



**High School
Varsity Athletic Handbook
2018 - 2019**

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AOSR Athletics Department 2018-2019

Welcome to another season of sport at AOSR!

Participating in athletics at AOSR is both fun and challenging. Student-athletes, while assuming a great commitment, become ambassadors for the American Overseas School of Rome. Our athletic program provides an environment conducive to the cultivation of lifelong skills such as; teamwork, discipline, dedication, respect, communication and perseverance.

Teammates build lasting friendships and unforgettable memories while wearing a Falcons uniform, representing the AOSR community. Playing involves a significant time commitment both for training and competition and that responsibility is both honored and supported across the school.

Please read the following Handbook, look at your calendars, and provide the necessary information.

The following requirements must be met for a student to be eligible to play:

To be signed/filled out by both Parents and Students:

- AOSR Extra Curricular Activity Contract (online)
- Uniform Policy Contract (online)
- Travel Commitment Contract (online)
- Parent/Family Base Access Form (online)
- A valid sports physical (good for one year) on file with the school nurse
- Submission of the participation fee of 150.00 Euros paid to the cashier
- Academic/age requirements are met for eligibility (see below)

High school students are eligible for 8 consecutive semesters after entering 9th grade. Students who turn 19 before August 1st are ineligible. Students must maintain a 2.0 GPA and have no more than 1 F, while fulfilling academic eligibility requirements as stated by DoDDS Europe, the governing body of our league.

Have a great season and GO FALCONS!

Daniel Zacaroli
AOSR Athletic Director

AOSR Varsity Athletic Handbook

I. Purpose of Handbook

The AOSR Varsity Athletic Handbook provides students, athletes, parents, coaches, teachers and the school community with a better understanding of the policies, procedures, responsibilities, and expectations involved with participation in the school's athletic program.

II. Philosophy and Goals

A. Philosophy

Athletics function as an integral part of the total curriculum and life at AOSR. The athletic program serves as a miniature model of life in that it provides opportunities for students with regard to developing good sportsmanship, responsibility, integrity, honesty, teamwork, leadership, and respect.

Additionally, athletics help individual students develop healthy self-concepts as well as physical well-being. Athletic competition adds to our community spirit and benefits all students – spectators as well as participants - develop pride in our school.

Winning is often considered the measure of success and our student athletes take part in progressive training, from fitness and fundamentals, to advance skills and sport specific techniques. They are encouraged to do their best in every team or individual competition, however, winning is not the primary objective of the AOSR athletic program. Our main goal is to provide opportunities for students of all backgrounds and experiences to develop themselves as well-rounded individuals with positive social and group attitudes and habits, empowered to take their place and affect our global society.

At no time will the educational curriculum and program be considered secondary to athletics.

B. Goals for Student-Athletes

- 1) To develop physically, mentally, emotionally and socially.
- 2) To improve upon concepts of loyalty, fair play, dedication, determination and self-discipline through team play.
- 3) To embody the highest level of sportsmanship.
- 4) To embrace positive attitudes toward individual health habits, appearance on and off the field, and citizenship in and out of school.
- 5) To develop appropriate attitudes towards winning and losing, success and failure.

- 6) To demonstrate respect for fellow athletes whether teammates, members of other AOSR teams, or members of opposing teams.
- 7) To gain ownership over balancing different aspects of life: athletic, academic, social and family obligations.

III. DoDDS League Participation

AOSR is a member of the ASIL (American School Italy League) or DoDDS Europe Region IV. ASIL is made up of 4 schools for the dependents of the US Department of Defense employees, or DoDDS schools: Aviano, Naples, Vicenza, and Sigonella; plus 3 independent international schools: AOSR, Marymount International School, International School of Florence. ASIL is part of a larger organization, the Europe Interscholastic Athletic Program operated by the US Department of Defense. This includes over 40 schools in 3 Divisions. Vicenza and Naples compete in Division I, Aviano, AOSR, Florence and Marymount compete in Division II for their final tournaments while Sigonella competes in Division III. Teams/individuals participate in end-of-season championship tournaments at the European level, depending upon the sport and DoDDS' direction.

The season for each sport starts with head to head competitions between schools on weekends for several months, followed by the European championships in Germany. In some sports, schools from Turkey, Spain, Bahrain and England join the 7 schools in Italy to compete in the Mediterranean championships.

