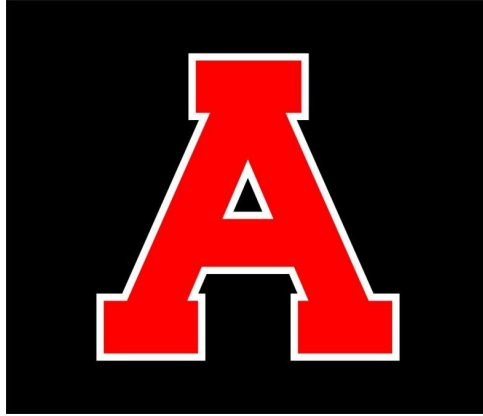


# **Allendale High School**

## ***Soccer Program***

### **Handbook**



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# **INTRODUCTION**

**“Talent may get you to the top, but it takes character to stay there. One important aspect of character is the ceaseless desire to improve.”**

**John Wooden**

This book is designed to help you, your son, and your family to understand the Allendale soccer program. Our philosophy, policies, coaching style, teaching style, expectations and actions are designed to be as competitive as possible. More importantly, they are designed to enhance the character, academic, and social behavior of every member of our program. This is the driving force for what we do. Every young man is vitally important to our team. Each young man has a different role that is based in large measure by his talent, work ethic and ability to add value to the team. ***Playing time is not a measure of a young man's value.*** There are certain “expectations” placed upon the performance of our program. One of those many expectations is for A.H.S. to be playing at a competitive level of soccer. With that in mind, we will put the young men on the field that provide the best opportunity for our team’s success.

Two functional goals for our program include:

- 1 Investing whatever resources we have to make our players the best young men, leaders and people that they can become.
- 2 Making a commitment to develop the athletic skills of every player in our program.

It is our deepest desire to take the program, and the young men involved, to the apex of educational athletics. Soccer is, in our opinion, one of the greatest games of all time. It is the perfect training ground for young men to develop who they are as individuals. This game pushes and stretches a person to extremes, and at those critical points true personal growth occurs. It often takes extraordinary times to clear the individual’s vision of his true character.

Not only will the participants in the program benefit, but the school and community will as well. Pride and tradition are life long values. It is one of our goals to make sure that the Allendale Soccer Program is a source of pride, rich with tradition, and exemplifying excellence within our community.

The vision that we have as a program is to be one that places emphasis on developing young men to be successful in all aspects of life.

# ALLENDALE SOCCER

## PROGRAM OVERVIEW

**VISION** – To develop student athletes into young men of character through hard work, discipline, a commitment to the team, and to the community.

**MISSION** – DEMAND EXCELLENCE. Excellence differs from perfection. We will constantly strive for excellence in everything that we do: on the field, in the classroom, in the community, everywhere we live. We will fight against mediocrity in everything.

**Philosophy Statement** - We believe that soccer provides the opportunity to be a part of something greater than oneself. Being a member of our program is being a member of the team, and one player is not bigger than the team. Although day in and day out our goal is to win, winning is not the only measure of success. Each athlete should approach everything they do with enthusiasm to better themselves, and in turn others around them.

### **STYLE OF PLAY:**

The style of play will vary depending on the individuals that are in the program at the time, and decisions will be made by the coaches based on what is happening on the field, as well as what has been happening in practices, and in school. However, there are some strategies that will be standard at all levels in the Allendale Soccer Program.

- The team will play at a fast pace, moving the ball quickly through the midfield.
- The team will be required to move frequently off the ball, and present multiple options of play.
- Individual players will be expected to make decisions on the field based on what is best for the team.
- The team will be in peak physical condition, and will strive to outwork all opponents.

“ Attack this day with an enthusiasm unknown to mankind” - Jim Harbaugh

## **TO THE PARENTS**

There are some tremendous advantages to living in our community. There is a close knit feeling that we are very thankful for in Allendale. It is a special place. In our soccer program, your son will become part of a family that will look out for him for the rest of his high school career. We need you to be an active, contributing part of our program, and help to make it great for your son and all the other members of our program.

