



**Ellis County Christian Homeschool Organization
(ECCHO)
Athletic Handbook**

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ECCHO Athletic Leadership 23-24

Athletic Director: Wendy Johnson

Baseball Head Coach: Skip Chancellor

Cheer Head Coach: Jacee Fink

Cheer Assistant Coach: Clifton Phelps

Soccer Head Coach: Carmen Salvador

Soccer Assistant Coach: Stormy Turner

Volleyball Head Coach: Lydia Metcalfe

Volleyball Assistant Coach: David Ramirez

ECCHO Sports Offered: 2023-2024

Season	Jr. High	High School
Fall (August – November)		Cheerleading Volleyball
Winter (October - February)		Cheerleading Soccer
Spring (January – May)		Cheerleading Baseball
Summer (June - August)		



ECCHO Culture

ECCHO believes athletics are an important addition to a student's education.

Our sports programs exist to fulfill the mission of ECCHO through the educational environment of sports. Athletics offer a unique setting where lessons complement those learned at home to provide student-athletes with the intellectual and "success skills" needed to excel in the world and shine their light in the community. ECCHO Athletics is committed to a disciple-driven approach to coaching that approaches all of these lessons from a biblical worldview.

What It Means To Be An ECCHO Eagle

- *Always be Christ-like in our attitude, behavior, and sportsmanship whether we win or lose.
- *Show up every day with the commitment, dedication, and sacrifice of putting ECCHO and your teammates before yourself.
- *Play the game with determination, pride, and a competitive spirit for your group and teammates while showing humility and respectfulness to the other team.
- *Be a good teammate at ALL times.
- *Be relentless in always striving for excellence in your execution of the mechanics, fundamentals, and techniques to master the tools necessary to compete at a high level.
- *Respect The Game - do what the game asks and requires – nothing more, nothing less – no showboating
- *212 Degrees - At 211 degrees water is simply hot, but at 212 degrees it boils. In sports training/competition as well as education, work, and all other aspects of your

life, you are underestimating your true potential without the extra degree. 212 degrees should serve as a powerful reminder in guiding the way you think, plan, act, and compete.



Mission

The purpose and goal of ECCHO athletics is to provide opportunities for student-athletes to develop spiritually, personally, and physically through a Christ-centered program. Our goal is to grow our minds and bodies and to Shine His Light in the community as we pursue and play the sports we love. Our focus is to provide an environment that embodies Christ-like behavior in our athletes, leaders, parents, families, and fans. ECCHO believes this type of environment can exist within a competitive athletic program. As Christian student-athletes, we strive to be Christ-like champions, who honor Christ in how we conduct ourselves on and off the playing field. We are called to be different, our focus should be on Jesus Christ, and our desire is to take His light to our community every time we step on the playing field.

Commitment

Commitment from student-athletes and parents is an important character quality. When a student-athlete commits to an ECCHO team, any scheduling conflicts with another organization, program, or team must be discussed with the coach and it will be expected that ECCHO athletic programs will take priority. This is important for teamwork, the integrity of the player, and the character of the player and the team. The athletic leadership will be sensitive to all

student-athlete commitments while upholding the integrity of the programs.



Eligibility

- ❖ Student-athlete candidates must be current ECCHO members in good standing, with no outstanding fees. (If a family has not applied for ECCHO membership at the time of tryouts, the family must apply for and become members before the student-athlete will officially be recognized as part of the team.)
- ❖ Student-athlete candidates must be able to agree to the time commitment for the sport they're trying out for.
- ❖ Student-athlete candidates must meet the age requirement for the sports program they are trying out for.
- ❖ Student-athlete candidates are currently homeschooled. (If the student-athlete candidate is not currently being homeschooled at the time of tryouts, he/she is still eligible to tryout, but will need to take steps to become a homeschooler in the state of Texas before he/she will be officially recognized as part of the team.)
- ❖ Student-athlete candidates are able to fulfill the tryout process for the sport they're trying out for.
- ❖ Student-athletes that are part of a school system that doesn't offer sports will be considered on a case-by-case basis by the team coaches and athletic director.

Attendance

Every team functions best when every student-athlete is present. The program director and coaches will always do everything possible to notify the team members of scheduled events at the beginning of each season. If there is a definite scheduling conflict at the time of schedule distribution, parents and student-athletes should notify the coaches right away in writing. Athletes are expected to attend and be on time for

every scheduled event. On-time means in place and ready to go at the scheduled start time. If an unexpected, unavoidable scheduling conflict arises, communication with the coaches is expected well before the scheduled event begins.



