

Liberty LionBackers Team Parent Information

Welcome and thank you for volunteering to be a Liberty High School athletics team parent! Your primary responsibility is to serve as a conduit of information between coaches and parents and secondarily between the Liberty LionBackers organization and parents.

Please don't think that you have to shoulder most of the burden of these duties. Many teams—especially big ones—have more than one team parent and some have parents who spearhead certain team tasks. Never hesitate to enlist extra help when you need it! Sometimes it does take a village!

Please don't panic at the length of this document. The LionBackers believe that the more information you have, the better. It is organized chronologically from the beginning of the sports season to the end.

In your role as team parent, you will share information with other parents provided by your coach(es) and at other times you will share information provided by the LionBackers.

The Liberty LionBackers is an organization that supports all of Liberty's athletic programs through fundraising, sponsorships and scholarships. All are invited to join and attend the organization's monthly meetings. (More on the LionBackers can be found at the end of the document.)

To assist you throughout the season, following is an overview of team parent duties. These duties may change depending on the sport and the coach(es') expectations/needs. It may be helpful to sit down with the coach at the beginning of the season to get a sense of what he/she feels are the most important responsibilities.

****Before the season begins/beginning of the season****

Since communication is critical to a team parent's job, decide on the best way to communicate with parents and coaches. Some teams find it helpful to manage communication on a website like Band, Shutterfly, or TeamSnap, where you can create sign-ups and manage volunteers, post schedules, rosters, and updates. You can even post pictures from games on some sites. These sites also can send automated emails reminding parents of upcoming deadlines and events. Some team parents also like to send a weekly update email that includes all pertinent information for the coming week...game and bus times, uniform color, links, and directions to games, etc.

It is really up to you and the coach to decide the most effective way to communicate.

- Request a team roster from the coach. Coaches will have contact info for each athlete's parent(s). You can use these to create an initial distribution list.
- Meet the Coach Night is another opportunity to reach out to parents. Usually held early in the season, you can confirm and gather email addresses and enlist help for various tasks.

Snack bar duties—The LionBackers manage and oversee two snack bars, one located at the main gate of the stadium and the other in the main gym lobby. The snack bar is one of the LionBackers' major sources of income.

- Your team will be given dates for which your team needs to provide volunteers to help in the snack bar.
- There will be one to three dates for which your team is responsible.
- All teams provide volunteers for Homecoming.
- Your dates will not conflict with one of your team's games.
- These dates will be provided prior to the first home contest so that there is ample time for teams to line up volunteers.
- Three to five volunteers are needed to work in the snack bar. Volunteers must be volunteered-trained, which can be done online through the [Carroll County Public Schools website](#) and takes about five minutes.

Roster cards—Some teams find it helpful to provide parents with roster cards to refer to when cheering on the team.

- Use the roster provided by the coach to make a list of players and jersey numbers so that athletes can be identified. Double-check with the coach to be sure that there haven't been any last-minute changes to the roster.
- It is helpful if the list is in numerical order by jersey number.
- The list can be laminated for parents to use throughout the season.
- Or, the list can be provided as a picture through email or text that parents can pull up on their phones.

Team photos

- The date for team photos is determined by the athletic director and is communicated to the coaches prior to the beginning of the season.
- The coach may or may not ask you to be involved in the process.

- You may be asked to distribute picture forms at Meet the Coach Night.
- It is helpful to send a reminder about the team photo date and time and remind parents to either complete the form and include a check or order photos online. You might also want to have parents remind athletes to bring their uniforms on team photo day.

****During the season****

Fundraising—Team fundraising should include at least an additional \$75 for the LionBackers annual bingo basket. Each fall and winter team is responsible for putting together a basket for the bingo. More details about the bingo and the basket are located at the end of the document in the End of the season/post-season section.

- Although the LionBackers offer financial support to the teams, there are other expenses—such as coaches’ gifts, banquet expenses and LionBackers bingo baskets (details below)—which may require additional fundraising.
- Some teams hold fundraisers such as restaurant nights, car washes, coupon card sales, and other teams just collect a specific, pre-determined amount from each family.
- Consult with the coach to see what additional expenses the team might incur during the season so fundraisers can be planned as early as possible.
- All fundraisers need to be approved by the school administration in advance.

Game photos

- Although not a requirement, photos from games can be fun for parents and athletes to look through and even download and order as prints.
- These photos are often used to make senior posters and slide shows for the end-of-season banquet. (More on those below.)
- This is a great way to enlist the help of parents who have photography skills and who like to take pictures.