IV. Varsity Sports by Season

AOSR offers the following high school sports:

Fall: Boys and girls cross-country, tennis, and volleyball
Winter: Boys and girls basketball, coed cheerleading and wrestling
Spring: Boys and girls soccer, coed track and field

When teams with tryouts have large enough turnouts, coaches will look to develop Junior Varsity teams. These teams will compete at the league and local level.

The minimum/maximum of participants for each sport is as follows:

Sport	Minimum/Maximum number of participants
Boys and Girls Cross-Country	10/30
Boys and Girls Tennis (1 squad)	10/15
Boys and Girls Volleyball	10/18
Boys and Girls Basketball	10/24
Cheerleading	10/24
Wrestling	10/15
Boys and Girls Soccer	15/28
Track and Field	10/25

Team rosters need approval of the Principal prior to being posted to ensure eligibility of all student athletes. Each team will be allowed to have one manager.

V. Responsibilities

A. Student Athletes

Responsibilities

- 1) All student athletes will abide by the school's rules, regulations and policies.
- 2) All student athletes will strive to establish balance between academics and athletics, and understand that academics come first.
- 3) All student athletes understand that playing time is not guaranteed.
- 4) All student athletes are expected to conduct themselves with dignity, sportsmanship and a sense of fair play on and off the field.
- 5) All student athletes must be aware that participation in the athletics program carries with it the responsibility to project a positive image and be a positive role model at all times.
- 6) Members of AOSR sports teams are expected to refrain from the use of smoking, drinking alcohol, and the use of illegal drugs.
- 7) Smoking, drinking alcohol, and the use of illegal drugs are not permitted on school time, defined as being on campus, traveling to and from events, and being at the events themselves. Any violation of this rule carries with it the minimum consequences of missing the next athletic contest and a parent conference with the principal.
- 8) Student athletes will strive to maintain top physical conditioning and well being in order to allow for maximum performance.
- 9) A student-athlete must attend their current sport practice, never missing it to attend the practice of an additional school sport whether in or out of season.
Arrangements will be made concerning a commitment to the arts and/or a class-related academic need (science lab). These are acceptable and necessary given our academic commitments. Students are not allowed to miss one of their school practices for an After School Athletic activity.
- 10) Mismanagement of academic responsibilities is not an excuse for missing varsity practice. Consequences for the unexcused missing of practice can include loss of playing time and dismissal from the team.

- 11) No student may attend practice if s/he did not attend classes during the academic school day of the practice.
- 12) No student may play in a game if s/he did not attend classes during the academic school day of the game. Missing school due to travel or playing on Saturdays is excused.
- 13) The athletic department expects all student athletes to be available to play in every game. Should an athlete not honor his/her commitment to attend a game, whether home or away, the coach has the right to deny future playing time or dismiss the athlete from the team. Excused absences for extenuating circumstances must be secured before missing a game, not after. In addition, should an athlete renege on a commitment to travel to Sigonella or the European championships (extenuating circumstances aside), the Athletic Director reserves the right to deny the student athlete the right to play in a to-be-determined number of future contests in their current season or in the next season the student athlete participates.
- 14) Missing more than one practice during the week may limit playing time on game day.
- 15) AP & IB students need to be aware that exams may take place at the same time as the Spring European finals in May.

B. Team Captains

A team captain is a student athlete who has a special responsibility in the overall development and success of an athletic team. Captains must be positive role models who are hardworking, dedicated, committed, and humble. A team captain demonstrates a positive attitude, leads by example, and shows respect for coaches, teachers, adults and peers. S/he must have a strong self-image, be mature, motivated and possess good communication skills. In addition, a team captain is in good academic standing, models and follows all school rules and regulations.

Responsibilities:

- 1) Promote teamwork while encouraging individual excellence of each team member.
- 2) Discourage criticism of others and lead team members in accepting responsibility for their own performance.
- 3) Understand and be committed to the school's rules and regulations and emphasize the importance to the team's members that they must be adhered.
- 4) Set the example for hard work and good sportsmanship.
- 5) Have a clear understanding of the team's overall goals and objectives and communicate them to the team's members.
- 6) Give credit to others and recognize team members for the contributions they make to the overall welfare of the team.
- 7) Discourage negative behavior, attitude and comments.
- 8) Work closely with the coach and team members to identify and solve problems that get in the way of successful team performance.