### **IMPORTANT THOUGHTS:**

This program will strive to be the best in the state. We will work to make our product on the field, on game night and in practice, the best there is. However, we cannot gauge this program on wins alone. There are many critical qualities that we develop in young men that must be counted as well. As a coaching staff, we are totally committed to helping the young men we coach reach their potential: as players and as men. We all feel very passionate about helping to develop quality brothers, husbands, fathers, and men for today and the days to come.

We define success in this way:

***When development of our athletes, during the time they spend with us, occurs in the direction of becoming outstanding young men.***

The soccer program at Allendale High School is as much a part of the school curriculum as Mathematics, Science, English, History, or any other subject we have to offer here at A.H.S. It is a place where learning will continue outside of the classroom.

### **SOME OF THE LESSONS LEARNED IN THIS PROGRAM:**

- ❖ Character development
- ❖ Community service
- ❖ Leadership
- ❖ Teamwork
- ❖ Selflessness
- ❖ Commitment
- ❖ Value of hard work and a strong work ethic
- ❖ Maintaining a positive attitude when things don't go well
- ❖ Responsibility
- ❖ Being a QUALITY role model.
- ❖ Being dependable
- ❖ Value of caring for others
- ❖ TEAM ABOVE SELF

## CHOICES FOR COACH-ABLE ATHLETES:

Teams can make a conscious decision to uphold the best of values. Individual players can make choices that will define them as athletes. Though we will be dealing with the following on a regular basis, here are some things to consider and talk with your son about:

### ENTHUSIASM

- love of the game
- share it with teammates
- bring everything you got every day: game and practice

### LISTENING, CONCENTRATING AND FOCUSING

- without this, there is no improvement
- demonstrates respect for coaches and teammates

### SELFLESSNESS

- the ability to put the team ahead of yourself in every decision
- accept and fulfill a role

### ACCOUNTABILITY

- to accept responsibility for outcomes
- problem solver – not an excuse maker
- look to yourself first when improvement is needed

### CONSISTENCY

- reliability
- can be counted on by self and teammates

### WORK HABITS

- subject yourself to hard, productive work
- commit to continuous improvement
- commit to a particular course of action

### DISCIPLINE

- discipline and love are two sides of the same coin
- accept and embrace discipline for the sake of the team
- self control on and off the field
- focused attention and effort

### SPORTSMANSHIP

- respect for the rules and the game
- respect for and accepting the judgments of others (officials)
- respect for your opponents as guests
- reacting correctly even when others don't
- truthful, honorable and genuine
- being worthy of respect from others

### DETERMINATION

- the ability to start your own engine
- quick recovery from mistakes – the ability to persevere
- show initiative
- stay with your obligations and promises: NEVER QUIT!

### TEACHABLE SPIRIT

- can take correction as a compliment
- consistently seeking new information
- eager to learn

### CONFIDENCE

- quiet inner feeling based on preparation – not arrogance
- relaxed aggressiveness
- confidence builder for those around you

### PRIDE

- shared joy of the inner circle
- does not require or expect special treatment
- sense of dignity
- valuing the work and accomplishments of the team

### COMPETITIVENESS

- controlled determination
- able to make a quick recovery from mistakes or misfortune
- relentlessly pursue success – the drive to be more

### MENTAL TOUGHNESS

- inner strength to be able to control emotional responses and concentrate on what has to be done in pressure situations
- use emotion and energy to make yourself tougher, not to give your opponents strength
- mindset focused on pushing forward and pushing through whatever seems to block your way
- stay the course, nothing can happen that will break your spirit – you stay enthusiastic, confident and positive

### **Priorities within the program:**

1. Faith and Family
2. Community
3. Academics
4. Soccer and Athletic Development

#### **1. Faith and Family**

The priority of each young man in the program should be with his faith and his family. Both of these are vastly more important than a soccer game, and when situations arise in which these are in conflict with soccer, the student athlete should not feel guilty choosing faith and family above soccer. However, please understand that when a player misses practice or competitions, their position on the depth chart cannot be guaranteed.

We work to build a family concept – where the entire group looks out for the individual. Putting others first is a foreign notion in our society – but it is something that we strive to get our young men to do on a daily basis. Family needs are second in our priority list, so if there is a family matter at home that will affect our soccer family, please keep us informed.

