes Wrestling is to place wrestlers at the UIL State Championships. This is a lofty goal and something to always strive for. John Wooden, arguably one of the best coaches in American history, defined

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success as *"A piece of mind attained through self-satisfaction and knowing you made the effort to do the best you are capable."* That definition is the basis for the philosophy of SLHS Wrestling's idea of success. It basically means that you have found success if you did everything in your power to be successful. If you took it easy in workouts, skipped practice, gave up in competition, or held back when lifting, but still placed at State, you have failed. You failed because you did not fulfill your complete potential. You will never have any idea how good you could have really been if you would have given it your best efforts all the time. If you killed it in all your training, but never even made the varsity line-up for the post season, you are still a success. This does not mean it is okay to accept a lower role on the team because you feel it is the best you can do. You should be in constant pursuit of the next level of success. At the end of each season, and at the end of your career, you will need to be able to look back on your training and feel good about the work you put in. If you can remember times when you phoned it in or didn't do a reasonable amount of extra work, you will not feel good about your success. The only way to feel good about your work and therefore success is to set high goals, believe in yourself, and do your best. The reason we have set one of our main program objectives as placing at State is because it is a difficult goal that is as high as we can go in the high school season. Individuals that set high goals are usually successful individuals. Programs that set high goals produce successful individuals.

## **Seven Lakes Wrestling Program Objectives**

1. Build Good People.
2. Place Individual Wrestlers at the State Meet.
3. Field a competitive team each season with quality wrestlers at every weight allowing us to compete for post season team titles as well as win regular season duals.
4. Encourage wrestlers to continue to remain involved in wrestling after graduation by competing, officiating, coaching, or giving back to the sport in whatever way they can.

### **1. Building Good People**

The #1 program objective here at Seven Lakes Wrestling is to Build Good People. What "Good People" means certainly can be subjective, but it is loosely

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defined here at Seven Lakes Wrestling as people who are willing to do the difficult right instead of the easy wrong. Being bad is easy. Being good takes effort, time, and usually involves putting others ahead of yourself. What this means to you is that as a coaching staff, we are way more interesting in teaching you a life lesson and reinforcing good behavior than we are interested in winning a dual meet or placing at state. We will hold you accountable for your actions. If you cannot be a good person, we will help you. If you don't want to become a good person, then we will remove you from the team. We do not have to fill a full team for boys or girls, and we can and will start over with new wrestlers as often as we must. Being a good person is way more important than winning. As mentioned in the section above, your experience here with Seven Lakes Wrestling should be a positive experience that will change you forever.

## **2. Placing Wrestlers at State**

The #2 program objective here at Seven Lakes Wrestling is to Place Individual Wrestlers at the State Meet. This is obviously a very simple objective. Did you place or not? We place the top 6 at the state championships. You must make the top four out of Districts and Regionals. Then you need to win enough matches at State to place top 6. There are many things that must happen all together in order to place. Everything in this handbook is here to help you accomplish that goal.

## **3. Fielding a Competitive Team**

The #3 program objective here at Seven Lakes Wrestling is to field a competitive team with quality wrestlers at all weight classes. This means that we have a comprehensive plan for everyone to follow so that we can be successful in regular season duals and tournaments. We will not be happy and accepting of just hanging our hat on two state champions and then being terrible at all other weight classes. We have three dedicated and experienced coaches here that care about all our wrestlers. Yes, those wrestlers that work the hardest and show the most promise will get more attention than those that don't, but we hold everyone accountable at all weight classes. Since this is an overall program objective, we hold ourselves (the coaching staff and the student-athletes) accountable for top to bottom success.

## **4. Encouraging Post Graduate Wrestling**

The #4 program objective here at Seven Lakes Wrestling is to encourage wrestlers to continue with wrestling after they graduate high school. This may be as a wrestling official, coach, or competitor. If the coaching staff did their job, then you

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will have had an incredible experience with wrestling and now it is time for you to share it with someone else. Continue to give back to wrestling.

## **Building Champions Every Day!**

Our overall program motto here at Seven Lakes Wrestling is "Building Champions Every Day!" That motto is part of everything we do here from preparation through to execution. This idea ties directly to our definition of success. If you are putting in your best effort every day, then you are a champion. If you are only doing the bare minimum or not putting in extra work outside of athletic period workouts or mandatory practices, you are not and will not become a champion.

### **Building Champions Every Day is divided up into four pillars:**

Excellence – Doing everything from preparation, classwork, drilling, training, lifting, making weight, competition, leadership, etc.... to perfection. This means that you work on your craft until you are the best you can possibly be.

Dedication – Setting aside and utilizing the time, money, and effort required to be a successful wrestler. Dedication does not mean working hard some of the time, or when it is convenient. It means doing it all the time.

Respect – Holding everything in this program that allows you an opportunity for success in high esteem. That means honoring those wrestlers that came before you that built a tradition of success. This means listening to and honoring the coaches and leaders who are trying to help you be the best you can be. This means honoring your parents who love and support you. This means taking care of the excellent facilities you have access to. This means helping and mentoring the young athletes on the team that will be the future of this program.

Courage – Doing for yourself or for the team, something that you do not really want to do (sacrifice) or something that you are not quite ready to do. All the greats that have come through this program have all stepped up and cut weight or went up a weight class to fill a varsity spot before they were ready. They all took on the better wrestler that they weren't ready for in practice or competition. They all stepped up and did something they were afraid of so that they could grow.

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## You and Your Place on *The Team*

Wrestling is an individual sport. You compete by yourself and then your points get added up together with everyone else on the team. Every wrestler will have a slightly different style or utilize a different set of moves. You must do the work in and out of practice. Your team can't do it for you. You can't rely on a teammate to tag in and finish off a move or help you out when you get into trouble in a competition. Individuality is one of the things that makes wrestling great. Sometimes, the idea of individuality leads to selfish athletes and poor teammates. That is not what we do here at Seven Lakes as a whole and it is definitely not something that we will tolerate on this team.

**The Team is bigger and more important than any individual on the team (including the coaches).**

Individual strength comes from Team strength. You need to want to wrestle for you, but if you don't have an overwhelming feeling of duty and responsibility to The Team, you will not get very far. The training, competition and sacrifice needed to be a successful wrestler is just too taxing for one individual. We survive on the power of our brotherhood. Think of and put the team first and you will find your own individual success. When the team wins, you win!

## Why Wait?

It is human nature to stay as comfortable as possible. This is an urge you are going to have to fight if you are going to be a wrestler. If you only compete in situations where you know you can and will win, you will never grow. You only have four years here to compete if everything works out perfectly. If you wait to step up and fight for what you really want, you will either run out of time or get passed up by someone who wants it more. Champions are made through failure. If you never try, you will never fail. If you never fail, you can't grow stronger. Here at Seven Lakes Wrestling, one of our main program objectives is to get wrestlers to place at the UIL State Championships.

1. **YOU CAN PLACE AT STATE! YOU CAN WIN STATE CHAMPIONSHIPS!**

In this room, in this system, with these coaches, you can all do it. Trust that you can do it, choose to do it, work hard all the time, trust your coaches, follow their advice, and you will succeed (Respect & Courage).



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2. Do not pass up on extra training opportunities. If there is an open mat, get there. Before practice begins, drill something you know to get to your 10,000 repetitions (it takes an average of 10,000 repetitions to learn a new skill). Wrestle with a partner. Lift extra weights. Increase your flexibility (Excellence, Dedication, & Courage).
3. Go to practice before it is mandatory. Go to all optional practices. Ask for special training opportunities (Dedication).
4. Do not wait to be told to get started in the athletic period, practice, or in open mat. Just get started. See number 2 (Dedication).
5. Wrestle the best kids in the room before you are ready to (Courage).
6. Work hard to move up from the blue team to the orange team for practice (Excellence).
7. Make it a goal to move to 5<sup>th</sup> period wrestling athletic period in the second semester of your first year (Excellence).
8. Fight to be on the varsity as soon as you can. Move up or down a weight class to fill an open spot on the varsity. Challenge the varsity guy to a wrestle off (Courage).
9. Ask for wrestle offs even if you think you can't win. We often shut down wrestle offs towards the end of the season or even early in the season when we don't have time. Take advantage of the very few opportunities that you will have (Courage).
10. Train and compete in Freestyle and Greco in the spring. (see spring wrestling section) (Excellence, Dedication, Respect, & Courage).
11. Attend summer camps (see camp section) (Excellence, Dedication, Respect, & Courage).

## **Be Coachable**

This is a great program with knowledgeable and experienced coaches that really care about you as a person as well as your success individually and the success of the team. When a coach gives you a suggestion, it was given with the intent of making you more successful. Develop thick skin and don't take criticism personally. When a coach is yelling at you, remember that their energy is up, and their adrenaline is pumping in practice and competitions. They are not mad at you. It is extremely difficult to say the perfect thing with excellent social etiquette in the

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heat of practice or worse yet competition. Don't take it personal. Figure out what you are doing wrong and correct it. Make time to meet with that coach and ask questions until you can do the skill correctly or you understand the concept completely.

In a complicated physical and technical sport like wrestling, it is extremely important to maximize your strengths and limit your weaknesses. As coaches, we will constantly be attempting new plans to try to accomplish this. We are trying to help, and we need to try new things to see what works and what doesn't. Be patient with that process or better yet, be an active participant in the process.

Wrestlers that shut down in the face of criticism or complain about being picked on, are often overlooked by the coaching staff for being too immature to coach. *"Don't worry when a coach is yelling at you. Worry when they stop yelling."* That saying may be an old one, but it is still very true today.

## Listening to Coaching Advice/Suggestions

In a perfect world, every wrestler would wrestle on the varsity at their chosen weight, but we don't live in a perfect world. In every season of every team that I have ever coached or competed on we have had at least one and usually several wrestlers that were making big sacrifices by wrestling on varsity before they were ready, moving up a weight, or cutting down a weight class or two. If a coach approaches you with the opportunity to sacrifice for the team or for your own gain, JUMP ON IT!

1. Opportunities are just that, opportunities. Don't pass them up.
2. You are a member of a team, and the team is bigger and more important than you. Sacrifice for the team and you will always be rewarded.
3. The coaches have your happiness and safety in mind. The staff did not come to the decision to ask you to make a sacrifice lightly. They fought it out in the office and thought it through very carefully.
4. Opportunities rarely come by a second time. Taking a chance and failing is better than never taking a chance in the first place.

This goes for trying new moves or changing styles. If the coaching staff comes to you with a new idea, give it a fair shot. Don't have a preconceived notion of how it will not work. Sometimes this is harder to do after you have found some success

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and the coaching staff asks you to stop doing what you feel works for you. We have your best interest in mind and want you to find more success.

## **Earn It**

Everything in life worth having comes directly as a result of hard work. You will never be proud of the things that are just handed to you. Don't expect good things to happen for you unless you have worked very hard for them. In my life and career, I have gotten "lucky" on several occasions that have allowed me many great opportunities. If I had not been working very hard, those "lucky breaks" would have been just like a seed that falls on barren land and would have been wasted. I capitalized on the lucky breaks because of the hard work I had previously completed and then continued to do after that opportunity presented itself. I had put myself in a position where I could do something with a lucky break. If you are not working hard all the time, you will not be able to do anything with the opportunities that present themselves. *"The harder you work, the luckier you get."*

## **Coaching Decisions about Awards, Accolades, and Leadership Positions**

Whether it is a weekly award, end of season award, announcement, starting line-up spot, playing time, or a leadership position, much of that decision making process to choose that award is subjective. Subjective evaluations are terrible and no fun for the evaluator as well as for the person that is being evaluated. Know that the decision was very difficult, and we pined over every aspect of it as a coaching staff. We will not discuss why someone was picked or not picked for anything subjective. We will not discuss the decision-making process with the wrestlers involved or with their parents. We made the decision in the office as a collaborative. We will not discuss the votes, deciding factors, or what coach said what. We will not relive the process with anyone outside of the coaching staff for any reason.

