

# **Prior Lake Lakers Baseball Handbook**

## **2024-2025**

### **Coaches:**

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### **Prior Lake Baseball Mission Statement:**

Our mission is to provide an environment where our players thrive both in the classroom and on the baseball field. As a coaching staff, we will use the game of baseball to teach valuable life lessons as well as develop habits that will be conducive to success later in life. We will focus on the core values of character, discipline, accountability, communication, and leadership. We will continue to compete at the highest level exhibiting teamwork, discipline and respect every time we take the field.

Players of this program will be challenged both mentally and physically every day we are together. They will have a new found understanding of what it means to be successful both on and off the baseball field. We will work to create outstanding young men first, then focus on creating outstanding baseball players. We will strive for excellence in this program, winning with grace and losing with pride.

### **Philosophy:**

Our coaching staff at Prior Lake will work to teach the game of baseball as a whole. We will begin by being fundamentally sound in all aspects of the game and use our climate and culture to teach lessons that are bigger than baseball.

This program will execute the fundamentals of baseball at the highest level, understand and execute offensive and defensive strategies, understand the game of baseball, and be disciplined in our team's conduct on and off the field.

### **\*Student/Athlete Development –**

Student-Athletes will work along-side coaches to create an environment that will emphasize fun and family through the great game of baseball. Our staff will focus our coaching on helping these students learn strategies to handle adversity, success, sacrifice, and to work as an individual for a cause bigger than themselves. We will work on teaching the individual in order to strengthen the team.

### **\*Practice –**

The coaching staff will come every day with a detailed practice plan and goals that we hope to achieve that day. Players are expected to be ready to begin practice at the designated start time. That means if practice starts at 5, you are ready to go at 5 not showing up to the field at 5. Players are expected to give their full effort every day in practice. Every day we come to practice, our goal is to be better than the day before.

### **\*Playing Time –**

Playing time in this program will be earned. The playing time awarded to each player will be based on the following: their commitment to the team, skill level, work ethic, injuries, attitude, game situations, and off field conduct. Our staff will work to give every player their opportunity to help the team based on their strengths and the needs of our team.

### **\*Prior Lake Baseball –**

As a team we will respect the game of baseball. We will run on and off the field. We will greet players as they return to the dugout from scoring a run or coming in from playing defense. We will acknowledge teammates who make a sacrifice for the betterment of the team (bunting, hit and run, sac fly etc.) We will take an immense amount of pride in our uniforms, respect ourselves, the opponents, officials, and the game of baseball itself.

### **Lettering Policy:**

- Play in as many innings as there are non-scrimmage games played; i.e. if there are 20 games played, a player must play in 20 innings.
- Athletes have completed the entire season, turned in all equipment and attended all games/practices as required or communicated with the coaching staff.
- All players on a conference championship or section championship team will letter.
- The coaches reserve the right to award a letter to a player who promotes positive attitude, outstanding dedication to the team, and commitment to work ethic that makes the program better.
- Coaches have the right to waive such requirement when players are affected by injury or other circumstances that are beyond the control of the player.

### **\*Communication –**

Communication is key to success in more than just baseball and this program will operate no differently. With the amount of unknowns throughout the spring season in Minnesota, it is vital that there are means of communication through the coaching staff, players, and the parents.

### **\*Weekly Updates –**

I will try to send out a weekly update to all players and parents highlighting the week's events as well as any major changes that need to be brought to everyone's attention.

### **\*Rain Outs/Schedule Changes –**

With the weather in the Midwest, games can be changed at the drop of a hat. We strongly recommend that parents and players follow Prior Lake Baseball on all social media outlets (Twitter/Facebook/Game Changer). This is where the first reports will be shared due to my work schedule and then they will be shared via email when time permits. If there is a cancelled practice or game, we will do our best to make a decision by noon that day. The information will be shared on the message boards at school, and it will be the responsibility of not only the coaches, but the players to communicate any changes.

### **\*Conflict/Resolution:**

Due to the nature of high school athletics and working with young men, there are going to be times of conflicts (player/player, player/coach, parent/coach). We encourage an open line of communication between all parties involved with this program. In order to solve these conflicts quickly and establish a resolution, the following steps need to take place in order:

1. Player must schedule an informal meeting with the coaches involved with the conflict. If it is a player/coach conflict, I will not talk with parents until the player has addressed his concern with me/another coach. This must be a face to face meeting. If a resolution is not reached, the athlete will move to step 2.
2. Schedule a face-to-face meeting with the player, parent, and coach involved. If not resolution is reached, the involved parties will move to step 3.
3. Schedule a face-to-face meeting with the High School Athletics Director and all parties involved. If the issue is not resolved, the athlete will move to step 4.
4. Schedule a face-to-face meeting with the Principal of Prior Lake and all parties involved. If there is not a resolution reached, we will then move to step 5.
5. Schedule a face-to-face meeting with the Superintendent of ISD 199, the principal of Prior Lake High school, the Athletics Director and all parties involved. If no resolution is reached, we are in trouble.