As a coaching staff, we will track grades, performance, behavior, attitude, family situations, and in essence build a network of support for each young man we coach. Playing soccer will provide an anchor for any player that needs, wants or allows us to take a role of leadership in his life.

#### **2. Academics:**

FACT:

Michael Johnson, a counselor at Tascosa High School in Amarillo, said a study two years ago found that those with a bachelor's degree made an average of \$66,445 annually. Those with a high school diploma made only \$37,303 on average. Those who had some college credits made about \$42,868, according to the study. Those with no high school diploma averaged about \$28,881. Degree hikes earning power for graduates – Education is the key for opening many job doors. By Janelle Stecklein

FACT:

Only 1.2% of High School soccer players make it onto a NCAA Division I College roster. Even a smaller number earn partial scholarships.

Everyone wants to go play for Club and Country, but the odds are against you... this is why we must produce great effort in the classroom. It puts you in control of your future. If you are ineligible – you cannot experience the benefits of being a team member.

In order to address this issue, we will hold STUDENT-ATHLETES in this soccer

program accountable for their grades, academic performance, attitude and behavior in the classroom. We will never ask nor expect for a teacher to change a grade. We will expect that through EFFORT the students in our soccer program will EARN their success.

We also know that every young man in our program is unique. We know there are learning difficulties, family challenges, problems and issues that come up. PLEASE - do not be afraid to address anything that you feel is pertinent with the coaching staff.

Our academic philosophy is such that we must do a great job in the classroom first and foremost. We will monitor grades, and cultivate accountability on behalf of our student-athletes. We will strive to create great communication with parents and teachers. Should you ever have an academic concern, call or email Coach Gotberg. It will get addressed.

### 3. Community Service

Each young man in the program will be expected to donate fifteen hours of community service by the end of soccer season. We give our participation awards on two criteria: 1) the player finishes the entire soccer season; 2) the player gives 15 hours of community service. We define service as "any act that is done voluntarily for the betterment of another person." We are looking for opportunities to teach our young men that giving something back to the community makes it a better place to live. Any community service hours must be documented in writing by an adult. Junior Varsity players will be required to complete 10 hours of community service.

### 4. Soccer and Athletic Development – Fourth and LAST Priority

If we are committed properly to our priorities, focusing on soccer is easy.

***There is much demanded from those to whom much is given.***

*Investment leads to commitment.  
Commitment leads to relationships.  
Relationships lead to acting with Honor.  
Acting with Honor leads to SUCCESS.*

As in any activity that you make a commitment to – you are expected to be at practice on time, dressed and ready to perform every day. There are always those players who refer to themselves as "gamers." In other words, they don't like to practice. I can tell you this without hesitation: if you aren't a "practicer" in our program, you won't have a chance to prove yourself in a game. Practice habits are developed through our entire program as a mechanism for investment and



improvement. If you miss practice, there will be a coach's penalty that may include missing game time as a result. Please make a point to take care of routine doctor and dentist appointments outside of practice time. If you are going to be absent, you need to let your coach know ahead of time. If you have an emergency, your parents may excuse you. Please remember that while you are not at practice, another young man is, and is working hard for the opportunity to earn playing time. The more we compete in practice – the greater chance we have as a team to succeed in our games.

Additionally, you must know, understand, and honor the Athletic Code at Allendale High School. It is a matter of honor, leadership, improvement, faith, and excellence to put your team, your family and your reputation ahead of getting into trouble.

### **KEYS IN OUR PHILOSOPHY:**

- Soccer is an educational tool. We strive to work together with your family to make your son as great as he can be.
- We expect your son to do what is right even if it is difficult, hard, time consuming, etc.
- We have all got to do a great job ACADEMICALLY- it can mean the difference of millions of dollars of earning power in the long run for our players.