## **Committing and Balancing Life Outside of Wrestling**

Wrestling is an extremely demanding sport. Aside from how physically and emotionally draining this sport can be, it will make huge demands on your time

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during the season. We let you come late to practice any day for school tutorials here on campus (not private tutoring), test/quiz make up, club meetings, and retests. Do not abuse this privilege. Wrestling practices are scheduled well in advance. Do your level best to work your life around practices. If you find yourself in a situation where you need to be late repeatedly, then you may need to consider dropping out of wrestling. We will not be able to consider you for a Varsity spot since we can't count on you on a regular basis and even if you are on the JV, it just isn't conducive to being a member of the team when you are constantly coming late. Athletics is a privilege, not a right. You must make concessions of your free time to meet team requirements. The same applies for wishing to leave early from practice. Family emergencies happen, but if you need to leave early repeatedly, then wrestling here at Seven Lakes is not going to work for you. There are only three reasons we excuse for missing practice. As laid out in the parent/athlete packet that all parents and athletes sign before athletic competition begins, you may miss practice for: 1. Excused absence from school, 2. Doctor's appointment, or 3. Family emergency. Things like, hunting trips, vacations, church, visiting family, studying for an exam, private tutoring, and so on that may make sense to you and your family are not acceptable reasons for you to leave practice early or to miss altogether. It may seem like a harsh reality, but if you can't schedule those items outside of wrestling practices and competitions, then you must choose between those items and wrestling.

*How do you balance all the demands of regular life and the extreme demands of being a Seven Lakes Wrestler?* That is a good question and the answer is going to be different for everyone. The way we look at it is we bet you could meet all the demands happily if there was a \$1,000,000 reward at the end. We believe that there is a reward even more valuable than loads of money at the end of this endeavor. You will never be the same after this experience if you buy in 100%. **Can you commit even when it is inconvenient?** Maybe a regularly scheduled family vacation over the winter break must be moved during your wrestling career. Maybe you take an AP course in summer school so that you can have a study hall during the regular season. Maybe you give up your job and not be able to afford your own car. Maybe you have little to no social life outside of the wrestling team during the season. Maybe you are regularly doing homework on the bus and in the stands, so you don't have to be up until 2:00am all the time. *Maybe, just maybe, learning the discipline it takes to be a part of this program is the real reward.*

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## Wrestling as an Academic Pursuit

Wrestling is a very technical sport. The best wrestlers treat their wrestling training like a high-level academic course. Be open to the teaching. Be patient when you are learning. Wrestling skills will be new and new things take time to acquire.

### Pay Attention – Actively Listen

When someone is sharing wrestling knowledge with you, actively listen. Watch what they are doing. Repeat the key points. Nod your head in recognition of what is being explained to you. Even though some people may be better at learning by doing first, you still need to listen to the instructions.

### Connect the New Information to Prior Knowledge

This is the best way to learn something new. Try to break down the new skill into parts and figure out how those parts are similar to things you already do well in your wrestling skills or your daily life. (Examples: “Oh, this move is just like kicking a soccer ball.” “This is just like sitting in a chair.” “This new technique is just a slightly different variation of a technique I already know.”)

### Keep Good Notes

Keep a journal or put notes in your phone when you have questions or have learned something. This way, you can utilize your notes to guide your next training session. Note taking is essential to just about any endeavor that you wish to be successful at.

### Ask Questions

When you don't understand, ask for clarification. If you have a “eureka” moment and figure out a move, ask to have someone watch you to see if you really do get it. If you think something connects to your prior knowledge, ask to see if you are on the right track. Good learning will always lead to new questions. Ask those questions.

### Do Extra Work

Don't ever pass up an optional practice or an extra workout. Be a “mat rat”. Come early; stay late. Don't just come to hang out. Come to train. Use your notes to direct your training.

### Find a Mentor

Latch onto the best kid in the room that is willing to work with you. Seven Lakes Wrestlers are all trained to teach and help everyone (teaching makes you better), so finding a mentor won't be difficult. There are three excellent wrestling coaches here

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that care deeply about your success, but we often have to split our time between upwards of 60 kids. That is not a good ratio for the learners. Get yourself a mentor and you don't have to wait to get a coach's attention.

## Video

Today, YouTube, Facebook, and tons of great wrestling sites exist that have thousands of hours of live wrestling matches from just about every level. Take advantage of what is out there and share it with the coaches. Film and watch your own matches. Ask to go over film with the coaching staff.

## Weight Management

### Weight Classes:

Wrestling is a sport that is divided up by weight classes down to the tenth of a pound. The idea behind weight classes is that wrestlers of the same basic size are competing against each other instead of one person having an advantage or disadvantage solely based upon their size. This is not a perfect system, but it is as fair as it gets. The 106 pound weight class is for wrestlers that weigh 106.0 or less. If you weigh 107 or 108 normally, it makes sense to drop that extra pound or two and compete at 106 instead of having to go up to 113 and compete against wrestlers who could normally weigh upwards of 120 and have cut down. The plain and simple truth of it is that most wrestlers are wrestling below their natural body weight. Wrestlers who are not wrestling below their natural weight are often at the disadvantage of being one of the smallest wrestlers in the weight class since most everyone else is cutting weight. On the other hand, if you enter into the 106 pound weight class and weigh 106.1 at the official weigh-in before competition, you are out and your team loses all your potential points. Proper weight management is essential.

### Proper Weight Management:

Proper weight management starts with year-round fitness. Fitness has no season. Maintaining healthy eating habits and staying active year-round is the way to go. Seven Lakes Wrestling competes and trains nearly year-round which will help you maintain a decent weight and acceptable level of wrestling fitness. Outside of the competition seasons (summer and fall when you are rarely weighing in and competing), you should be getting stronger and leaner. That does not mean you are dropping weight. It means that your body fat percentage is remaining the same or

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dropping and you are getting stronger. Getting stronger means that you can lift more weight than before or lift more repetitions of a specific weight than before. It does not mean that you merely feel stronger or look better in the mirror. Body fat is measured by a properly trained professional with fat calipers or a very expensive water displacement test.

## Choosing a Weight Class:

In a perfect world, everyone would wrestle a pound or two below their walking around weight, but we do not live in a perfect world. The weight classes may not line-up with your walking around weight. You may also be one of the best kids in the state, but the **very best** kid in the state that you cannot beat is in your weight class on your own team. In all honesty, very few wrestlers are wrestling their perfect weight. Some have to cut a little weight, some have to cut more weight, and some may even have to wrestle well above their natural weight. What weight class will be best for you is not an easy decision. Don't make it alone. The coaching staff is here to help you. Keep the following in mind when you are making the right weight class choice:

1. Maintain year-round fitness so there are no crazy drastic cuts to be made.
2. Train hard and improve your wrestling. The best wrestlers on the team usually get to pick their weight class while everyone else must move around them. Be the one that everyone has to move around instead of being the one that has to move.
3. Wrestle year round and compete as often as possible. This will give you many opportunities to see if you are comfortable wrestling up or down a weight. This also gives you real world matches to judge yourself against the best of the best.
4. Sit down with the coaching staff and have intelligent conversations about where you will be the most successful individually.
5. Remember that it is the coaching staff's final decision what the line-up is. Work with them on their decisions but be flexible and be prepared to put the team first. Don't forget that you are part of team and may need to sacrifice your best weight class to benefit the team.
6. Often (especially for people cutting weight) we like to let wrestlers compete for the first half of the season up one weight class from where we hope to have that wrestler at the end of the season. Meaning that we will sometimes encourage a wrestler that wants to go 113 for the post season to wrestle at 120

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for the first half of the season and then drop down on January 1<sup>st</sup> when there is a two-pound allowance (you can weigh 115 in the 113 pound weight class).

7. Do **NOT** set the line-up in the locker room with your group of friends. "If you go 113, then Johnny can 106 and I'll do 120." This feels like you are being a good teammate so all your buddies can have a spot on the team, but you have just bred mediocrity in the team. You have decided the lineup based upon friendships and the path of least resistance. That is a huge mistake. You get what you earn, not what you deserve. We don't make deals or take turns. The nice kid who has done everything right in the program for four years is not going to be given a varsity spot because he is a senior and it is his turn. That is disrespectful to everyone involved in the program and goes against the nature of the sport. Get to your lowest possible weight class and fight for the spot every single day in every single workout. This means that some wrestlers will get left out of the starting line-up. As sad as that is, that is how you make great wrestlers and great teams. That wrestler that gets left out can and must still make a huge impact on the team in a back-up capacity. They will share in the success of the varsity starter by pushing them in practice every day and being ready to step up in the event of injury or illness.

## Weight Certification:

In order to compete in UIL wrestling, you will have to go through a weight certification process that must take place after October 1st and before any varsity competition. Weight certification is scheduled by the coaching staff in cooperation with our trained assessors (district athletic trainer that does not work at our home campus). The process begins by wrestlers having to pass a **hydration test** with a UIL trained assessor. The hydration test is based upon urine color. Urine samples that come out clear or very light yellow pass. Those urine samples that are too dark will fail and the test is over. You will have to wait a full 24 hours before you can reschedule and try again. Here are some tips for passing the hydration test.

1. Simply be well hydrated and you will pass.
  2. Do not work out 12-18 hours before they hydration test.
  3. Stop taking any vitamins or supplements you currently take at least three days prior to the test (supplements are discussed in greater detail later).
  4. Do not eat 8-12 hours before the test.
  5. Run several cycles of drinking water and then urinating before the test.
- Remember that urine is the wastewater and the vehicle for removing



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impurities from your body. The more cycles of clean water you run through your system, the more likely it is that your urine will be clear and you will pass the test.

6. Testing urine color as a measurement of hydration lags behind your current hydration level. You can be hydrated and fail the urine test because the urine tells the story of how you *were* not how you *are*. That is why you must run several cycles of clean water through and avoid the food.
7. There are more detailed instructions on the UIL site: *Athletics – Wrestling – Rules and Guidelines – Weight Assessment*.

After you pass the hydration test, you will immediately step on to a scale while wearing a singlet and have your **alpha weight** recorded. You will next have your **body fat percentage** measured. Body fat is measured by a trained UIL assessor with skin fold calipers. Your alpha weight and your skin fold measurements will be fed into a national wrestling computer (trackwrestling.com) and your lowest competition weight is calculated. That weight is not necessarily the weight you should compete at, but it is the lowest weight you can compete at. Once you are entered into the computer, your clock starts. You can only lose a certain amount of weight per day. If you get assessed at a weight too high or wait until the season is just about to start, you will not be allowed to compete at your chosen weight. Hydration testing through urine and skin fold calipers is not infallible and there is an appeal process. An appeal is not a do over. You are still bound by the weight loss schedule set in your first assessment and you only have three weeks to complete the appeal. It is just plain better to take care of your business and do it right the first time.

## Cutting Weight:

Cutting weight is part of the sport. No one wants to do it, but we often must. There is a proper way to maintain your weight and there are very silly and unsafe ways to cut right before a weigh-in. Most weight issues can be solved with diligent adherence to a proper nutrition regimen and the intense workouts we maintain during the regular competition season. When it can't, a wrestler will have to cut weight. Here are some tips to help you when you need to cut:

1. No cheat days or breaks in your nutrition.
2. Do extra work. Come early and stay late for practice. Run on your own. Do extra cardio at the gym. If you need to add extra workouts into your routine, do them early in the morning before school or late after dinner before bed.