- 9) Take the responsibility at the end of the season for recognizing and thanking the coaches for their contributions.
- 10) Meet with Coaches and Athletic Director weekly to discuss coming events.

C. Team Managers

Team managers are selected by the coaches and are an essential and important part of all athletic teams. They must be extremely responsible and report to the coach and Athletic Director. Community service hours may be awarded for your dedication.

Responsibilities

- 1) Assist with creating and maintaining team rosters, records, forms.
- 2) Assist with organizing coaches' binders with contracts, permission forms and other documents.
- 3) Storage and maintenance of equipment.
- 4) Distribution and collection of uniforms and equipment as instructed by the coach.
- 5) Operate the scoreboard and take charge of the official scorebook for home games.
- 6) Other duties as assigned by the coach.

D. Parents

As your son or daughter becomes involved in the AOSR athletic program, they will be challenged and experience moments of both growth and satisfaction. As parents you can be apart of these experiences for your student - athlete by considering the following suggestions:

- 1) Be positive with your athlete. Let them know that they are accomplishing something by being part of a team.
- 2) Make them aware that what they are doing is important by communicating with the coach and respecting their role.
- 3) Do not offer excuses, push them to work hard and do their best.
- 4) Support your athlete by coming to games and cheering on the team. Set the standard for spectator sportsmanship.
- 5) Insist that your athlete respect team rules, school rules, game officials and sportsmanship.
- 6) Encourage your athlete to improve their self-image by believing in themself.
- 7) Encourage your athlete to play for the love of the game.
- 8) Respect the coaches and the decisions they make.
- 9) Support the team any way you can, volunteer.
- 10) Avoid doctor visits and/or family outings on the day of a game. Student athletes are expected to attend classes on the day of a game.
- 11) Communicate any issues directly with the Coach, Athletic Director or High School Principal as soon as possible.

VI. Policies

A. ELIGIBILITY GUIDELINES

Co-curricular activities are defined as those lying outside the regular curriculum for which a student's participation carries no academic credit. In some cases, such activities require a student to be absent from regularly scheduled classes. Academic eligibility for any co-curricular activity is determined in the accordance with the following criteria:

- 1) Students returning to AOSR from the previous school year will be considered eligible if their previous quarter grades meet the following situations:
 - a. GPA is at or above 2.0
 - b. Student did not earn more than one failing grade in any subject; or
 - c. Student did not earn one failing grade and two grades of D in any subject.
- 2) Students ineligible at the start of tryouts for a sports season will not be eligible at a later date in the season if their GPA improves above 2.0 at the end of the next quarter. (Though a probation period may be admitted.)
- 3) The progress of students new to AOSR will be determined at Progress Report time and/or via grade checks by the Principal. Quarter grades and GPA will be the indicators of eligibility. If a student is declared ineligible, the time period will be from the last day of the quarter until the last day of the succeeding quarter.
- 4) IB students are expected to maintain a minimum of 3.0 GPA in order to participate in an after-school activity (see Student and Parent Handbook).
- 5) Any student who quits a team during the season is not eligible to rejoin the team during that season for any reason. This does not apply to injured players.
- 6) Incomplete grades (I) will count as failing grades until such deficiencies have been removed.
- 7) If a student withdraws from a course, the grade recorded upon withdrawing will count towards eligibility.
- 8) A student on behavior probation or who is placed on behavior probation at any point in the quarter is declared ineligible.
- 9) A student serving an after-school detention may participate in an extracurricular activity as long as the activity takes place after the assigned detention.
- 10) A student serving an in-school or out-of-school suspension is not eligible to participate in that day's activities or any other activities that fall before the next school day.
- 11) Class attendance is mandatory the day of and, in the event of a weekend activity, the day following (Monday), all co-curricular activities. If the

activity is at the end of a school day, students must attend classes that day in order to participate in the activity.

- 12) Students may not miss any more school time than what has been organized by the school for co-curricular activities, i.e., students must attend school up to the time of departure for an event off campus that involves a trip.
- 13) Students who miss class due to participation in any co-curricular activity must complete an "Advance Absence Form" prior to departure, due on a date specified by their coach.
- 14) Students declared ineligible during a sport season are to return their uniform immediately, not participate in any practices or games, and not allowed to sit on the player's bench during games.