Eagles Sports Code Of Conduct

Player Code of Conduct:

- First class representation by student-athletes toward parents/families, teammates, coaches, spectators, and opposing teams.
- Exhibit positive & exemplary sportsmanship at all times - ECCHO student-athletes will win and lose with dignity and class amongst each other and in dealing with the opposing team.
- Display appropriate demeanor/attitude by all student-athletes. The student-athletes will conduct themselves as young men and young ladies on and off the field/court/etc.
- Exhibit equal respect, value, and support for every teammate.
- Understand the importance of leaving every field and facility in better shape than we found them.
- Understand the physical and mental preparation, fitness, and conditioning at practice and games.
- Student-athletes will always play hard within the established rules of the game.
- Remember to eat before arriving at games or events - if we play a doubleheader or have an extra long event bring a light snack and drink to eat between games.
- Student-athletes will come prepared to all practices, games, events, etc
- Student-athletes will refrain from cell phone use at games, practices, and events without permission from the coach or athletic director.
- For the safety of players, please refrain from chewing gum at practices, games, or events.

- Student-athletes will be present and attentive at each game, practice, or event. While always being polite, kind, and friendly to all people is important, socializing should happen after the event is completed.



Parent Code of Conduct:

- First class representation of ECCHO team, families, church & community.
- Positive and exemplary sportsmanship - we will win and lose with dignity and class amongst each other and in dealing with the opposing team.
- Equal respect, value, and support for every player, parent, and family member associated with the ECCHO team.
- The understanding that it takes a team to accomplish team goals - i.e. a player's exposure to the sun for hours before a game or practice (lake trip, swimming pool, etc) will be discouraged.
- Mutual respect, tolerance, understanding, and caring in all team matters.
- Coaches' decisions, whether you understand, like, or agree, are made by the coaches on the field, court, or event. Second-guessing the coach's decision is permitted, but please keep it to yourself until you have a chance to speak with the coaching staff for a clearer explanation.
- Please...No coaching from the stands or sidelines.
- Please...limit your trips to the player during games and events. Players are responsible for their equipment, snacks, water, etc.
- Emphasis on Team unity, Team effort & Team success is important - positive encouragement & support for each player & the entire team
- Understand the reality that from this point forward in all sports, some players will have more playing time, more position/roles & assignments than other players.
- Please text or call the coach to quietly & tactfully discuss any concerns, questions, or ideas - please respect the 24-hour rule.

- 24-hour rule - no calls/texts 24 hours before or after the game/ event to discuss the player's conduct, playing time, position, etc. *See further explanation in the handbook.



ECCHO Dress Code

Ellis County Christian Homeschool Organization (ECCHO) Dress code

ECCHO members should dress appropriately for any given activity and will be required to adhere to the following dress code for ALL ECCHO events, functions, programs, activities, classes, and sports teams.

1. Shorts and short skirts/dresses worn with shorts underneath must be at least fingertip length. (Standing with arms straight down at your sides, if your fingertips touch your bare legs, what you are wearing is too short.) Shorts, skirts, jeans, and pants with rips above the fingertip length will not be allowed unless tights are worn underneath so that bare skin is not showing.
2. The following will not be allowed: tank tops that allow bra straps to show; tube tops; tops or low-rise pants/shorts that allow the midriff to be seen; see-through or skin-tight clothing; clothing that shows cleavage; clothing with offensive pictures or slogans; or shorts, skirts, or pants with any kind of writing across the rear.
3. No parts of underwear may be showing at any time.
4. To honor our more conservative members, swimwear for girls and women should be a one-piece suit or tankini with an over-shirt (t-shirt or modest tank) and shorts at co-ed water events. For boys and men, swim trunks and a T-shirt or tank.
5. Anyone violating this dress code may be asked to leave the event.
6. Any member of this organization that persists in violating this dress code will no

longer be considered a member in good standing.

All sports uniforms will adhere to the ECCHO dress code



Uniforms:

Each sports team has its own uniform. Uniform costs will vary depending on the sporting team each individual player is part of. ECCHO teams should represent our programs well by having clean, properly cared-for uniforms. Uniforms and gear should not be altered without prior written approval from coaches and/ or the athletic director. If a uniform is altered inappropriately, it will be required to be re-altered appropriately at the cost of the player. If a uniform is lost or damaged, it shall be replaced at the cost of the player. Uniforms shall always be worn in accordance with what the team, team captains, and coaches instruct.