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3. Keep eating the good stuff. DO NOT stop eating. Not eating shuts down your metabolism and you will not lose weight.
4. DO NOT sit in hot tubs, saunas, steam showers or wear plastic or rubber suits. Not only is this illegal (will get you kicked out of competitions and suspended from this team), but it is extremely unsafe.
5. Keep drinking. Water is the hydration you need. Most sport drinks are full of sugar and salt and will set your weight cut back. Drink water or a "Pedialyte" style product.
6. DO NOT yo-yo way up after a weigh-in or on an off day. This sounds like a fun break, but it makes it harder to get back down the next time and is just plain miserable. Too much food after a weigh in can put your body into a state unsuitable for competition.
7. Ask for help. The coaches have all been there before and will help you.

## **Adding Weight:**

It takes months and months of proper nutrition and serious weight lifting to put on muscle mass. It is a very difficult process that does not always work. If you find yourself in a situation where you are competing above your natural weight class, you will be hard pressed to put the appropriate muscle mass on during the wrestling season to give you the advantage you are looking for. If you find yourself putting on a great deal of weight very quickly, it is likely fat and will not help you. Stay down and be lean. An extra pound here or there when you are 5-7 pounds under your competition weight class won't hurt, but you are not going to put 7 pounds of muscle on. Don't be lazy or delude yourself. Also, see below about your trackwrestling.com weigh ins and moving up and down. Those couple extra pounds you put on just because you could, might wind up cost you an opportunity at your chosen starting spot if it comes open (the starter has a skin infection, grade issues, injury, suspension, we enter two varsity teams, or the coaching staff just wishes to give you a chance at the weight to evaluate you).

## **Official Trackwrestling.com Weights**

After the official weight certification, your competition weights are put into the Trackwrestling.com weight management system online. These weights are official and mandate at what weight you are eligible to wrestle at the next competition.

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## Therefore:

1. Ever since the UIL's adoption of National Federation rules, each wrestler is only legally allowed to drop 1.5% of their alpha weight per week, the trackwrestling.com website has broken down exactly how low each wrestler is allowed to weigh on each and every day of the competition season.
2. Before each competition, your coaches must create a pre-match weigh-in sheet from the trackwrestling.com website that lists the lowest legal weight on the date of that specific competition for each wrestler.
3. After the official competition weigh-in, I must enter those weights into Trackwrestling.com and the new weights will be calculated. This happens for every competition.
  - a. This means that you cannot weigh-in at a high weight and then drop way down in a couple of days to be at a lower weight class.
  - b. Plan well in advance and talk to your coaches when changing weight classes.
  - c. These are not our rules, they are UIL and NFHS mandated.

## Goal Setting

Now we need to look at setting high, but realistic goals for this year's regular competition season as well as your overall career. Goal setting is a difficult skill for anyone, but even more difficult for young people with limited life experience. You need help and guidance setting, adjusting, and working to fulfill your goals. One of the biggest mistakes that young athletes make in goal setting is that they only set goals they are comfortable with which are almost always too low. Here are some general questions and answers about goal setting with some examples that should help you out.

### What is a goal?

I am sure all of you have a basic grasp of what a goal is. For wrestling here at Seven Lakes HS, a goal is a measurable end of season single event tied to your last competition of the year. We do not accept getting on a team, winning a certain number of matches, lettering, or beating a rival. Those are all milestones. Goals deal with which tournament you hope to place at in February. Are you hoping to place at Rookie Districts, JV Districts, Varsity Districts, Regionals, or State?

### What is the difference between a goal and a milestone?

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A milestone is, **"I will win 30 matches. I will get 100 takedowns. I will win a District Championship."** Goals are large end of season measurable events like, **"I will place at State. I will win a JV District Championship."** Milestones are statistics that happen during the competition season or during a training cycle. Goals are end results. Milestones are fun ways to celebrate small victories during a long season. The danger is mistaking a milestone for a goal. Once a goal is attained, it is time to relax because the journey is over. That is why goals are tied to the final tournament of the season. Milestones are only a measuring stick used during your training to let you know how well you are doing along the path to your ultimate goal. We set both milestones and goals here at Seven Lakes.

## What does it mean to set specific and measurable goals?

Setting a specific goal is measurable. It is not based upon a feeling. An example of a goal that is too vague would be, *"I want to get better."* This is obviously not a goal that will serve you well. A measurable goal would be, *"I will place at the State Championships."* At the end of the season, we will see if you made it or not and then see where we came up short. This will help us plan for next year.

## What is the purpose of setting goals?

Setting goals is the first step in organizing a plan for your training. If you are willing to set *placing at The State Championships* as your goal, then you know it is much easier to place at that tournament by winning the first two matches and getting into the semifinals. State brackets are created by a matrix based upon your Regional place. So, you need to place high at the Regional Championships instead of just limping in at fourth place. To do well at the Regional Championships, it is easier to do with a high District Place because Regionals is also bracketed by matrix based on District placing. District brackets are built by head-to-head seeding points. So, you need to wrestle tough against all your district opponents all season long as well as work to build your seeding points. You will see the best district wrestlers early and often. To be ready for all those best district opponents, you need to be training hard all preseason with tons of coaching attention. To get that extra attention from the coaches, you need to earn the starting spot as early as possible. To earn that spot, you need to manage your weight well, maintain your year-round fitness, show up to as much extra training as possible. You start with the end goal in mind and then plan backwards to organize your daily training. That is why goals are so important.

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## **How do I know how high to set my goals?**

If your goals don't scare you, then you just aren't aiming high enough. You must be willing to fail and lose to win big. If you set low goals, you will likely only do small things. Even though it is a very difficult sport, just about anyone can make it through the season and not quit. That should never be anyone's goal. If you are un-athletic, and have never really competed, your goal should be to place at the Rookie District Championships. If you are more ambitious, you can make a goal of placing at the JV District Championships. If you are experienced and have already lettered, your goal should be to place at the Varsity District, Regional, or State Championships. If you can't see yourself placing at the Regional Championships, then you shouldn't be a Varsity Starter for us. Each year, this team will compete for a District Championship, a top 5 place at the Regional Championships, and place wrestlers at the State Championships.

## **How do I.....**

The coaching staff will help you set your goals. We will plan your training. We will push you to attain your goals. We will help keep you on track when you get lost. We are here to support you.

## **Finding Success in the Athletic Period**

Most of you will be in 5<sup>th</sup> or 7<sup>th</sup> period wrestling athletics where you will complete a great deal of training during the school year. We utilize our athletic period daily. We do not blow this period off as rest or just an easy grade. The athletic period is planned into our training schedule in and out of the season. New wrestlers to SLHS will be in 7<sup>th</sup> period and returning wrestlers that have earned the right will go into 5<sup>th</sup> period. In 7<sup>th</sup> period during the fall semester, we teach our basic skills of wrestling in the order that makes sense. If any wrestler in 7<sup>th</sup> period shows mastery of the basic skills, upper classmen maturity, and has earned a shot at 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> string varsity, the wrestling staff may move that wrestler up to 5<sup>th</sup> period at the end of the first semester. Here are a few hints for you to get the most out of the athletic period as possible:

1. Have your training materials every day.
  - a. Clean t-shirt, shorts, socks, and underwear. Always keep three to four sets of clean workout clothes in your locker. Wrestlers in 5<sup>th</sup> period will need two clean sets every day, so they should keep six to eight sets of

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workout clothes. Workout clothes must be navy, orange, grey, white, or black only. You can wear what we provide you as workout clothes or provide your own, but the color code is strictly enforced.

- b. Take your dirty workout clothes home **EVERY DAY** to be laundered. Do not leave things in your locker to fester and funkify. This makes the whole locker room stink, ruins your clean clothes, and increases your risk of getting or spreading a skin infection.
- c. Shower after every single workout. You will need:
  - i. Liquid or bar antibacterial soap.
  - ii. A body scrubber.
  - iii. Deodorant/Antiperspirant.
  - iv. We provide and wash towels for everyone.
2. Hurry up and get to the athletic period quickly. 5<sup>th</sup> period wrestlers have 10 minutes from the end of 4<sup>th</sup> period to be ready to go and 7<sup>th</sup> period wrestlers have 12 minutes from the end of 6<sup>th</sup>
  - a. Hustle to the locker room.
  - b. Get changed quickly.
  - c. Get into the room quickly.
  - d. Read the board and figure out what the day's workout is.
  - e. Help with cleaning of the mat and/or wall pads.
  - f. Get the proper shoes on.
  - g. Check-in for attendance.
  - h. Get mentally prepared to work hard and get better.
3. Be responsible for your own development. Be mature and take an active role in your training instead of just waiting for the coaches to tell you exactly what to do.
4. Find a good drill/workout partner that will push you. Hang out with who you want to be. Don't settle for a bad workout partner. You are who you work out with.
5. Don't forget to treat your training as an academic pursuit.

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## Finding Success in Practice

Practice is very similar to the athletic period in your preparation (See above) with just a few differences. Here are a few ways that practice is different from athletic period workouts.

1. An hour and half or a two hour practice may seem like a really long time, but doing something you love always seems to be over too quickly. Fall in love with the process and know that it will be over way too soon. Enjoy every minute and every challenge.
2. Practice attendance is taken by squads. Your captain will check you in and report that attendance to the coaching staff. The coaches will check your weight at the end of practice the night before a weigh in. This check in provides us regular data on weight and hydration.
3. You are a student-athlete, not an athlete that has to go to class in order to wrestle. You can be late to any practice to meet with a teacher for tutorials, quiz or test make up, retests, or to discuss a classroom issue. **It is not okay to miss practice to do homework or work on group projects.** Schedule around practice for those issues. Here is the procedure to be properly late:
  - Contact Coach Demarchi electronically to let him know why you will be late before practice starts. [michaeldemarchi@katyisd.org](mailto:michaeldemarchi@katyisd.org) 281-989-2748, canvas email, or Remind.
  - Go take care of your business.
  - Return to practice as soon as you are done with a pass from your teacher to let us know you actually went.
4. Being on time means to get there up to 15 minutes early. This gives you time to weigh-in, get your shoes on, review the board, do extra work, review your notes, and get your mind ready to work and get better.

## Setting Yourself Up for Success in Competition

Competition is the ultimate measuring stick of how well your training is advancing. Competitions are our test days. Did you pass or did you fail? Did you win or did you lose? Just like different preparations you do right before a test in class, there are preparations right before the competition that are different than a

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regular practice day. There are a few different areas that you need to look at and they are broken down in the following sections.

## Non-Wrestling Preparations:

Take care of your family responsibilities, chores, coursework, and personal life on a regular basis so you don't have anything hanging over your head that could mess with your focus. Above the wrestling office door is a sign that reads:

1. *Family First*
2. *School Next*
3. *Then you can Wrestle*

The coaches follow that list every day in everything that we do and we expect you to do the same. We all have family responsibilities and chores to do at home. We all have classroom responsibilities and grading to take care of. After taking care of all of that, then we can coach. You should plan your life the same way.

## Full time preparations:

Read this whole handbook and work on your wrestling every day. If you spend time preparing, you will feel prepared. If you feel prepared, you will be relaxed and confident. If you are prepared, relaxed, and confident, you have a great shot at winning. This state of mind is reached by doing everything you are coached to do all the time. Doing the right thing regularly adds up.

1. Attend practice every day with the intent of getting better.
2. Manage your weight every day.
3. Eat healthy all the time.
4. Have a positive attitude.
5. Drill hard in practice and have the courage to work on the stuff you NEED to work on instead of working on the stuff you like to do or just want to do.
6. Take good notes every practice.
7. Basically, follow all the hints and guidelines listed in this handbook all the time instead of just when it suits you.