In addition to the above general rules for participation in co-curricular activities, the following apply to sports:

- 1) Students in grades 9 – 12 are eligible for 8 consecutive semesters after entering grade 9.
- 2) A student-athlete must not have reached the age of 19 on or before August 1st of the school year to be eligible to participate in athletics that school year.
- 3) A student athlete must be an amateur. An amateur athlete is one who has never used and is not using his/her knowledge of athletics or athletic skills in an athletic contest for financial gain.

B. Participation Requirements

- 1) Athletes (and parents/guardians) must have signed and returned the all participation forms by the required deadline.
- 2) Athletes must have completed the team Player Information Form
- 3) Sports physical must be submitted to the Nurse by deadline for the **current year**.
- 4) Provide all documents required for traveling to DoDDs schools including passports, visas, etc.

C. Attendance

- 1) To participate in any school sports activity, practice or game, athletes must attend classes on the day of the event. Exception must be cleared with the principal in advance. Students must present a medical excuse for any absence to the principal on the day of participation.
- 2) Attendance at all games and practices is required. Exceptions must be cleared with the coach in advance.
- 3) Athletes are expected to be on time to practices and games.
- 4) Student athletes must participate in 75% of all practices and 75% of all game competitions prior to the end of season tournament in order to be eligible to receive a letter in the sport at the end of year banquet.

C. Alcohol, Tobacco, Drugs

Members of AOSR sports teams are expected to refrain from the use of smoking, drinking alcohol, and the use of illegal drugs.

Smoking, drinking alcohol, and the use of illegal drugs are not permitted on school time, defined as being on campus, traveling to and from events, and being at the events themselves. Any violation of this rule carries with it the minimum consequences of missing the next athletic contest and a parent conference with the principal and a maximum consequence of suspension.

E. Medical, Health, Safety

An annual physical examination is required for participation on a high school varsity team. Student athletes are required to report all injuries, no matter how minor, to the coach.

If a student is absent from school for five or more consecutive days due to a physician attended injury, he/she must inform the coach and get a medical release before participating in a practice or game.

F. Uniforms and Equipment

Uniforms and equipment are provided by AOSR. In most sports the uniforms are signed out to the athletes. The athlete is expected to return the uniform to the Athletic Department at the end of the season, cleaned and in good repair and showing only reasonable wear and use. Uniforms and equipment that are lost or damaged become the financial responsibility of the athlete.

Athletic Department issued uniforms/equipment are to be worn only at interscholastic competitions or with the permission of the school. At no other time are school athletes to wear school issued uniforms.

G. Practices

Teams generally practice **everyday** after school from 15:30 – 17:00. Practice can also take place between 07:00 – 08:30 and 17:00 – 18:30 due to facility availability and students' academic schedules. In this case, students must organize their own transportation to and from training.

Attendance is recorded at practices/games. Regular tardiness and missed training sessions will result in; game/travel suspensions and possible removal from team.

Student athletes are expected to be on time for practices. A student athlete may not practice if he/she is absent from school. Exceptions must be cleared with the principal.

Late buses leave school daily at 17:00. When morning/late practices take place, students are responsible for making their own travel arrangements.

Practices and games can take place on Saturdays. Sunday practices are discouraged but under specific circumstances they may take place. Practice sessions do not take place on Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, Christmas Day, Easter, and Good Friday.

H. Travel

Student athletes should take with them toiletries, a sleeping bag (with mat), and money for meals and snacks, cellphone and homework. They must have a permission slip signed by their parent or guardian in order to be permitted to travel as well as a valid passport and visa (if appropriate) in their possession on all AOSR sports trips.

As a rule when traveling to away games and meets, the AOSR Athletic Department plans for teams to leave as late as possible in the school day in order not to miss significant class time.

Travel destinations in Italy and estimated travel times by bus are as follows (these times include rest stops):

Aviano	7 hrs 30 min	Aviano HS (Aviano, Italy Air Force Base)
Vicenza	7 hrs	Vicenza HS (Vicenza, Italy US Army Base)
Florence	4 hrs	(American School of Florence)
Naples	3 hrs	(Naples HS, Grisignano, Italy, US Navy Base)
Sigonella (Catania)	1.5 hrs (by plane)	(Sigonella HS, Italy, US Navy Base)
Marymount (Rome)	20 min	(Marymount International School)

Tournament Travel

End of season tournament sites vary from sport to sport. Tournaments take place in Germany generally in the Wiesbaden or Kaiserslautern areas. Travel to Germany may be by bus, train or by plane. There is an additional fee for tournaments (see European Commitment Contract).