Appearance

ECCHO team players are representatives of ECCHO and are seen as leaders on and off the field, court, etc. Players should represent the program well by always presenting themselves with modesty, cleanliness (clean hair, nails, clothes, and proper hygiene), and appropriate clothes that follow the ECCHO dress code. They should always be kind, respectful, and friendly to everyone and exemplify ECCHO's motto of shining His light.

Play Time

ECCHO Athletics strives to offer a fun, competitive, high school experience for our athletes and families. In order to make this happen for all of our athletes,

playtime at any level is not guaranteed. Athletic personnel are sensitive to every athlete's desire to play and participate. Attitude, effort, skill, ability, and safety are taken into consideration when choosing team members and when making game and practice plans. It is important that athletes and parents understand that success doesn't always mean the athlete is on the playing field.



24-Hour Rule

Do not confront a coach immediately before or after a contest or practice; instead, wait for a full twenty-four hours before making contact of any sort - this includes emails and text messages. Because impulsive meetings rarely promote resolution, the “24-hour rule” will always be in effect. This not only allows for reflection and prayer but for emotions to settle so rational, facts-oriented discussions can take place.

Parental Support & Expectations

The success of our student-athletes depends greatly upon parent support and participation. Parents should familiarize themselves with all requirements, guidelines, codes, and rules. Parents are expected to contribute to the team's needs by signing up for parent service assignments. Communication is of utmost importance. Athletes AND parents are responsible for maintaining excellent communication with coaches and the athletic director.

Tryouts

Tryouts are held for each sporting program. This gives students/candidates the opportunity to assess the sport they are interested in and coaches the

opportunity to assess candidates as individuals and to see how candidates interact as a team. Candidates and parents will need to attend the scheduled informational meeting for the sport they're interested in, and candidates will attend tryout clinics/events/days. Candidate selection processes vary per program. Selection postings will be made by the athletic director and/or coaches per individual program.



Practice

Practice schedules will be provided to the athletes by the athletic director or coaches. The goal is to be consistent with practice space and times. If changes must be made an announcement will be made. Student-athletes and parents are responsible for keeping up with practice dates/times. Email, Groupme, Game Changer, and Google Calendar are the usual avenues for schedules and communication.

Fees

The ECCHO Eagles Sports Programs strive to provide an opportunity for homeschooled students to participate in sports and have the full high school athletic experience. As part of this program, we budget for coaching fees, officials, field rental, equipment, insurance, game fields, tournament fees, & other sports program-related expenses. The uniform package is a separate fee from the program fees. Fees are to be paid in full by the dates specified in each individual sports program. All monies paid by parents go directly to the program and help to pay the various expenses. The money is held in the ECCHO account and the treasurer keeps a monthly record of all expenses and income. Sports budgets are reviewed and approved by the Athletic Director and/or the

ECCHO Board of Directors. As a part of the ECCHO Eagles Sports Program, Parents agree to pay all fees due in a timely manner.



Transportation

Transportation to and from games and practices is the sole responsibility of the student-athletes and the parents.

Facilities

Although we do not own the facilities we use, we are blessed to have them available to us! Please be good stewards of that which the Lord provides us with. Please do all you can to keep the facilities clean and to leave them in better shape than we found them.

Multi-sport

Student-athletes may participate in multiple sports with ECCHO. Student-athletes and parents need to be mindful of the commitment to each sport. Student-athletes need to make sure their coaches and athletic staff know of other commitments and such so

that they can plan accordingly.



Athletic Lettering Policy

Students bearing a “letter” or letter jacket from ECCHO represent faith, family, and ECCHO at all times. In light of this, the awarding of a letter is considered both an honor and a privilege. Students involved in serious disciplinary misbehavior may be barred from receiving a letter at the discretion of the ECCHO Board of Directors, even if the student meets all other criteria given below.

General Lettering Requirements

- ❖ The Student-athlete must be part of the Varsity Roster through the entire season/ year.
- ❖ The Student-athlete must contribute to the team in a way that merits lettering.
- ❖ If the student-athlete was added during the season/ year, it will be up to the coaching staff/ athletic director whether the athlete’s contribution to the team was significant enough to justify lettering in the sport.
- ❖ The student-athlete must attend all games and practices, except when cleared by the coach.
- ❖ The student-athlete must begin and complete an entire season, including post-season tournaments and playoffs.
- ❖ A student-athlete who loses academic eligibility during the season will be ineligible to letter that season/ year.
- ❖ A student-athlete who is unable to finish a season, for disciplinary reasons, will be ineligible to letter that season/ year.