## Dress Code: We have special dress code requirements for competitions.

1. If we are attending school the same day of competition, varsity wrestlers are required to dress up and wear their travel top. Shirts and ties with dress pants for the gentleman (no jeans) and skirts, dresses, or pants suits for the ladies. The goal is to look way nicer than you would for a normal school day. JV can wear nice pants and Seven Lakes Wrestling shirt. We will travel to the event



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dressed up on the bus and change when we get to weigh ins or if the captains choose to, we will change out into our warm ups before we board the bus.

2. If we are not attending school the day of competition, you will travel to the event in your competition warm up top and bottom. Do NOT be wearing non-school issued gear.
3. On our special charter bus travel trips, we will wear long pants (jeans are acceptable) and our travel top.
4. During competitions, you are in Seven Lakes Wrestling Gear only. You wrestle for Seven Lakes, so represent Seven Lakes.

## The day before competition preparations:

1. Make sure you get a good practice in the day before competition.
  - Review your notes and get your last-minute questions answered.
  - Have a positive attitude in practice.
  - Remind yourself how hard you have worked, and you will feel well prepared and confident.
2. Make weight at the end of practice which provides you the extra wiggle room for hydration and eating after practice and before weigh-in the next day.
3. Make sure you eat super clean so you will be well fueled the next day.
4. Make sure you know all the details about competition especially when and where check-in is the next day so you can be early.
5. Check-in with your mentor and ask some questions.
6. Remind your parents about pick up and drop off and figure out your communication plans so they can be there to watch you win.
7. Get extra rest. Go to bed earlier than normal. Turn off your electronics. Lay flat and rest.
8. Set your alarm and a back-up alarm for early morning check-ins.
9. Do an equipment check as soon as you get home from practice in case you have to run to the store to pick anything up (that includes food for the day of competition –see below).

## Day of competition preparations:

1. Plan to be 15 minutes early to check-in just in case something happens. A check-in set for 5:00am means before 5:00am. Plan to be there at 4:45am. If you show up 5:00am, you are late and will have to deal with discipline that could be as severe as removal from that competition or even being removed from the team all together. Plan to be early in case something happens. If

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something does happen, contact the coaching staff so we know what is going on.

## 2. Do a double check of your equipment before we leave the wrestling room area.

### ○ Equipment:

- Travel top
- Warmups
- Shoes
- Socks
- Singlet
- Headgear
- Mouth guard (This is recommended for everyone, but it is required in competition if you have any metal dental work on the outside of your teeth. You need a mouth guard that protects upper and lower teeth if you have upper and lower metal work.)
- Competition bag
- Towel
- Body wipes
- Change of clothes

### ○ Personal comfort:

- Pillow
- Blanket
- Electronic entertainment and charger
- Headphones
- Homework you need to take care of (see non-wrestling preparations above.)
- Money for a tournament shirt.

### ○ Competition food:

- Water
- Pedialyte
- Fresh fruit
- Granola bars/energy bars
- Dried fruit mix
- Yogurt
- Gum

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- Light protein (grilled chicken breasts, hard-boiled egg whites, lean steak, etc.)
- Salad
- Extra money (Be smart with your choices at the concession stand. Most concession stands have little to no options for you and should be considered for emergency only.)

## Day of competition with school:

About half of our competition days happen after a full school day and sometimes we go to a few periods of school and then leave early. Be prepared for the classes you are attending. Make sure you have workout clothes ready for an athletic period workout and shower materials for after that workout.

## Weigh-ins:

As soon as we get to the facility, check your weight on the scales we will be using. Rest and relax in the weigh-in facility until the weigh-ins begin. Do not leave the weigh-in facility except to use the restroom and inform your captains where you are. If you are under the weight required by far enough and can eat or drink, be careful about how much you consume. Play it safe. Also keep in mind that some people are still cutting weight and can't eat. Don't be rude about your consumption. Eat or drink in private and don't rub it in anyone's face. There are several rules that you need to be aware of that could get you disqualified from the competition. Watch what others are doing and ask questions if you want to do something different. The big rules you need to know about are below:

1. No weigh-in is official until everyone is going and you are called by an official or coach running the weigh in and checked off.
2. You may not come late to weigh-ins or leave and come back. You will not be allowed in and cannot weigh-in (hence – stay in the weigh-in facility).
3. You may not use the restroom once the weigh-ins have begun.
4. You may not engage in any weight loss activities before or during weigh-ins. That means no running, working out, extra layering of clothing, spitting, etc.
5. You will have to wait in line and make weight in your singlet and suitable undergarments. That means underwear that covers your buttocks completely as well as your genitals. Girls also need to wear a sports bra that completely covers their breasts.

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## Begin Refueling:

Start your refueling process as soon as you have made weight. You don't get a great deal of time between weigh-ins and wrestling. You want to start your refueling right away so you will still have time to rest before you begin your warm-up. Make sure you are well hydrated (that means water) and get some of the food listed earlier into your body. Don't eat so much that you feel sluggish for warm-ups.

## Warming Up:

After weigh-ins and refueling, it is time to get warmed up as a team before your first match of the competition. Think of a competition day warm-up as an intense practice condensed into 20-30 minutes. Team warm-ups will be run by team captains and/or a coach and will be highly structured. Do not be selfish. Finish refueling, use the restroom, take care of your personal communications, get dressed for the mat, and make it to the team warm-up on time. A team warm-up will consist of the following:

1. A good run to get your body warm and make you use your lungs.
2. Some slow-motion drilling to help build muscle memory for the most important skills that are about to be used in competition.
3. Hard drill to get you ready to wrestle and get you sweaty.
4. A good spar / near live match with a good drill partner.
5. Team sprints
6. Stretching
7. Team meeting.

The goal of a warm-up is to really blow your lungs out and get that first match out of the way before it really matters. After the team warm-up, you will still need to warm back up prior to your 1<sup>st</sup> match. You do not want to step out on the mat to compete until after you have been through a full team warm-up and an individual warm-up. **Never step out onto the mat cold and dry.**

## Utilizing Down Time at Competition:

Especially in an individual tournament, you will find a fair amount of time where you are not weighing in, warming up, or competing. How you utilize this time can be the difference between being good and being great. Yes, you need to refuel, take care of your communication with your friends and family, and sometimes even get some sleep in the stands. But, when you are not taking care of your necessities, time at the tournament should be used for getting better at wrestling. You are at the wrestling tournament and are not leaving early, so you

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might as well get better at wrestling. If you just watch other wrestlers warm up and compete and take notes, you will be better. Why not find your captain or coach and ask some questions? Maybe your question gets answered verbally, or you take over an empty mat and work on some stuff. Maybe you just go support your teammates on different mats. Long and short of it, turn off your device, put away your screens, and be present at the wrestling event. Never pass up an opportunity to get better.

## Wrestling Attitude in Competition

Attitude is everything! Every wrestler will have a different style, but every winning wrestler has a similar winner's attitude.

**Make the following things a part of who you are as a competitor:**

### Pinning

The goal of a wrestling match is to pin your opponent in the 10 foot circle; it is not to hang on and win by one. You should constantly be working to secure a fall. If you aren't working for a fall, you are stalling.

### Be aggressively scoring points at all times.

Don't think about how many points you have or if you are winning or losing. Score points and work for the fall always. From neutral, hand fight, get in your opponent's face, press the action and work for takedowns. On top, work to break your opponent flat, turn them, and secure a fall. When on bottom, work to get back to your feet and work for another takedown or work to secure a reversal and then pin your opponent. The easiest way to lose a lead is to stop trying to score points. Never let an opponent back into the match. Constant scoring and aggression is a good way to break an opponent's spirit and earn a pin. Don't forget that the official on the mat is human and will make mistakes. If they take away three points from you in a bad call and you lose, that was your fault. You should have scored more points. Be aware that referees pick which wrestler is supposed to win that match from the way that you are wrestling. They may do this consciously (bad referees), or subconsciously (even the good referees will do this without realizing it). If you are the constant aggressor, they will call a faster pin for you, give you the close calls, and call your opponent for stalling. Conversely, if you score points early and then shut it down, they will make every call they can to even it up. Referees hate stallers.

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## Don't take anyone for granted and don't pack it in when you are the underdog.

It just plain does not matter what is supposed to happen or who is supposed to beat who. What matters is what actually happens. What actually happens is almost always a direct result of preparations and attitude. If you are the better wrestler, pin your opponent in the 10 foot circle. Do not get hung up on "getting a good match in." Just pin him/her. If you feel cheated out of your workout, go run sprints after. If you are supposed to lose, aggressively score from every position (see above). If you don't score and lose, we will have a filmed experience to go back to for teaching later. If you go out there with the intention of not being embarrassed or to try to stall out a match, you are still going to lose, and we have nothing to learn from and no way to get better. If you are going to take a beating, you might as well get something out of it.

## Wrestle through the whistle

Don't stop because you think the period is almost over or you think you are out of bounds. Keep wrestling on the edge. We would rather the official have to stop you than have you quit a second early and give up points. Many wrestlers also stop wrestling with a couple seconds left in a period. Don't stop. Score points. Capitalize on your opponent coasting through the end of the period and pick up some easy points.

## Work to "break" your opponents

You don't have to be the best wrestler to win a match. "Breaking" an opponent is a highly effective way to gain bonus points on tough wrestlers that you are better than and, most importantly, it is a way to come from behind and beat that wrestler that is better than you. Breaking an opponent is not a literal breaking of bones or the body. Breaking an opponent means wearing them down from whistle to whistle and making them quit. This is done through constant aggressive attacks, stopping their moves, putting them on their back, etc. Moves that don't work on a good wrestler in the 1<sup>st</sup> period can work on a tired or broken wrestler in the 3<sup>rd</sup> period. Making a wrestler quit rarely comes from one fancy or painful move. It comes from constant wearing down of that wrestler. Work for it. Earn it.

## Dealing with losses

Everyone takes a beating sometime. There is no such thing as an undefeated wrestler. Everyone has been beaten at one point in their career. First, be a good sport (see below). It is okay to be upset with yourself or even the situation, but don't waste too much time pouting. Get over the situation quickly and figure out what

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you did wrong. It may be a simple fix that you can take care of right away for the rest of your competition that day, or it may be much more complicated and take hours of practice and work to fix. Losses are gifts to the real wrestler. It is an opportunity to learn and get better.

## Sportsmanship

The wrestling rule book states that every match begins and ends with the opponents shaking hands. As a Seven Lakes Spartan, we expect more.

1. Win or lose, we expect that handshake to be a real handshake, not a slap.
2. Shake the hand of your opponent's coach after each match. This includes eye contact and **NO** negative commentary.
3. Be polite and speak clearly when checking in at the table. Clearly say your last name and spell it for them. Then tell them your first name. Use your polite words.
4. Don't ever argue with or complain to the official. Your coaches will do that when necessary.
5. You must always come and speak to your coach after each match no matter how upset you may be. We know when you are upset and will let you go quickly, but we decide when the conversation is over, not you. We do not allow immature behavior here. You will come to your coach and act right, or you will not be wrestling for this team in the future. We have pulled bad sports from competition (even in the middle of a tournament) in the past and will do it again in the future if we must.
6. Do not throw your headgear, clothes, stomp, slam, or act foolishly. Keep your straps up until you are off the mat and behind the score table or the bench.
7. Absolutely no trash talking before, during or after your match.
8. No cursing.
9. Remember that you represent yourself, your team, your parents and family, your school, and your coaches at all times. People are always watching, listening, and sometimes even recording you. Act right at competitions. Always act right of course, but especially at a competition when you are competing for Seven Lakes. You acting like a fool and cursing in the bathroom after a weigh-in always comes back to the coaching staff eventually.
10. Respect your opponents. Wrestlers are the best people in the world. Anyone who has taken the time to join a wrestling team, trained for months or years, passed all their classes, earned a spot on their team, made weight, and has

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stepped out on the mat with you deserves your respect. Give it to them. We will beat that opponent, but we will be respectful of them.