### **Practice –**

It is vital that every player be at practice every day. To obtain the goals, set forward by the team, we must commit to doing the work necessary to reach those goals. We will practice every day after school on the days we do not play games. Those times are subject to change. The practices will be held in the gym or the field on the high school campus.

### **Player Code of Conduct –**

Players will be expected to conduct themselves that reflects positively on themselves, their families, and the program. This includes but is not limited to; actions on and off the field, social media, and actions in the classroom.

### **Eligibility –**

All athletes must have the following documents in the Activities Office before our first practice, March 14<sup>th</sup>. Failure to do so will result in the individual not being able to participate in practice or games until the matter has been resolved.

1. Current athletic physical
2. Complete health questionnaire
3. Signed MSHSL eligibility statement
4. Athletic fee paid, or arrangements made.

### **Practice:**

Practice schedule will be shared daily with the players before practice begins. Any changes to practice will be shared accordingly through all outlets previously stated.

All players are expected to be at every practice on time, dressed, and prepared to succeed unless otherwise communicated with the coaching staff. It is the **PLAYERS** responsibility to notify coaching staff if a practice will need to be missed by noon that day. Players will need to make a **Phone Call** and either talk directly to a coach or leaving a voicemail giving the reason they will need to be missing practice. Emails and texts will not be acceptable.

Practices will generally run about 2 – 2/12 hours long. Players are expected to attend the full duration of practice unless communicated otherwise.

All players are responsible to have their own personal equipment at practice every day. This includes gloves, spikes, hats, and baseball pants (unless communicated otherwise).

### **Game Day/Attendance –**

All players are to be at school by the designated time from the school in order to participate that afternoon/evening. Please make every effort to notify coaching staff by noon the day of if you are not going to be present.

It is the coach's discretion to determine whether an absence is considered excused. An unexcused absence will result in the loss of playing time.

1. 1<sup>st</sup> offense – 4 innings
2. 2<sup>nd</sup> offense – 1 game
3. 3<sup>rd</sup> offense – 3 games
4. 4<sup>th</sup> offense – dismissal from the team

### **Game Day/Dress Code:**

It is encouraged that on game days, players in the program wear a Prior Lake baseball piece of apparel. This can be from years past, or something from this year. This is subject to change at the discretion of the team.

Team hats. This hat is to be worn forwards at all times. If you are seen by a coach wearing your hat backwards, the coach has the right to take it away and you will have to earn that hat back through an activity of the coach's choice.

### **Transportation:**

All players are expected to ride the bus to and from games with the team. If a player is going to be taken from an away game, myself and the AD must be notified by noon the day of the contest. Only legal guardians of players may take them from an away game.

Players are responsible for getting themselves to practice.

### **Social Media:**

All players are expected to be mindful of what they are posting on social media outlets such as Facebook, twitter, Instagram, snapchat, YouTube, Tumblr, reddit, tiktok or anything else I forgot.

Any violation of this policy will be met with discipline on a case-to-case basis by the coaching staff and the player at fault. You are representing more than just yourself now, you are representing Prior Lake Baseball as a whole.

### **Additional Expectations:**

#### **\*Fundraisers –**

All players in this program will be expected to help out with our fundraisers. This is now **OUR** program and we are going to build this together. In order to make this an elite program, it is going to be a group effort.

#### **\*Workout Plan –**

I will be working with the strength coach to create and hand out a workout plan for Prior Lake Baseball Players. This will be a specific baseball work out. If you are in a winter sport, workout with your team as needed, but this will be available if you want to work out extra, or your winter team doesn't hit the weight room.

#### **\*Equipment –**

Players will not throw or mistreat equipment in this program. You will receive one warning for the entire season if you throw a glove, helmet, bat or anything other piece of equipment. If this action repeats, you will be immediately pulled from that game and not return for the duration.

### **\*School Etiquette –**

Do not be a problem for teachers during school. I will have a close relationship with all teachers at Prior Lake and if there are problems arising in class, we will address those concerns at practice. We expect all of you to set the example in this school, and that begins by being respectful and hardworking in the classroom.

### **Prior Lake Baseball – WHO WE ARE –**

#### **Team Principles:**

- Earn everything
- Put the team ahead of yourself.
- Strong work ethic on and off the field.
- Be early to everything. If you're 5 minutes early you're on time. If you're on time you're late. If you're late you're forgotten.
- Be proud to be a Laker.
- Respect authority and each other.
- Leave places better than you found them (dugout, field, locker room).

#### **Role of the Coaches –**

- Teach the game in a positive manner. Correct and encourage the player.
- Promote a positive community drive atmosphere
- Inspire all players to reach their full potential
- Communicate effectively with players and parents
- Treat all members of the program with respect
- Set the example of standards
- Represent the Laker Emblem with pride and dignity.

#### **Role of the Player –**

- Be a good teammate
- Be coachable!
- 100% effort all the time. On and off the field
- Be accountable to coaches and teammates.
- Maintain your composure when faced with adversity.
- Represent the program positively.
- Enjoy the game and have fun!