- ❖ If a student-athlete is injured during the season/ year, it will be up to the coaching staff/athletic director whether the athlete's contribution to the team was significant enough to justify lettering in the sport.

Jackets and Patches

All letter jackets and patch info can be found on the ECCHO website under the sports tab. The athlete's family is responsible for the cost of the jacket. Student-athletes are awarded one Letter "E", one sport patch (per program lettered in), and an eagle as part of the ECCHO sports program. The student-athlete family is responsible for the cost of additional patches.



Captain/Co-Captain Responsibilities and Expectations

Captains need to inspire and motivate others to reach a goal that everyone is working hard for. Captains are leaders, who help lead the team. They build the culture, with the coach, that the team wants to continue. It is important for the captain of an Eagles team to have the right spirit. The captain is a servant leader.

Qualities of a Captain/Co-Captain

- Has a thorough understanding of the rules, participation policies, and code of conduct that affect the team – and ensure that they are adhered to/enforced.
- A show of confidence in the team and each player. Supports the teammates while also pushing them to be their best, to work harder than they think they can work.
- Addresses conflicts before a conflict turns into a problem.
- Cheers for their teammates the loudest.
- Puts the team first. They have a team focus - putting their own beliefs, thoughts, and performance behind the vision of the team.
- Clear communication skills.
- Respectful behavior towards others even if they have differing opinions. Every person on the team matters and a captain respects every person and the role that each of them plays.
- Strong work ethic and understanding that he/she is a representative of the team and organization.
- Leads by example.
- A Christ-like attitude of *fairness, kindness, and understanding*. A positive attitude will win players over and inspire others to continue to be positive even amidst moments of doubt or frustration.
- Remain positive all of the time so that the rest of the team's attitudes will reflect that, and be a role model for his/her teammates in accordance with what the coach expects from them.
- Is in control of him/herself – no angry outbursts. Show of equality/equal opportunity – no favoritism.
- Displays obvious dedication to the game and team.



Matthew 18

“If another believer sins against you, go privately and point out the offense.

If the other person listens and confesses it, you have won that person back. But if you are unsuccessful, take one or two others with you and go back again, so that everything you say may be confirmed by two or three witnesses.” Matthew 18:15-16 (NLT)

Parenting and Coaching are both difficult vocations. By keeping lines of communication open between parents, student-athletes, coaches, and athletic staff, many potential problems can be avoided. This begins with clear communication between the coaches, the athletic staff, parents, and student-athletes. ECCHO uses the Matthew 18 principle as our guide for resolving conflict. Matthew 18 provides clear biblical instructions for resolving conflicts.

1. If a student-athlete has a question or complaint, he/she first must go to the person with a spirit of reconciliation and love and try to work out differences. This needs to happen before the parent approaches the coach or athletic staff.
2. If the problem is not resolved, the student-athlete may request a meeting with the person in conflict and the coach or another member of the athletic staff.
3. If the issue is not resolved between the coach/staff and student-athlete, then a meeting with the athletic director or another representative of the board may be requested.
4. If the issue is still not resolved, a meeting with the athletic director and/or board of directors may be requested.

The goal should always be to guard against divisive speech and gossip by solving problems at the lowest level with the fewest people possible.



Discipline

1. Students are expected to obey all leaders while attending ECCHO activities and abide by the ECCHO code of conduct at all times.
2. Ongoing discipline problems may result in the loss of activity privileges.
3. A three-step discipline policy will be followed for most discipline problems.

Eagles 3-step discipline policy

- a. A first offense will warrant a verbal warning from the Coach, Athletic Director, or adult in charge.
- b. A second offense will result in documented discipline slip from the Athletic Director and/or Coach and a call to the parent.
- c. A third offense will result in a document discipline slip from the Athletic Director and a call to the parent to set up a meeting with the board of directors, student, and parent to review the situation.
- d. Incidents repeatedly occurring at different events will result in a more detailed review of the situation and/or loss of Eagles Sports Program privileges.

Suspension

If a suspension is necessary it will be decided upon after a meeting with the ECCHO board of directors, the Sports program director, and the team coaches.