I. Homework and schoolwork

All student athletes are responsible for making up homework and schoolwork missed during sports travel. It is understood that teachers will be made aware of who is going on a sports trip so that they can supply assignments in advance. Students must complete the "Advance Absence Form" and acquire the signatures and assignments from all teachers prior to leaving. Study Hall on trips will be provided.

J. Varsity Athletics Service Fee

AOSR athletics requires a €150.00 service fee for participation in a single sport season. This fee helps provide the resources and makes clear one's commitment. This contribution helps to offset expenses having to do with coaches, training, equipment maintenance, uniforms, facilities, transportation, referees, and more. A one-time fee streamlines the athletics process, making logistics more efficient.

1. If the service fee is not paid to the school within the first 5 days of the athlete making the roster, they will not be allowed to practice, be issued a uniform or participate in a game.
2. Athletes may be reimbursed for the service fee if requested within 10 calendar days after the first official practice.
3. Limited practice, playing or travel time does not exempt an athlete from the service fee. All efforts will be made to provide ample competition time for all students, Junior and Varsity.

VII. Falcon Sports Council

AOSR is a school that welcomes parent involvement on many levels and in many ways. One such place where parent involvement proves very helpful is with our athletic program. The Falcon Sports Council consists of parents interested in supporting AOSR athletics. The council supports the Athletic Director to promote the varsity athletic program in the following:

- 1) Assist in promoting a quality athletic program that encourages responsible student athletes;
- 2) Improve communication between parents, coaches and the school community;
- 3) Build team pride, unity and school spirit through student/parent participation;
- 4) Provide Fundraising Support in areas not covered in the annual budget (in accordance with school policies and procedures);
- 5) Assist in games and meets; and
- 6) Assist the Athletic Director (AD) in travel planning/support and in the annual Sports Banquet.

VIII. Awards

Each year coaches, along with the athletic director select qualified student-athletes for special awards. The selections get final approval from the head of school and principal. Normally one female and one male athlete are chosen for each award. These athletes are recognized at the Sports Banquet held in the spring. Names of award recipients are entered on a permanent plaque in the awards showcase at the school. In addition to the awards listed below, each coach annually awards a plaque to recognize the Most Improved Player of the Year, the Most Valuable Player (MVP), and a Coach's Award during the Annual Sports Banquet.

Scholar Athlete of the Year:

The candidates must have participated in at least two varsity sports throughout the year and can be from any high school grade. The candidates selected must have the highest GPA among all athletes (minimum of 3.3) throughout the year. In addition, the individual must have displayed athletic skills

Athlete of the Year:

The candidates must have participated in at least one varsity sport and shown outstanding athletic ability, while being recognized at Conference and/or European level. In addition to athletic ability, the student-athlete must have demonstrated exemplary sportsmanship. The candidates may be from any high school grade and must be confirmed by coaches and administration.

Falcon of the Year:

The candidates must have participated in two varsity or junior varsity sports. The candidates can be from any high school grade. They must have good athletic ability and embody the spirit of the school by showing enthusiasm, demonstrating excellent sportsmanship and determination in both sports.

Faidley Sportsman Award:

This award is presented to individuals who exemplify a sportsman defined as “one who plays fairly and wins or loses gracefully” and who, through their athletic achievement, have brought honor to their sport their school and themselves.

It is awarded to senior athletes who have excelled at the varsity level and demonstrated leadership in their chosen sport. Participating in at least 6 AOSR sports teams at the varsity level, this individual must have served as captain or co-captain of a team for a minimum of three seasons, placing first, second or third as an individual and/or part of an AOSR sports team within the American Schools of Italy League (ASIL)/DODDS European Tournament or being named to the ASIL/DODDS European all-conference or all-tournament team, while maintaining GPA of at least 2.5 on a 4.0 scale.

Furthermore, the student-athlete must be confirmed by the school administration as having set an example of sportsmanship and good character. This endowed award includes a presentation of a personal plaque in addition to entry of the recipient’s name in the award showcase.