### **THE TEAM CONCEPT:**

We must constantly keep in mind that this soccer program does not exist for personal glory – it exists to bring glory to the team, school, and the community. All of us must make sacrifices for the team - players, parents, coaches. We need to keep the needs of the team above our own personal desires. Our Allendale Soccer Family consists of players, managers, coaches, booster club members, teachers, custodians, administrators and parents. Our coaches are husbands, and fathers first. We have other employment outside of coaching. Please respect that this is a high school soccer program. We do this because we love working with your sons, love the game of soccer, love to compete, and love to teach. Trust, appreciate, and have faith in our coaches for all that they do – and all the sacrifices their families make so that we can be a part of this program. We understand your sacrifice as well. Each one of us has a role to play in your son's development. We are all committed to creating the best soccer program possible. Please join us in that.

## **COMMUNICATION WITH PARENTS:**

As a coaching staff, we understand that parents may often see things differently than coaches do. Everything we do is designed to earn the respect and trust of the parents. We must be in this together with every young man's family. When our kids trust us like family, we will really have accomplished something significant. Therefore, we have adopted a set of parent rules that helps us to define our roles and expectations. Always keep in mind that my role as the Head Soccer Coach is to make the best decisions for the entire team first.

## **COMMUNICATION WITH COACHES:**

This is an explanation which defines acceptable/reasonable times as well as the unreasonable times for communication between coaches and parents regarding any issues. Acceptable/reasonable time is defined as the time period from the day after a game and extending until the end of school time on the day of the next contest and excluding unreasonable times in between. Unreasonable time frames are considered late hours of the night, the half hour before and during practice time, and the time period after school hours on the day of a game which extends until the following morning. Quality discussions will only occur only when calm and cool heads prevail. It is very good practice to take 24 hours to think and reflect before trying to discuss any issues that may be "emotionally charged." The time limitations defined above will only help to promote quality discussions, which are what we all want.

## **A.H.S SOCCER PROGRAM GUIDELINES**

The Soccer Program at Allendale High School exists for the benefit of our student-athletes. All decisions will be made with the best interest of the team first and individuals second. High School soccer is a very competitive sport, and we play under a microscope of expectations. Here are rules and roles to focus on for parents, players and coaches.

### **SOCCER PROGRAM RULES:**

#### **RULE ONE:**

All Student-Athlete policies and expectations in the Parent-Athlete Handbook will be followed as set by the Athletic Department. Consequences are determined per Handbook stipulations.

#### **RULE TWO:**

Any further "Conduct Unbecoming of a Teammate" will have consequences determined by the coaching staff, and when applicable, team captains, depending upon the severity of the infraction. The unacceptable violations of Conduct Unbecoming of a Teammate can range from, and are not limited to, dress code violations (e.g. as simple as wearing the wrong game socks, etc), to missing or being tardy for practice, to words spoken, to postings on social media, to physical actions, to much worse and more grievous acts against the team or teammates.

#### **GAME TIME SUSPENSIONS:**

If there is a violation of conduct that results in a consequence determined to include loss of playing time, then we will proceed in the following manner whenever possible:

- ✓ Player will be notified of the suspension.
- ✓ The player has the responsibility to communicate the suspension with his parents as soon as possible.
- ✓ Communication to the parents from the coaching staff, prior to the next contest, will take place as soon as it is reasonably possible.
- ✓ Please understand that there may be unfortunate circumstances that result in the parents not receiving the communication prior to the game. (Ex. athlete violates a rule on the bus to an away match)

**Player name and signature:**

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## COACH'S ROLES:

- Set a good example for players and fans to follow.
- Be positive, firm, fair and as consistent as possible.
- Be positive in the public eye in regards to our players, parents, and program.
- Make playing time and strategy decisions with thought and care.
- Establish and organize practice for the team on a daily basis.
- Be a good communicator with players and parents.
- Keep academic progress of athletes.
- Constantly evaluate all aspects of the program to make sure they are in the best interests of the entire team.
- Be available to talk with players and parents – other than game day.