## **Getting into the Line-up**

How do you earn a spot in the line-up? If you aren't "The Guy" or "The Girl" at your chosen weight class, you need to find a way to get onto the varsity line-up as quickly as possible. The more time you spend on the varsity and the more trips you make to the post season, the more likely you are to find success at the highest level. The suggestions below will work for just about any level at any time.

1. Take care of all of your business. If you are not the starter, and the coaching staff has to take up their time to deal with you because you can't take care of simple team responsibilities, you will not get many extra opportunities.
2. Be at all the practices on time with a positive attitude and give yourself and the team your very best effort.
3. Show up to optional practices.
4. Drill with a starter so the coaches see you more often and give you more attention. Drilling with a starter that is better than you will also make you better and give you a shot as a starter.
5. Be willing to wrestle up or down as many weights as you can safely do to earn a spot.
6. Make yourself indispensable to the team and the coaching staff so that we make it a priority to get you into any and all open spots.
7. Just plain ask to get a starting spot. You never know.

## **Setting the Starting Varsity Line-up**

The Head Coach always makes the final decision on the line-up according to what he thinks will be best for the team and each individual involved. Katy ISD Athletics mandate states that everyone that can compete on sub-varsity will be provided an opportunity, but on the varsity, we compete to win. It is not always fair, and you will get what you earn, not what you deserve. Being a good kid that follows all the rules guarantees you a spot on the team. It does not guarantee you a spot on the varsity. As the head coach, I choose the line-up based upon years of experience as a coach. The decision making process will be tailored to fit each



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individual wrestler and weight class. The process will not always be the same from situation to situation. When time allows, an **attempt** will be made to make each wrestler involved in the process aware of how the decision making process will be set for their individual situation, but it is possible that either a last second decision has to be made and/or that the decision is purely subjective. In order to earn and maintain a starting varsity spot, read, understand, and follow the handbook in all situations, and then win on the varsity level and distance yourself from all other competitors in competition and in the practice room. **We will not discuss the line-up we have chosen, the decision-making process that got us to that line-up, or playing time within that line-up with anyone outside of the SLHS Wrestling Coaching Staff.**

## **Skin Infections**

Because of the close contact nature of our sport, skin infections are a sad fact of wrestling life. Vigilant and proper hygiene coupled with preventative protection will minimize your risk.

### **Proper hygiene:**

After every single practice or athletic period workout, everyone must shower here on campus. Not smelling too bad, having body spray, or changing into your fresh street clothes are not acceptable substitutes for a shower. **Head to toe showering** after each workout is essential and mandatory. Please utilize some type of **body scrubber** to help remove dead skin cells (dead skin cells are breeding grounds for bacteria). Use **anti-bacterial soap**. If the label does not read "anti-bacterial," it isn't. Bar soap lasts way longer, but you need a suitable plastic case to contain it between showers. There are several **skin infection fighting soaps** on the market designed specifically for wrestlers and MMA fighters. We have *Defense* brand soap for you if you want to use it. You can also use a **dandruff shampoo** that has zinc in it as a full body wash. Zinc kills creepy crawlies pretty well. Several years ago, I assumed I was not at risk for a skin infection since I wasn't competing and was showering after every workout, I started utilizing just a nice smelling hair and body wash in my shower routine. After three infections in 6 months, I changed my routine. Now I do a **dual medicated shower system**. I use bar *Defense* brand soap with a body scrubber first. Then I use dandruff shampoo as a second head to toe body wash. I have not even had a hint of any infections since that change.

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## Preventative protection:

1. Wash your hands with soap and water several times a day. This will help reduce illness as well and reduce your risk for skin infection.
2. Always use fresh clothes for every workout. Just because it does not smell does not mean it is okay for tomorrow's lift.
3. Take all your dirty clothes home every single day to wash. Letting clothes sit and fester for a day or two invites infection to come set up shop in your locker.
4. Wear long sleeve shirts and tights or sweatpants for workouts. Covering bare skin minimizes contact and reduces your risk.
5. Wash your bedding every couple of days at home.
6. Wash your kneepads, shoes, and headgear regularly.
7. Utilize a protective skin shield before each workout. We provide *KenShield* brand skin protection. *KenShield* is a foam that you rub on your skin before a practice or competition that will form a barrier. It is not a magic cure all. It is just another layer in the defense system. It is also pretty useless if you don't shower in a timely manner.

## Preventative protection during competitions:

Competitions are the most likely place to pick up a skin infection. The mats will never be as clean as they are at our home practice facility with so many people walking all over the mats all day. It is also a time when you will be contacting more people that may or may not be clean while wearing only your singlet as protection.

1. Wear your *KenShield*.
2. Use antiseptic body wipes after each match. We provide these for you.
3. Do not sit around in sweaty clothes. Use you clean change of clothes for traveling home.
4. Shower as soon as you return to Seven Lakes. If you signed out with your parents, you must shower as soon as you get home. You can always bring your shower equipment and find a working locker room at the competition venue if time permits.

## Dealing with possible infections:

Almost every infection starts off as something small and is sometimes mistaken for a non-contagious mark (like a pimple or spider bite). Treat every new mark on your body as a possible skin infection to make sure it does not become an issue that is spread around the room as well as to minimize recovery time if it already is a skin infection.

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1. Do daily skin checks on yourself. Look all over while in the shower; use a mirror to check out what you can't see normally.
2. Red marks, and raised bumps need to be checked out. Even if you think it is an ingrown hair, a blemish, a pimple, a bug bite, or don't know what it is; treat it like a possible infection.
  - Scrub questionable marks with soap and water.
  - Put antibiotic ointment on the mark and keep it covered. If it grows in the next day or two, you have an infection and you need to see a doctor.
3. You will get cuts, scratches, and skin abrasions during regular practice and competition. Those are not skin infections, but they could become one if not treated properly as healthy skin is the body's defense against infection. Where the skin is damaged is a place where infections can often occur.
  - Scrub the area daily with soap and water.
  - Apply antibiotic ointment.
  - Keep it covered when you can.

## Dealing with an actual infection:

When you have an actual infection, you need to be under a doctor's care. You will have to sit out of practice and competition until your infection has cleared up. It would be better if you maintained your vigilance in prevention and not gotten an infection, but if you have one, deal with it properly.

1. Get to the doctor as soon as you can. Our team doctor, Dr. DiSemone will take care of you immediately. He is great!
2. Follow the treatment plan of your doctor.
3. During the UIL competition season, you must obtain a UIL Skin Lesion Form in order to compete again. No other form will do. The form is on our website. No exceptions. This is not a team rule. This is mandated by the UIL.
4. Be aware that after you have been cleared of your infection, you may be at an even greater risk for a new infection than you normally would be. Be extra vigilant in your hygiene and preventions.

## Toughness

Wrestling is an extremely tough sport that is not for the faint of heart. The training that we do as well as our competitions will require toughness to get through. You will be sore. You will be hurt. The old joke with wrestlers is that

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there is always one day a year where you feel great, and nothing hurts – it is called the first day of practice. If you want to be successful in wrestling, you need to develop toughness. Learn how to train with pain and soreness. Jammed fingers and bruises are no reason for you to miss practice or sit out. If you are injured and require medical attention, we need to get you to the trainers and/or under a doctor's care immediately, but if it just hurts a bit, wrestle through it. There is a difference between hurt and injured. Hurt is an everyday part of a tough sport that you will have to work through. Injured requires the attention of a medical professional resulting in you missing several practices and competitions. The trainers are here to help and protect you. If you visit them, they assume that you are there because you are injured, and they will and should hold you out of practices and subsequent competitions. Are you hurt or are you injured?

## Dealing with Injuries

Injuries are a very real possibility when competing in any sport. Through quality teaching of proper technique, stretching, strength training, and good common sense injury prevention procedures, we hope to minimize injuries in our training and competitions. Even under the best training and competition situations, injuries still happen. How you handle your injuries can make the difference between a season or career ending injury and a minor setback. Here is a simple list of things a wrestler can do to minimize their injury risk:

1. Pay attention to the teaching from your coaches. Everything being taught to you is about injury prevention.
2. Follow through EVERY TIME with injury prevention procedures (stretching, strength training, running moves, etc.)
3. Get your proper rest after workouts. Ice what is sore. Talk to your parents about taking an anti-inflammatory to manage soreness.
4. Soreness the next day is part of athletic training, but something that hurts beyond simple muscle soreness needs to be addressed.

Here is another simple list of things a wrestler can do to get back to practice and competition as quickly and as safely as possible:

1. **An emergency is an emergency, and we will get you the appropriate medical attention as quickly as we can without any steps to follow first. We will use**

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**common sense and our appropriate training to take care of your safety. For everything else, follow the procedures listed below.**

2. As soon as you feel you have an injury, communicate with Coach Demarchi. Coach Demarchi manages ALL injuries for ALL wrestlers on ALL levels. You obviously need to speak to one of the assistants when Coach Demarchi is not available, but you will need to communicate with Coach Demarchi as soon as you are next able to. This is your responsibility, not the assistant coaches. Not properly communicating your injuries with Coach Demarchi proves that you are not mature enough or trustworthy enough to compete for this team.
3. Always speak to Coach Demarchi when you return from a visit to the trainer – EVERYTIME!
4. Any injury that needs treatment needs to go through our athletic training staff here on campus. If you feel you have an emergency, then you obviously need emergency medical attention, but otherwise, you need to see our trainers here. We are not trying to replace a medical doctor here in any way. We want our trainers to evaluate the injury and help facilitate the best course of action for safe return to play. Please do not visit the school nurse for anything other than emergencies and illness. Please do not go directly to your family doctor without consulting our athletic training staff first. This will only prolong the amount of time you are out. Our athletic training staff can fast track you (working with your family insurance) to the best doctor for your specific injury.
5. Even when doing rehabilitation, you must speak to Coach Demarchi before you go to the trainer (except for emergencies) AND speak to Coach Demarchi again after your visit to the trainer.
6. Follow the trainer's advice.
7. If you need a treatment, see the trainer in the morning or after school before practice. We do not allow wrestlers to miss the athletic period or after school practice to see the trainer.
8. All doctor's orders are law and must be followed. If a doctor says you can have no athletic activity for two weeks that means two weeks. Follow the doctor's orders. They are non-negotiable. This is why it is best to see the SLHS athletic trainers first so they can get you to an appropriate bone and joint or sports specialist doctor. If you visit your family doctor with pain or an injury, their default reaction is to pull you from activities for several weeks to

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rest and see how the injury has progressed. This means you are out and will not be able to compete even if you feel better.

9. Attend all meetings, athletic periods, practices, and competitions.
10. Dress out for the athletic period and practices and do what you are physically allowed to do by doctor's orders. If you are not allowed to do anything, then stay with your group, take notes, help in any way that you can in order to contribute to the team. Do not sit out on the side. You are basically removing yourself from the team. It emotionally feels like quitting. It is not fun. Stay involved to the level that you can.

Injuries just plain suck. We hate to see you injured. I am sure you don't want to be injured. Beyond the physical pain and recovery, injuries can damage your heart and mind as well. Being injured will make you feel like you are not a part of the team. You must stay strong in your heart and in your mind. Don't let an injury hold you out of team activities. Do what you can and be as involved as you can be. Keep up with your treatments and get back as soon as you safely can.