ECCHO Eagles Baseball Program

The ECCHO Eagles Baseball Program is an outreach ministry to the families of ECCHO. The purpose of this program is to provide a developmental, fun, competitive, and safe environment for boys ages 13 - 18 years old. Our goal is to provide homeschooled boys with the ideals of good sportsmanship, honesty, loyalty, courage, and respect for authority through the game of baseball. We strive to teach the student-athletes how to work within a team setting by respecting their teammates, portraying a team-first attitude, and then dedicating themselves through commitment and sacrifice to become more Christ-like in the manner in which they approach the game while turning baseball lessons into life lessons that go beyond the ballfield. ECCHO Eagles athletes are seen as leaders within the program and are held to a higher standard as such.

Tryouts:

Baseball Tryouts are held in later summer and early fall each year. Students ages 13 (by September 1st) to 18 are eligible to try out. Tryout dates and times will be determined by the athletic director and baseball coaches. Dates and times will be posted on the ECCHO website and social media platforms. Student-athlete candidates are expected to come prepared in appropriate baseball attire (head to toe), and bring all necessary baseball equipment, and water to every tryout.

Candidates will be evaluated during tryouts by coaches. Student-athlete candidates may be asked to return on additional tryout days before a final decision is made. Results will be emailed to parents of student-athletes within one week following tryout.

Commitment:

Eagles Baseball is an academic year-long program. The team member's term begins in August and ends at the end of May of the following year. Team members are expected to attend practices in the fall, participate in baseball class during the "academic year" and participate in the full baseball season - class, practice, games, and tournaments during the spring. Team members commit to participating in various activities, fundraisers, parades, etc. as part of their place on the team. (Special circumstances are considered on a case-by-case basis - please talk to the coach and athletic director.)

Practices:

Fall practices are two days a week for 6 weeks from October to mid-November. Spring practices are two days a week starting in Mid-January through early May.

Baseball Class:

Eagles baseball will have a baseball class on Fridays as part of the high school classes offered by ECCHO. The purpose of the baseball class is to free up practice time for practice. Class time will be used for communication, covering program details, team building, team development, baseball knowledge, and scenarios. Team members will participate in devotionals as well as health and nutrition.

Competition:

Our goal is to be a competitive team who works hard on and off the field and shines His light for the world to see. The Eagles baseball teams will play a full season of regular season games each spring (approximately 20-40 games). The Varsity team will enter into two to three tournaments during the regular season. The JV team may enter one tournament during the season if the opportunity arises. The Eagles baseball program plans to end the season with a trip to the homeschool world series or the National Association of Christian Athletes as deemed appropriate by the coach and athletic director.

Calendar:

The Eagles games will be posted on the team calendar, and team game changer. Parents and team members are responsible for keeping up with the calendar.

Groupme:

The Eagles Baseball team has a GroupMe dedicated to team members and at least one parent per player. It is important that you have the app and keep up with notifications.

Attendance and Absences:

It is expected that parents and team members communicate to the coach and/or athletic director any issues or problems that arise in a timely manner. Team members are expected to be at all practices, classes, games, etc. It is understandable that things come up and sometimes team members are unavailable, please communicate with coaches and/or the athletic director as soon as possible. When possible please schedule vacations, family events, and other commitments during the off-season. Team members are expected to be on time, dressed appropriately, and ready to participate.

Fundraising:

Baseball is an expensive sport and ECCHO recognizes the need for fundraising to help cover some of the costs for the program. Team members and families are expected to participate in all fundraising opportunities.

2023-2024 Baseball Fees:

The ECCHO baseball program season fee is \$900 per Varsity and Junior Varsity player, and \$700 per Developmental Program player. This fee does not cover the end-of-season championship. This fee can be paid in installments throughout the fall. The full amount is due by the end of January. Uniform fees are \$325 per Varsity player, and \$260 for Junior Varsity and Developmental Program players. Individual pieces can be purchased as needed. (Fees for the program and uniforms are subject to change.)

Baseball Team members are expected to follow all the guidelines as laid out in the ECCHO Athletic Handbook.



ECCHO Eagles Developmental Program

Our Player Development Program is designed for those committed to being the best they can be.

The goal of this program is to have players improve their skill level and knowledge of the game in order to allow them to participate in and receive more game day reps and participation.

The completion of the program does not guarantee additional playing time at any point but will help to establish guidelines for each player trying to achieve their individual goals.