## PARENT'S ROLES:

- Be a fan of everyone on the team: *Be most concerned with the success of the TEAM.*
- Respect the decisions made in games by the coaches and officials.
- Respect other fans, coaches, officials, and players.
- Talk with your son if he has any questions. If it is necessary, to get answers contact the coach using the guidelines below.
- Be positive with your son and keep any negative thoughts about the coach, the program or members of the team to yourself. **YOU DO NOT HAVE THE RIGHT TO TEAR DOWN THIS PROGRAM.** The kids have one chance to be high school soccer players, help to make it as special as we can.
- Understand that it is the coach's' responsibility to make certain that students are safe and become better people and athletes, not to win every game.
- Be supportive of your son. He gets coached at practice everyday. Be positive in what you say, and be careful what you tell him. If you are telling him something different than he is hearing in practice, it will negatively affect his performance.

## PLAYER'S ROLES:

- Be positive and have an unselfish, team oriented attitude.
- Support your teammates. Treat them like family.
- Be at practice on time and everyday – work hard to improve.
- If you have a question, concern or are unhappy about something, talk with your coach before you talk with anyone else. Come directly to us.
- Know and follow school and athletic codes.
- Challenge yourself to improve as a student, an athlete, and as a person.
- Notify your coach of any scheduling conflicts in advance. If you are going to miss practice or workouts – it is YOUR RESPONSIBILITY to communicate that.

## **HOW TO HANDLE ISSUES:**

If you have a question or concern, please take the time to think about what your question is. If it ultimately has to do with playing time, another player or game strategy, then *keep it to yourself*. Otherwise, follow this process:

Talk with your son about your question. What is your son's perspective? Can he solve the problem himself? Set up a meeting with us if you still have questions. You will be asked to create an agenda for the meeting and submit that to the coach prior to the meeting. Remember – we make decisions for the good of the team based on practice, ability, attitude, and chemistry. The decision that may seem to be very clear cut to a parent of one son is not so clear when all of these variables are taken into consideration. High school soccer is a competitive situation, and our responsibility as coaches is to put the best teams on the field. If questions/issues still remain, the next step is to set up a meeting with our Athletic Director and myself – again, an agenda will be asked for prior to the meeting.

## **SIX SIMPLE GUIDELINES FOR THESE MEETINGS:**

1. The conversation must be respectful and in a professional manner in regard to both language and conduct and during a reasonable time as previously defined.
2. You **MUST** provide an agenda of items that you want to cover prior to the meeting. This will help us to direct the conversation and limit the scope of the meeting to solve the problems that can be addressed.
3. Everyone gets a chance to talk, but everyone must listen as well. Emotional control by all parties is critical.
4. Meetings will not occur on game days. They are held only by appointment.
5. Please understand that discussions concerning problems will not be held against the players or parents.
6. Your son must be present.

## **WHAT IS IT PROPER TO ASK ABOUT?:**

It is fine to discuss the treatment of your child. You are welcome to ask about how your son can improve. Asking about your son's attitude and behavior are also acceptable topics to discuss.

## **THINGS THAT WILL NOT BE DISCUSSED:**

- o Other Players
- o You may not insult the coaches or coaching staff

Our goal as a staff is to make this experience a great enjoyment, education, and memory. We work hard to know your son, to make him better on the field and in life, and care for him very much. There is no correlation between how much a young man plays in the game, and how much we care about him. We are striving to build better young men, and their value as a person is completely independent of playing time. Life teaches us lessons in many ways. First and foremost, we want to do what is best for the team, and then secondly for your son as an individual.

## **THE ROLE OF PARENTS IN ATHLETICS:**

Our sports booster club exists for the betterment of all players in our program. There are great places for you to get involved in your child's athletic endeavors. Please, if you would like to be involved, contact one of the coaches in the program and we will get you in contact with someone who can help.

### **What kids want from their parents:**

This excerpt comes from a code of conduct for many parents that schools all over the country have adopted. It was developed by simply asking the kids what they would like their parents to know, but are afraid to tell them when it comes to their athletic participation. Parents cannot deny this message if they love their kids because it comes from their sons and daughters:

**What kids feel their parents' responsibilities are before, during and after a game:**

- 1 Ask yourself “why do you want your child to play, what do you expect out of your child, and what role do you expect him/her to have?”**
  - ❖ **The parents' answer should be the same as the child. If not, there is a problem.**
  - ❖ **#1 reason kids play – FUN.**
- 2 Once a parent is sure their kid is safe physically and emotionally, they should release them to the coach and let them enjoy the experiences (successes and failures) of playing the game.**
- 3 Yelling at an official is one adult screaming at another in a public setting that we are supposed to be using to teach kids discipline and respect.**
- 4 During the game, kids need to have model, poised, confident, and supportive parents.**
- 5 Kids want parents to learn to watch the game and concentrate solely on what they are doing.**
- 6 Kids want their parents to focus on the team and team goals and take the focus off of them.**
- 7 Kids want to hear ONE instruction voice during the game – THE COACH!**
- 8 Kids want their parents to be spectators and encouragers? – not coaches, officials or players.**

- 9 After the game, many kids state their worst experiences have been in the car with their parents.
- 10 Kids need time and space after the contest. They do not need to be analyzed by their parents or listen to the parent criticize the official or the coach.
- 11 Kids should never be made to feel that their parent loves them more when they play well in a game and less when they have a bad game.
- 12 Kids need to hear “I love watching you play” or “I love watching you be a part of the team.”

## **OTHER ASPECTS OF THE PROGRAM**

### **SPORTS MEDICINE AND REHAB:**

GREAT CONDITIONING CAN MAKE UP FOR A LARGE AMOUNT OF INABILITY.

IF YOU ARE IN GREAT SHAPE AND STRONG – YOU’LL HAVE A TREMENDOUS CHANCE TO STAY HEALTHY AND ALSO BETTER YOUR CHANCE FOR SUCCESS.

We are very blessed to have a trainer in our building on a regular basis. Our players must learn the difference between being sore, hurt and injured. If your son goes to the doctor, only that doctor can treat or release the player. Being sore or hurting is different from being injured. If sore or hurting, then measures should be taken to heal, yet continue to push through the pains. Being injured means that a player cannot play due to medical restraints. Our training staff, which includes a certified athletic trainer, does a great job of helping our players make that determination. Please trust them and listen to them.

### **STRENGTH AND CONDITIONING PROGRAM:**

One of the most important aspects of our athletic development program is developing relationships and spending time with our players. This is where we become a family, where we learn to care about each other and to push to our limits. The more invested we become as a team, the more we care about each other, the stronger our relationships are – the greater success we will experience.

Beginning after the completion of the girl’s soccer season, we will be meeting twice a week, Mondays and Wednesdays. These practices are to better the skills of the individual and begin working as a team. These practices are 100% optional, however, it will be near impossible to sit on a couch all summer, and then be ready to get major playing time once the season starts. Another opportunity will be through ***The Advantage*** program. Athletic Development and lifting will help us to get bigger, stronger, more powerful and more competitive along with lowering the risk of injury. Seize the opportunity!

## **PHILOSOPHY ON OTHER SPORTS:**

We are firm believers that kid's best interests are served when they are active in all seasons. We prefer three sport athletes. We expect two sport athletes. Many schools demand that kids play only one sport. It is our belief, in the soccer program, that "cross training" leads to better conditioned, tougher, more competitive athletes. Multi-sport athletes are also much less likely to be burned out because they don't only do one thing. What a great experience your son could have if after four years he has three sets of strong relationships with coaches and players.

We hope that your son is playing another sport. It is our belief that since you get one shot to be in high school, you should enjoy competing during all three seasons. Jake Plummer, who played in the NFL as a quarterback for over eight seasons told ESPN:

***"My ultimate goal is to get coaches to stop specializing their athletes, telling them they can't play other sports because it'll hurt their sport," Plummer says. "I played all three sports and handball whenever I could. That's why I made it in the NFL -- that rounded me out as an athlete."***

If you don't play more than one sport - you are cheating yourself out of some great experiences that you'll never get to have again in your life. If you are in more than one sport – consider yourself among the elite!

## **PLAYER EVALUATION AND PLACEMENT:**

Evaluating a player's athletic ability as well as his attitude, work ethic and other factors help us to motivate and teach him. As coaches, we will put time, effort, discussion, and thought in knowing the young man to find these things out.