## Spring Wrestling

Most Seven Lakes Wrestlers that take their training and goals seriously practice and compete in Freestyle and Greco wrestling during the spring months. Freestyle and Greco are Olympic styles of wrestling where points are not scored by controlling your opponent as much as they are by exposing your opponent's back. The only difference between Freestyle and Greco is that you cannot touch your opponent's legs in Greco. For the remainder of this handbook, we will refer to Freestyle and Greco as FS/GR.

### Why train and compete in FS/GR?

1. FS/GR wrestling allows you to get another season of competition in during the year and usually means you level jump over those wrestlers not competing in the spring (and the summer if you qualify for and compete with Team Texas).
2. The rules and scoring in FS/GR wrestling forces you to focus on basic skills of wrestling; stance, motion, level change, penetration, lifting, back step, and back arch. Wrestlers that only compete in folkstyle or collegiate style wrestling often get hung up on a specific move or two instead of learning skills that will open the door to thousands and thousands of different moves. FS/GR wrestling forces you to work within these skills. Plain and simple, it is the best

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training for learning how to maintain the most effective offensive and defensive wrestling stance throughout an entire match in all positions.

3. To wrestle in FS/GR, you need to join a USA Wrestling club. Those clubs usually contain different coaches and athletes for you to interact with. That means more coaches daily that have different ways of explaining the skills. It also means you get to drill and spar with different partners than you normally get in your room.
4. Wrestling in FS/GR provides you with an opportunity to qualify for, train with, and compete on Team Texas' national teams. Being a part of Team Texas gives you an opportunity to train with the best in the state. It gives you a chance to train with different coaches dedicated to making Team Texas all it can be. Team Texas allows you to compete nationally and be seen by college coaches.
5. Putting in all that extra training and competition lets you know how elite you really are. Once you believe in yourself, there is no limit to what you can accomplish.
6. Wrestling is fun. Why would you pass up on a chance to do it more?

## What does it take to wrestle FS/GR in the spring?

You need to know that FS/GR wrestling is not governed by the UIL like our regular season is. In order to train and compete in FS/GR you need to remove yourself from the UIL and Katy ISD, therefore wrestlers need to join an independent USA Wrestling club to support them. You cannot utilize Katy ISD during the FS/GR season. You will need to take care of the following items on your own. Your coaches can help you with organization and questions, but we can't provide anything for you without putting your amateur status at risk. In order to compete in FS/GR wrestling, you will need the following:

1. Membership in a USA Wrestling sanctioned club with a current USA Wrestling card renewed each year.
2. All your own training equipment including headgear if you desire it. Headgear is not mandatory in FS/GR. If you want to wear one in practice or competition, you need to get your own because you can't use your SLHS issued headgear.
3. A red and a blue singlet (or a single blue and red reversible one).
4. You must enter yourself into FS/GR competitions and pay your own entry fees (registration is almost always online).

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5. You must provide your own transportation, rooming, and food.

## Wrestling Camps and Clinics

Wrestling camps are **essential** to the development of a wrestler! I cannot stress this enough. You are competing during a great time to be wrestler in Texas. Back in 1998 when the UIL first sanctioned wrestling in Texas, the closest place to train with world class wrestlers was at the University of Oklahoma in Norman, OK (an 8 hour bus ride away for us in Houston). Now, there are camps right here in the Houston area nearly every single week of the summer that get you access to world class clinicians. Take advantage of these opportunities. Rarely do you need to pay for any significant travel or room and board. You can spend your money on the clinicians and do multiple camps for the cost of one trip to a university camp. On the other hand, if you can afford it, Go To A University Camp. Staying in the dorms, being on a college campus, working with an entire college staff is not easily reproduced in a high school room with one or two clinicians and a handful of kids. Which camp do you go to?

If you are willing to spend the time and money, (this commitment goes a long way toward your attitude in competition the following season) we recommend that you get yourself to a camp at a successful NCAA D1 university. The SLHS coaching staff would be happy to help you find and choose a good camp to go to. The camp will cost more than a local camp because of room and board costs and then you will have to deal with cross country travel. I highly recommend it if you really want to win. If you can't afford to travel to a camp, there are several other camp/clinic opportunities here in town.

### Intensive Camp

This is only for the truly dedicated. Intensive camps are the longest, the most expensive, and the most demanding. Intensive camps are longer than regular camps. The cost is obviously going to be higher because of the longer amount of time that a wrestler is fed, housed, and coached. Intensive camps will have three wrestling sessions throughout the day like most other overnight/university camps, but a wrestler's free time has been replaced with extra workouts. They will run, lift weights, swim, drill, teach more, look at film, etc. A wrestler who completes an intensive camp will find out what his/her real limits are and then surpass them. I



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highly recommend an intensive camp at least once in a wrestler's career if you can afford the time and money.

## Money

Sadly, the world runs on money. In order to go to camp, it requires time and money. If money is not an issue for you and your family, spend it on camp. Adolescent athletes that just plain get what they want from their parents make spoiled athletes. An athlete should help to foot the bill in money and chores around the house. If finding money for camp is a problem, plan ahead. If you really want it, ask for it a birthday/holiday gift from your family in lieu of a regular present. Work and save for camp.

## Training Outside of Seven Lakes

With camp, clubs, FS/GR, strength coaches, and private wrestling coaches, there are many opportunities to train away from the Seven Lakes HS Wrestling facility and away from the SLHS wrestling coaches. Please use your head when making choices of who to train with, when to train, and where to train.

1. Make sure you are getting what you want for how much you want to spend. Sadly, there are a great deal of private coaches interested in little more than stroking their inflated egos. Be wary of crazy claims and guarantees.
2. Keep in mind that you are a Seven Lakes Wrestler while you are here. You do not compete for a private coach. We would prefer that you steer clear of private sessions during the UIL competition season. Too many ideas from too many voices at once just becomes noise. *"Too many cooks in the kitchen can spoil the broth."*
3. We know most of these club coaches, so talk to the SLHS coaching staff and we can help guide you to the right people. Knowing about wrestling or having been a successful wrestler does not necessarily make a good coach.
4. More training does not always make you better. We maintain a rigorous training cycle during the competition season. We plan for a fair amount of rest during this training cycle. If you take that rest time and fill it with more training, you can wear out physically or emotionally.
5. Only SLHS Wrestling Coaches will coach you in UIL competition. If your club coach is intrusive and interrupts our coaching from the stands, it is a major distraction. Tell your personal coach to deal with you after competition. It

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would be best if they stayed away from UIL competitions all together and looked at film in your private session later. If you and your club coach do not trust us enough to coach you during the UIL competition season, then it just will not work. A non-school coach (not certified by the UIL to work with those specific student-athletes) acting as a school coach is a UIL violation and will not be tolerated on this team in any fashion. You will be removed from the team if it becomes too much of a distraction and your private coach will be turned in to the UIL and Katy ISD if they are not following UIL/Katy ISD rules.

6. Club and private coaches can be a great resource, but they can also spoil a really great thing if not used properly.

## **Nutrition**

I need to make a quick disclaimer here. None of the SLHS wrestling coaches have any degrees or accreditations in nutrition education. We are also not tailoring nutrition plans to each of you. We can point you in the right direction and make suggestions. In this section, we are only sharing general nutrition information for wrestlers. You should not consider any radical or trendy diets. You need to include your parents and your family doctor when creating a healthy nutrition plan. I want to share with you several different areas when it comes to nutrition. There are tons of trustworthy websites and smart phone apps that can provide specific meal plans. Check your health care benefits to see if visiting a nutritionist is covered on your plan. Before we go through the list of areas we will cover, keep in mind that almost all diets that are sold as quick or easy weight loss are designed for sedentary people and not athletes. Nothing worth having comes easy.

### **Hydration**

Very few athletes stay hydrated enough before, during, or after workouts. The same could be said for competition. Hydration means water. You should drink water all day long, but especially right before, during and after any physical work you do. Staying hydrated will benefit you by: aiding in proper digestion, maintaining kidney health, helping with overall cooling of all body systems, reducing injury, and making all body systems work more efficiently.

You can substitute a sports drink or juice now and again, but don't forget that those items contain lots of sugar and salt. You are working out hard enough to

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handle sugar and salt in moderation, but 5 Gatorades a day will add up and have very negative effects on your training.

## Vitamins

With proper nutrition, you should get most of the vitamins you need to stay healthy, but you could miss a few. A one-a-day vitamin is an excellent and relatively inexpensive way to stay healthy and ward off disease. Liquid vitamins are digested more easily than the solid pills. Often times, the solid is passed through the system nearly whole and is mostly wasted. There are also vitamin gummies on the market.

Most of you do not need any specific types of vitamins beyond the one-a-day, but there are a few that are sport specific. Glucosamine is a good supplement to help repair and prevent injury to joints. Vitamin E repairs muscle and flesh wounds.

## Regular Eating

Wrestlers are notoriously horrible about not eating. Back in the old days, I was encouraged not to eat in order to drop weight. That was miserable, unhealthy, made me prone to disease and infection, and even affected my stamina and wrestling as a whole. Refer back to the section on weight management earlier in this handbook to get my views on cutting weight. In a perfect world, an athlete would eat a small nutritious meal every three to four hours. That works out to 5-6 meals a day. More small meals/snacks during the course of day is better than 2-3 large meals.

**A good plan would be** (*Do not eat in class unless you have permission from your teacher and it is not distracting you from your classwork*):

- A sensible breakfast before school.
- A mid-morning snack somewhere around 3<sup>rd</sup> period.
- A healthy lunch
- A good protein & carbohydrate snack before any after school workouts.
- A sensible dinner.
- And finally an evening snack sometime after dinner and before heading to bed.

That comes out to three good meals and three snacks per day. If you are cutting weight during the season, you would be better off to up your caloric burn (workout harder and more often) instead of cutting back on food. Food is the fuel that runs, cools, and lubricates the engine that is your body. Think of not eating like trying to run a car's engine without oil, gas, or coolant.

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## Supplements

You need to be very careful when it comes to supplements. Many products that are sold as *All Natural* or *Herbal* are not tested or monitored by the US Food and Drug Administration and are therefore suspicious. On a far too regular basis, a substance/supplement is found to be dangerous and is removed from stores, but then the company simply rebrands that same product and puts it back out on the market until the FDA catches up with the issue. When it comes to your health and well-being, why gamble? Proper year-round nutrition will give you all you need. Fat burners just don't work and are dangerous. Creatine is extremely unsafe. In the history of collegiate and high school wrestling, only three wrestlers have ever died trying to make weight. They all died in 1998 and they were all on Creatine trying to cut weight. This substance should be considered untouchable just like steroids. Super-hyper protein mixes are usually indigestible and should also be left alone.

## Food

What food should you eat and avoid? There is no way that I can list all the foods you should eat or avoid. Get in the habit of reading labels and using common sense. Don't forget that everything is best in moderation and in balance. If you are seriously interested in nutrition, I have videos and books for you to borrow.

**Foods to avoid:** anything battered and/or deep fried, saturated fats, sugar and sweets, fast food, pizza, overly processed food, highly refined carbohydrates, and soda. You really should always avoid these types of foods.

**Foods to eat:** fresh fruit, fresh vegetables, lean grilled chicken, lean grilled pork, lean red meat, fish, egg whites, and 1% skim milk. There is a list of many more food examples posted in our locker rooms as well as on a multitude of reputable websites out there.

We have some sample meal plans listed in the handout section of our website. Be sensible when it comes to your diet. You don't have to have a special diet that is going to stress your parents out. Just make intelligent choices. Planning ahead and being vigilant is the best course of action. Shop for food two to three days at a time so food stays fresh and actually gets used. It is also nice to have everything on hand at home for the days that you are extremely tired and/or out of time. Most diet slips happen when you are unprepared and under the gun. You make bad choices and justify it as the best you could do under the circumstances. This is a great place for supportive parents to really play a huge role in your success. This section was short and incomplete; we can guide you more if you are interested.