Pasta parties

- Sometimes teams like to gather a night or two before games to share a meal and team bonding off the field.
- Parents volunteer to host the party and other parents provide food and drinks.
- Please be mindful of athletes who may have food allergies.

Pre-game food

- Some teams like to gather prior to a game to eat as a team. Check with your coach to see if he/she wants to do this and where.
- Decide on whether the meal will be potluck or athletes will pay to have food provided.
- If pre-game meals will be a regular part of the season and the food will be purchased, it may be beneficial to collect money for this at the beginning of the season.
- Please be mindful of athletes who may have food allergies.

Bus/post-game snacks

- Sometimes, a coach will request that bus/post-game snacks be provided.
- Decide if you want to collect money to purchase these throughout the season or if you want parents to provide snacks on a rotating basis.
- Again, be mindful of food allergies. Snacks eaten in a confined bus can be particularly hazardous to those athletes with airborne food allergies.

Homecoming parade (fall teams only)

- Athletes from fall teams typically walk in the Homecoming parade, distributing candy to parade watchers.
- You or a parent volunteer may need to organize candy donations and gather the team before the parade begins.
- It is always on Friday, prior to the Homecoming football game.

****End of the season/post-season****

Senior Night

- Typically held at the last home game, Senior Night is a celebration of senior athletes.
- Athletes are usually introduced either before or during halftime of the game and escorted by their family.
- Information about each senior is usually read during the ceremony...how many years he/she participated, favorite team memories, special thank yous and plans for the future, etc.
- Some teams encourage senior athletes and/or their family to make a poster montage of pictures that represent their time on the team or in the sport. These are usually displayed at the field during Senior Night and should be removed shortly after Senior Night is over.
- Have each senior athlete complete a [Senior Bio Form](#) to gather the above information.

Team Banquet—End-of-the-season banquets vary widely in their locations and the fare provided. Some teams opt to hold banquets off-campus in a rented space, others choose to hold them at school or even at local parks.

At some, full, catered meals are provided, and others feature just desserts or are potluck meals. It is up to the coach, team parents and banquet committee if one has been created.

- The date and time should be cleared with the coach before booking a venue.
- Typically, participation certificates, varsity letters and team awards are presented at end-of-the-season banquets.
- Some also feature a slideshow of photos or videos that have been taken throughout the season.
- Coaches' gifts are usually presented at the banquet as well.

Coaches' Gifts—As noted above, coaches' gifts are usually presented at the banquet.

- Ensure that you collect money for the coaches' gifts ahead of time, so you know how much to spend on each coach.
- Many coaches are volunteers and receive no financial stipend from the school or the county for their service.

Liberty LionBackers and the bingo basket—As mentioned at the beginning of this document, the LionBackers organization offers financial support to all of Liberty's athletic programs. The LionBackers raise money through its corporate banner sponsorship program, snack bar sales and through its annual bingo, typically scheduled for February.

- The bingo features basket prizes provided by each sports team at Liberty.
- Basket themes are communicated to the team parents either through the team parent coordinator or the bingo chairs.
- Each team (JV and Varsity) will pick a basket theme and then purchase items that reflect that theme for their basket.
- Basket costs should total around \$75 and can be paid for through fundraising activities or parent donations.
- The team parent or another volunteer is responsible for putting the basket together and delivering it to a bingo chairperson by the deadline.
- Team parents should encourage parents to join the Liberty LionBackers and although there is a big push for members at the beginning of each sports season, you can join the LionBackers at any time.
- The LionBackers meet on the first Wednesday of every month at 7 p.m. in the school's Media Center. (Some meetings may be virtual given recent events)

Helpful websites

- For information about the LionBackers, links to the athletic schedule and athletic department news, visit the website at www.libertyathletics.com.
- In addition, be sure to like and follow the LionBackers Facebook page, which features the daily sports schedule as well as Liberty sports news and links to coverage in local papers.
- For a county-wide athletic schedule, visit www.carrollcountyathleticleague.org.
- And for information from the Maryland Public Secondary Schools Athletic Association, visit www.mpssaa.org.
- Questions regarding team parent responsibilities can be directed to the LionBackers' team parent coordinator, who can be contacted via the [LionBackers website](#).

Thank you so much for volunteering to be a Liberty athletic team parent! The teams and the LionBackers would not be successful without your support!