When we place a player in a position, decide how much he'll play, or place him on the Varsity or JV team, it is in an effort to make him as successful as possible. However, it is always first and foremost to determine what will make the TEAM most successful. Playing time is earned in practice, weight room, and conditioning. Trust is the most important factor we are looking for. If ever we change your son's position, it is in attempt to help the team, and to help him. We do all we can to be as fair as possible at all times. If your son struggles with a position change, please have him talk with us. Trust us that it is not done on a whim, but much thought and discussion between coaches have occurred in an attempt to do the best for the Team. We will also look at the players behavior off the field as well, such as in warm-up, bad weather, at half-time, and their body language.



## **Junior Varsity, and Varsity Philosophy:**

It is important for you to understand the differences and how we make decisions in regard to where your son is placed in our program.

**Junior Varsity** – This is still a developmental level of soccer. The JV team is mostly for 9th and 10<sup>th</sup> graders, and again works to develop the abilities, desires, skills, work habits, mental toughness, and techniques of our Varsity team. There is an even greater drive to achieve TEAM success at this level, yet we still emphasize player experience. Your son will get dedicated coaching that strives to build our younger athletes into better players. While effort will be made to get every athlete playing time in every contest, this is not guaranteed. We hope to provide an excellent experience for all athletes on this team. Our JV and Varsity coaches will be in constant contact about players on both teams, determining what is best for the program.

**Varsity** – The Varsity is our most competitive level of soccer. Playing at the varsity level means that the student athlete must be in peak physical and mental shape. This helps us to keep morale high, stay more “fresh” at the end of games than our competition, and increase the investment level of more players. We will put our most competitive team on the field. Every day in practice, our Varsity players are in competition to play in each game. No player is guaranteed to start, or get playing time in every game. Playing time is based solely on the potential each player adds to team success: In other words, they play as much as their performance in practice merits. There are no guarantees of playing time in Varsity games. All players striving to be a Varsity player must understand that there will be much expected of them. There will be extra meetings, film time, practices, and demands placed on them. It is an extremely competitive atmosphere and to earn playing time at this level means that they will have to make great investments.

**Team Captains:** At the Varsity level, there will be two or three captains per season, and the captains will be selected by the coaching staff after careful consideration. The responsibilities of the team captains go beyond being one of the best players on the field, but include being able to lead the team in all situations. They will be involved in the discussion regarding consequences for conduct unbecoming of a teammate, and must be able to represent Allendale Soccer proudly. Team captains will be expected to go above and beyond and lead the team in practices as well as games. Being a captain is a privilege, and it is one that can be taken away should the student athlete demonstrate an inability to hold the position.

## **CONCLUSION**

It is our deepest desire that this experience of being an Allendale Falcon Soccer Player is the best it can be for your son. These young men get one shot at high school athletics. We want the relationships, memories, and experiences of being a part of this program to be sacred for players as they continue with life beyond high school. There are ups and downs in soccer as there are in life, and it is those experiences that will give them the foundation to make good decisions later on. Hopefully the lessons that are learned from each opportunity, whether it is a peak or a valley, are still an opportunities to better yourself. The whole experience teaches us about life – not just good things, but also the hardships should be viewed as valuable. Building friendships, serving community, sacrificing for a goal, putting yourself in second place behind the needs of the team, and being a part of something bigger than any individual are all great traits to carry into life. Those things will be treasured and will be sacred to our young men for years to come. It is my sincere hope that this book helps you to think about our soccer program from a variety of perspectives. We are honored and excited to have your son be a part of our program, and look forward to working with him and with you in the near future.

We are fully committed to making the soccer experience a highlight of our community.

**Thank you –**

**Head Varsity Soccer Coach: Mark Gotberg**

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**\*\*I would like to thank all the Coaches in my life, as well as the players of past and present who have helped shape my beliefs and philosophies. I take my job as Head Coach very seriously, and I truly believe our young men are blessed to have the opportunity to work with and learn from entire soccer coaching staff that we have here at A.H.S. I can tell you that we feel very blessed to have the opportunity to work with the young men of A.H.S as well.**

**\*\* Thank you as well to Allendale Head Varsity Football coach Ben Burk, Varsity**

Wrestling Coach Duane Watson, and all others whose work contributed to this handbook\*\*