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## **Drugs, Alcohol, Tobacco, & Vaping**

Steer clear of drugs, alcohol, tobacco, and vaping as well as people that use them illicitly. This is not a moral judgment of people who use or abuse substances as addiction is a terrible disease. Just know that you are a young person that is probably not ready for or mature enough for these types of situations. But, more importantly, you are a Seven Lakes Wrestler and held to a higher standard when it comes to these issues. If you are hanging out with people who use these substances, you are much more likely to try and/or use said substances. Drugs, alcohol, tobacco, and vaping have no place in any athlete's training plans. Stay away. Vaping is not safe nor is it a safer alternative to smoking, drinking, or using drugs. That industry is almost completely unregulated and just plain terrible. Please steer clear! If you have a problem with drugs, alcohol, tobacco, and/or vaping or need to talk about this in any way, come see us so we can get you to the properly trained people that can help you.

## **Steroids and Performance Enhancing Drugs**

No! Steroids and Performance Enhancing Drugs are illegal and dangerous. Even if you could get away with using these illegal substances and did no harm to yourself, you would be a cheater and you would know it. That goes against everything wrestling is all about. The health risks are way too high for the possible small rewards you could get out of the use of PED's. You are better than that.

## **Staying Clear of Dangerous Activities**

Going to a trampoline park the last Saturday before the season begins or fulfilling your lifelong dream of skydiving the week before districts is an unwise and unnecessary risk at just about the worst possible time. You are an athlete, and you need to take care of yourself and be safe. Basketball, off road biking, trampolines, skateboarding, skydiving, street fighting, water or snow skiing, and the like are dangerous activities that need to be curtailed or eliminated (especially during the season) if you are serious about being a champion wrestler.

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## **Proper Rest**

The training we do is extensive and intense. Your body needs rest and good sleep on a regular cycle in order to rebuild stronger and to operate properly. Put yourself on a schedule and stick with it. Sleeping on a bus or in the stands between matches will be helpful, but you need regular sleep in a bed. We understand that it is very difficult as a teenager to get your mind quieted and into bed every night at 8:00pm. But, get in the habit of getting into bed earlier and resting. Extra rest before a competition is essential.

## **Yearly Training Cycles**

Wrestling training and competition is nearly year-round, but we train in cycles set to help you attain your goals. Here is what the cycles look like.

### **Mid-August thru Mid-November – Preseason Training Cycle**

Beginning with the second day of school, we begin training for the upcoming UIL competition season. Returning wrestlers in 5<sup>th</sup> period athletics begin reviewing skills, lifting weights, and building their cardiovascular fitness. There are usually many open mat training opportunities after school. New wrestlers in 7<sup>th</sup> period athletics will begin working on attaining wrestling skills from our syllabus during the athletic period. New wrestlers will not be required to attend after school practice until right before the competition season, but they can come to any practice as soon as they are ready. The focus during this training cycle is to build strength, get into wrestling competition shape, get down to properly managed competition weight, hone wrestling skills, and get ready to compete.

### **Mid-November thru February – UIL Competition Training Cycle**

This is the most important training cycle of the year and the most intense. We will be practicing or competing 6 days a week through most of this training cycle. Lifting will be limited due to reduced recovery time allowed with so many competitions, but we will still lift twice a week. We will be looking to peak our performances in February for the Championship Tournaments.

### **Late February thru Spring Break – Post Season Break**

After the UIL State Championships we will take a full week break from athletic period and after school workouts. We will begin lifting weights after that, but will not practice or train after school until after spring break.

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## **March thru May – Freestyle and Greco Spring Wrestling Training Cycle**

During this training cycle, we will be training and competing in Folkstyle, Freestyle, and Greco Roman wrestling. In the athletic periods, we work on honing basic and advanced wrestling skills as well as build up cardiovascular stamina, flexibility, and strength training working toward individual goals on the spring fitness tests (in late May).

## **June thru Late July – Summer Training Cycle**

In the summer training cycle, we want everyone to strength train and attend camps. We want everyone to spend time with their families (including the coaches). We set up many training opportunities, but we don't expect all wrestlers to attend everything. We set up many opportunities so that wrestlers have options. We expect the best of the team to attend camps at highly successful NCAA Division I college programs. We also offer highly organized open training sessions several times a week.

## **Early August – Break**

Before school starts back-up and the Preseason Training Cycle begins, we like to give everyone a wrestling break.

## **Time Management**

Wrestling competitions and wrestling practice are extremely demanding. It takes a very mature attitude and a great deal of sacrifice to be a good student and a successful wrestler while also balancing your family and social life. This is an extremely valuable skill for life and worthy of your time and effort. Kids that find it difficult to manage school, family, and wrestling usually are not prepared to give up their free time. This is the challenge. Learn to give up your free time first and give your very best to the important tasks. Those student-athletes that find their grades slipping often try to blame their poor grades on wrestling training. Wrestling training is not causing your grades to slip. Not dedicating time to complete your homework instead of wasting your time frivolously has caused your grades to slip. We are aware that what we are asking is difficult. That is what makes it worthwhile.

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## **Being a Good Student-Athlete Here at Seven Lakes**

You are held to a higher standard as a student-athlete in the classroom here at Seven Lakes and an even higher standard as a wrestler. Teachers know who you are. They make contact with us as coaches when you aren't at your very best in class and with your studies. We act upon those contacts and will not tolerate poor classroom behavior. You should want to be good student-athlete instead of just avoiding getting into trouble with the coaching staff.

1. Be on time to class every single day. No matter what your teachers say or even if they don't mark you tardy, being tardy is extremely disrespectful to your teacher, extremely disrespectful to the class as a whole, and does not set you up for success.
2. Be respectful. Use your polite words.
  - a. Refer to your teachers as "Sir, Ma'am, Mr., Mrs.," or "Coach" unless they ask you to refer to them as something different.
  - b. Use "Please," and "Thank you."
  - c. Say "Yes" instead of "Yeah," "No" instead of "Na."
  - d. Start class with a greeting like "Good morning." or "How are you today?"
  - e. End class with a polite goodbye on your way out, like "Thanks Mrs. Smith. See you tomorrow."
3. Sit up front if you are allowed to choose your own seat. If not up front, make sure you sit where you can do your best. Don't sit by your friends if you can't control yourself or especially if your friends are poor students or disrespectful. Better yet, sit by the smart and ambitious kids. If the teacher picks your seats, you should ask for a good one that will help you be successful.
4. Turn your cell phone off. Don't put it on vibrate or silent. Turn it off and put it away safe in your backpack until class is completely over. Then you can check your personal texts and social media on the way to the next class.
5. Pay attention in class. Make eye contact with your teacher and show that you are actively listening by nodding your head and interacting with them. You may be able to listen with your head down or working on something else, but it is distracting and disrespectful to your teacher.
6. Do your homework, study for tests and quizzes, and participate in class.



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7. Retest when you fail a test even if it won't make much difference in your grade. Retesting shows that you care about your grade and it demonstrates respect for your course and your teacher.
8. If you have an issue with a grade or a classroom situation, make sure to be respectful when you address it. They are still the teacher and you are the students no matter how wrong they may be.
9. Do NOT sleep in class. That is very disrespectful.
10. Do NOT cheat on tests, quizzes, or class assignments. Spartan athletes do not cheat. I don't care if "*everyone else*" is doing it. You will not if you wish to remain a member of this team.
11. If you make a mistake in class or with a school official, own up to it. Take your punishment (expect another punishment with us as well) and begin to rebuild the relationship you damaged with that respected educator.
12. Do not abuse any trust you may have earned. Trust takes a long time to earn and is very easy to break in the blink of an eye. If you ask to go to the restroom, go to the restroom and come back. Don't head off to the counselor, your locker, or to visit people at lunch. Be honest.

## Academic Eligibility

Our primary goal here at Seven Lakes Wrestling is to build good student-athletes. Taking care of your grades and just passing is not our goal; passing is the expectation. We are always pushing for A's and B's, but we need to discuss the UIL Academic Eligibility rules for those student-athletes that stumble.

1. In order to compete in or work during a UIL sponsored event (this includes riding the bus to and from an event, taking score, running a camera, or working a table), you must be passing all of your classes (70% or higher).
2. There is a list of advanced classes that do not count against academic eligibility (The UIL does not want to punish kids for attempting a difficult course), so see the list of approved courses, it is on the Katy ISD website or you can speak to a coach to see if your class counts.
3. A blank grade or an incomplete (I) counts the same as a 0% for a grade.
4. If a student has an incomplete grade because of **a possible retest or missing work due to absences only**, that incomplete can be made up within a one week grace period from the end of the grading period. If the grade is not

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officially recorded by the teacher in the registrar's office before the end of the school day on the last day of the grace period, then even if the grade is changed to passing, it will count as a failing grade for academic eligibility. The week grace period may not always be a week. You need to see the official dates set by Katy ISD and TEA on the KISD Athletic webpage or speak to your coach. These dates are mandated and not just picked by your coaches.

5. **Semester exams and semester averages do not factor into academic eligibility** in any way. They do not count.
6. All six weeks averages count and determine academic eligibility. **Three weeks progress reports CANNOT remove academic eligibility.** Progress reports can only allow a student-athlete to **regain** their eligibility.
7. If a student athlete is attempting to regain eligibility at a three weeks progress report, that student-athlete **must be passing all courses** Just passing the one you failed earlier will not be sufficient.
8. Passing or failing at a grade check does not go into effect until typically one week after the grading period ends. Usually, this grace period runs from Friday to Friday, but sometimes there are odd dates. The grace period dates are predetermined for each school district by the TEA and UIL on an eligibility calendar. Katy ISD's is located on their webpage and in the handout section of our team webpage. These are not the dates of the coaches.
9. **Any holiday that spans a full week of school will not count in the eligibility calendar.** Everyone becomes eligible no matter what their grades may be during that holiday. The idea here is that the UIL does not want a student-athlete to be punished for four weeks of ineligibility because they do not have class for a week of break where they could have a chance to pass.
10. Current class grades or what your teacher says you may or may not have right now do not matter. The grade you can see in the online grade book does not count. **Only official six weeks and three weeks averages that have been submitted by the teacher count when it comes to determining eligibility.**

## Getting the Support of Your Family

It is extremely difficult if not impossible to be successful as a wrestler without the support of your family. The same goes for the coaching staff. We rely very heavily on our families for support during the season. Without that support, we

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probably would not be able to coach here. Family support is essential. You are going to need rides to practices and competitions. You will need visits to the doctor. You will need money for gear, Freestyle and Greco training, camps, etc. You are going to ask for a special diet. Your parents are going to have to plan family trips and vacations around your training and competitions. You are going to want your family in the stands when you are competing. You want and need your family on your side. Here are some basic ways to EARN the support of your family:

## Respect your parents.

We are not only talking about merely using polite words here. We are talking about being thankful for all that your parents have done for you and letting them know you appreciate everything. They are your parents. They deserve your respect. Give it to them. Keep in mind that you are a teenager and have limited life experience. You do not understand all of what your parents have sacrificed for you and your family.

## Contribute to your family.

Every family has responsibilities and chores. Contribute and take care of your chores. Better yet, step up and take care of some things that you weren't asked to do. Unload the dishwasher, vacuum the steps, take out the trash, or weed the front flower beds. Do extra for the family in the off season. You will be very busy and tired during the regular season.

## Be a good student.

This is spelled out in another part of the handbook in detail. When you are a good student, your parents are much more willing to support you when you want/need things.

## Support the things that are important to the rest of your family.

If you support your family and what is important to them, then they will be supportive of you. If your sister has a dance recital, don't just go and cheer for her; help her rehearse. Maybe you can do some chores for her so she can focus on her dancing. Be a supportive and contributing member of the family.

## Booster Club

Our Athletic Booster Club is very good to wrestling specifically and to all Spartan teams. We need to have their support in order to run the size of team that we have and at the level of success we have had. In order to have the support of the

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booster club, we must have wrestling family members join the booster club at the highest levels they can afford. The booster club here maintains a bank account for wrestling. Every single dollar that we raise and put into that account is earmarked for our use alone. The head coach has 100% discretion about the use of those funds. This allows me to get what we need when we need it. We also get extra money from the booster club based upon how much money we have put into the main booster club account through our membership. Lastly, it is our responsibility as good stewards of Spartan Athletics to support all Spartan sports. The booster club supports all sports no matter how large or small.

## How do we get money for the program through the booster club?

1. We get funds in the spring based upon how much we have raised for the whole club from our membership fees. This means that we need to have as many families as possible join at the highest level possible. The higher level you join at, the more good things you get. Shirts and blankets and such are nice, but season passes are huge for you even if you only go to wrestling meets.
2. We get every single dollar we raise in fundraisers. The way I have organized our fundraiser is that all that money goes directly back to you and your kids in removing fees you would have had to pay (Dallas travel and banquet).
3. Scholarships – seniors that were members of the booster club have access to several \$1000 scholarships.
4. Special projects – as a head coach, I can request special project funds. I have had the booster club buy us singlets, food, entry fees, weight equipment, and gym chairs.
5. The booster club also buys and maintains things that all sports get to use and enjoy like that awesome field turf out by the weight room.

## Where does booster club money go?

Katy ISD funds our program very well, but there are a few things we don't get from them and have to pay for through our booster club. We also usually maintain a team larger than what KISD plans for most team. That means we have to pay extra for uniforms, travel, and entry fees. Providing coaching clothes for my staff and small hospitality events also comes from the booster club. Posting pictures and names on the walls when we win is a yearly expense that I do not have enough general supply budget from KISD to cover. There are a ton of other little things as

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well as some large items that every once in a while crop up that we rely on booster club funds for.

## How to Deal with Conflict

Any organization that has people in it will have conflict. This is a great program with great people, but it is still an organization made up of people. People are imperfect. You will likely wind up having to deal with at least a small conflict in your career here with Seven Lakes Wrestling.

### Dealing with hazing

Hazing is absolutely and completely forbidden and must be reported to a coach immediately. Hazing involves exclusion from activities, verbal threats, written threats, electronic threats, bullying, cyber bullying, or initiation activities. **We do NOT do that here at Seven Lakes Wrestling.** Those activities are not condoned by the wrestling staff or Katy ISD. Whoever is engaging in those activities is wrong and needs to be stopped. If you see something, say something to a coach immediately.

### Dealing with conflict with a wrestler

Simply use common sense and talk to that wrestler and find a sensible solution. If you need help, your captains and coaches can facilitate the conversation for you. Do not let the situation fester and build up. Talk it out.

### Dealing with conflict with a Team Leader

Again, speak to the person you have a conflict with. If you can't come to a solution, bring the situation to a coach. We are here to help.

### Dealing with a conflict with a Coach

Talk to the coach you have an issue with respectfully. Calling out a coach with disrespect in public will create a whole new problem for you as well as exacerbate the original one. Ask for a conference in private. If that does not work, speak to another coach. We have three coaches here that love and respect you and want you to be happy. Do not assume that your complaints will be held against you and you will not be given a fair shake here at Seven Lakes Wrestling. That is not what we do here. We make mistakes and would never punish a student-athlete for sticking up for themselves. It is almost always better handled with a coach and athlete conference. When it is allowed to build to a level that involves people outside of the team, it becomes much more complicated.

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## **Online and Social Media Behavior**

Remember that everything you do online becomes public record and is accessible to anyone that wants to look. Anything negative you do, write, or post can and will be found and can wind up costing you opportunities or result in your removal from this team. Every college coach I know goes to a potential recruit's social media presence to look at what that recruit is all about. The same goes for college entrance officials and potential employers. Everything you think is "safe" or "private" is not. Be aware that in many instances, your social media behavior can be considered a part of your school discipline which can lead to school disciplinary actions like suspensions and detentions. Be good online and be sure to remove anything inappropriate that others may have posted on your social media. Distance yourself from those inappropriate people that may bring you down. You are who you hang out with, even online.

## **Intra-Team Dating**

Dating or starting a romantic relationship with another wrestler or manager on your team can become very complicated for you and the whole team. At this state in your life, the odds of your romantic relationships ending in a matter of weeks or a few months is pretty high. What happens then? You have created an awkward social distraction from our normal pursuit of excellence on and off the mat. Male and female wrestlers are allowed to train, lift, and wrestle together in this program, but not if you are dating. Now you have created a situation where the coaches must pay special attention to who is working out with who based upon teenage dating patterns instead of which partner groups will help our wrestlers succeed. During a travel trip that involves a hotel, it is never acceptable to be in a mixed room without a coach present. At any wrestling event, it is not appropriate to be involved in any displays of affection. Hugging a teammate after a big win is not an issue but laying all over each other in the stands is a problem. Please refrain. The coaching staff is well aware of and sensitive to the fact that you are teenagers that are interested in other teenagers. We are also aware that you spend an inordinate amount of time with your teammates which could make it difficult to date outside of your team. If you find yourself starting a relationship with someone on this team, follow the separation rules and do not create a situation where your coaches must intervene.

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That is extremely distracting to the whole team. Please do not allow your break ups to become a division in the locker rooms or wrestling room. We really don't need wrestlers taking sides and starting drama. Ask yourself if you are putting your needs and desires above the team's needs. Dating a team member is not an issue. How you act while dating that teammate and how you both handle the breakup is the possible issue. Be careful and respectful.

## Post High School Wrestling Involvement

One of our four program objective here at Seven Lakes Wrestling is to encourage and facilitate post high school wrestling involvement. We want to help you find an appropriate wrestling program for you to be a part of. There is more and more recruiting going on in Texas and there are more opportunities for Texas wrestlers. Let us help you get involved. If you are planning on attending a state school that does not support wrestling, let us help you start a club there. If you are done with your competition career, let us help you get involved in club coaching or officiating. We need so many more wrestling officials, especially good ones.

Competing in wrestling should have been a life changing event for you. How are you going to give back to the sport that gave you so much? Get involved. Step out of your comfort zone just like you did to start wrestling.

## Review

- Welcome to Seven Lakes Wrestling (page 2)
  - So glad you are here in this great place.
- The Purpose of Athletic Training (page 3)
  - We train in wrestling and seek success to train to be a winner in life.
- The SLHS Wrestling Definition of Success (page 3)
  - *"A piece of mind attained through self-satisfaction and knowing you made the effort to do the best you are capable."*
- The SLHS Wrestling Program Objectives (page 4)
  - Building good people and winning at wrestling.
- Building Champions Every Day (page 6)
  - Everything we do is part of a carefully planned system that rests on four main pillars: Excellence, Dedication, Respect, and Courage.

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- You and Your Place on The Team (page 7)
  - The needs of the Team will always outweigh the needs of the individual. You are a part of something bigger than yourself.
- Why Wait (page 7)
  - Step out of your comfort zone and start your training and chase high goals before you think you are ready. Most wrestlers start too late.
- Be Coachable (page 8)
  - Learn from your mistakes and don't take criticism personally.
- Listening to Coaching Advice (page 9)
  - The coaching staff is here to help you.
- Earn It (page 10)
  - Anything worth having comes from hard work.
- Coaching Decisions About Awards, Accolades, and Leadership Positions (page 10)
  - The Coaching Staff will not discuss the decision making process for subjective awards.
- Committing and Balancing Life Outside of Wrestling (page 10)
  - Learn how to balance your life through discipline. Do the difficult right over the easy wrong every time.
- Wrestling as an Academic Pursuit (page 12)
  - Treat wrestling like it is an academic course in order to be successful. Take good notes and utilize them to develop your training.
- Weight Management (page 13)
  - Maintain year-round fitness. Work hard and don't take shortcuts.
- Official Trackwrestling.com Weights (page 17)
  - There are rules that you must follow in order to be eligible for a weight class.
- Goal Setting (page 18)
  - Setting goals is essential in order to work backwards for your daily training. Spartan wrestlers all set one goal a year for their placement in the final tournament of the year. Milestones are smaller accomplishments to be celebrated during the year.
- Finding Success in the Athletic Period (page 20)
  - Work hard, show up on time, and prepare for the training ahead of time.
- Finding Success in Practice (page 22)



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- Work hard, show up on time, and prepare for the training ahead of time.
- Setting Yourself Up for Success in Competition (page 22)
  - Doing everything right all the time adds up and will help you win. Use your confidence found from your training and your equipment preparations to win at an even higher level.
- Wrestling Attitude in Competition (page 28)
  - *"Pin 'em in the 10 foot circle."* Always be aggressively trying to score points. Expect to win!
- Getting into the Line-up (page 31)
  - Get into the line-up as soon as you can. Don't wait. Move up a weight. Go down a weight. Ask.
- Setting the Starting Varsity Line-up (page 31)
  - The head coach decided the line-up. We play to win on varsity.
- Skin Infections (page 32)
  - Daily vigilance in proper hygiene minimizes your risk.
- Toughness (page 34)
  - Hurt is every day. Deal with it. Injured requires medical attention and will have you out of practice and competition for considerable time.
- Dealing with Injuries (page 35)
  - There is a procedure for dealing with injuries that involves Coach Demarchi and our training staff here on campus. Do not go out on your own except in cases of emergency.
- Spring Wrestling (page 37)
  - Wrestle in the spring.
- Wrestling Camps and Clinics (page 39)
  - Go to camps and clinics to get better.
- Training Outside of Seven Lakes (page 40)
  - Use your head if you are going to utilize a private coach and communicate with your SLHS coaching staff about your outside training.
- Nutrition (page 41)
  - Eat right all the time for better weight management, recovery, injury and illness prevention, and building strength.
- Drugs, Alcohol, Tobacco, & Vaping (page 44)
  - Stay away from drugs, alcohol, and tobacco.
- Steroids and Performance Enhancing Drugs (page 44)

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- Do Not use steroids or PEDs.
- Staying Clear of Dangerous Activities (page 44)
  - Don't do crazy activities that put you at unnecessary risk of injury.
- Proper Rest (page 45)
  - Get enough proper rest.
- Yearly Training Cycles (page 45)
  - Preseason, UIL Competition Season, Post Season Break, Spring FS/GR Wrestling, Summer Camps and Competition, Summer Break.
- Time Management (page 46)
  - Manage your time well and be prepared to give up your free time in order to be successful here at SLHS Wrestling.
- Being a Good Student-Athlete Here at Seven Lakes (page 47)
  - Show up to class on time, study, be respectful, and know that you are held to a higher standard as a Spartan Wrestler.
- Academic Eligibility (page 48)
  - There are clear and specific rules to academic eligibility that are governed by UIL and TEA. Get all A's and B's or be aware of the rules to minimize lost competition time.
- Getting the Support of Your Family (page 49)
  - Be respectful of everyone in your family and do your chores.
- Booster Club (page 50)
  - Join the booster club to support the wrestling team and all Spartan sports.
- How to Deal with Conflict (page 52)
  - Respectfully talk to whoever you have a conflict with. Involve a coach and/or a member of leadership if you need help.
- Online and Social Media Behavior (page 53)
  - Everything you do online will be out there forever. Be good.
- Intra-Team Dating (page 53)
  - Don't let your dating causes distractions.
- Post-High School Wrestling Involvement (page 54)
  - Work to compete in college wrestling, coach, or become an official after you leave SLHS Wrestling.