Per the evaluation grading system, our Developmental Program will be structured around each individual players current evaluation grade and encompass the very basics of their throwing, catching and hitting abilities.

During the developmental training sessions and through using a variety of practice/skill enhancement drills, we will emphasize the proper techniques, fundamentals, and mechanics of fielding ground balls, catching fly balls, throwing, footwork, speed/agility, and hitting. The hitting drills will include a focus on their hitting stance, the timing of their load on the pitch, their bat path swing, etc.

The DP players will receive an equal amount of practice time/reps and participation as the other members of the team, however, they will be assigned to the JV roster with very limited playing time until these players have shown the skill improvement necessary to award additional playing time during games. The DP players must also learn and at least have an average baseball understanding of where, when, how, and why during game situations.

In addition, each DP player must have the focus, commitment, and dedication to do extra work on his own time in order to accelerate the improvement of his skill level other than just during the practice or game day field setting.

The following will give you a quick overview of things that will be covered during the DP as a reference to the goals and expectations in completing the program and receiving the most benefits from your time invested.

Pitchers...A structured throwing program will condition their arms to be in top form once their season starts. They will follow a 10-week throwing program similar to the way the pros prepare their bodies and arms for the long season ahead. They will also learn the importance of Arm Care and have developed a routine for once their season starts. The goal is for them to not want to throw a baseball until they have warmed up properly with their Pre Workout Arm Care routine and get in the habit of their day not being over until they have completed their Post Workout Arm Care routine.

Hitters...Reps-Reps-Reps. The more swings a player gets while focusing on their fast twitch muscles, the better. A confident hitter is by far a more productive hitter. This program, too, will be similar to the way the pros train to prepare for battle! We will have a "Tee Routine" that each session will start with geared towards creating rhythm and athleticism in their swing. This routine will also help your Dude develop a more repeatable swing while at the same time learning who they are and what their swing feels like when it is right and what it feels like when they are doing something wrong.

Fielders...Individualized defense. Each position is different. There are many things to work on to perfect that position. Whether it be an outfielders footwork on fielding a ground ball and he needs to come up and throw the runner out at home. Or a second baseman who needs work to be quick on turning a double play on a ground ball to his left. Over the course of this program your Dude will learn and get in the reps it takes to be one of the best at his position.

The work we will get in during these in-season sessions will act as continued education. Your player will learn how to handle the situations that come up every season. We will discuss what's happening on the field, good and bad, and they will learn how these situations are handled at the highest level of this game. Being mentally tough is so important in this game. With the guidance your player will get in this program, they will develop skills that will not only make them a tougher player but will also prepare them for a successful life. Pitchers will get in their weekly bullpens, hitters will get in a BP session to work through any issues that are going on and continue their "Tee Routine" and fielders will continue to get in their reps to stay on point with their footwork and ball/glove transfer.



ECCHO Eagles Cheerleading

Congratulations on trying out to become an ECCHO Eagles Cheerleader! Please read the following information to learn all you will need to know about tryouts, and what to expect if you make the squad.

Our cheerleaders are more than just cheerleaders. They are the face of our program and ambassadors for our students. As followers of Christ, all of our ECCHO students are held to high moral standards and are encouraged to shine their light wherever they go. ECCHO always wants to represent God, homeschooling, and our program well. Our cheerleaders are held to that same standard in all that they do. They will have the privilege of representing ECCHO at program events including, but not limited to New Family Meetings, Homeschool 101 Workshops, Book Fairs, Class days, Sporting Events, Pep Rallies, Parades, Cheer Competition and Fundraising. Our squad members will focus on cheer athleticism including physical conditioning, cheer skills/ technique, dancing, jumps, and how to work together as a team. They will be learning about the sports programs ECCHO participates in and when, what, how, and why to cheer and will have an encouraging attitude towards/ show respect to all teams, players, and coaches at all times. ECCHO cheerleaders are seen as leaders within the program. Participating in ECCHO cheer gives squad members the opportunity to develop their leadership skills while promoting program and community spirit.

All ECCHO athletes are expected to read the sports information and adhere to the guidelines and expectations found in the ECCHO Athletic Handbook. Please read, fill out, and return the forms provided in the handbook before tryouts begin.

Tryouts

Tryouts for ECCHO Cheerleading will be May 8-11, from 2:30 pm - 4:30 each day at Longbranch Community Church in Midlothian. 200 Longbranch Rd, Midlothian, TX 76065

These will be closed tryouts. Only coaches invited ECCHO staff, helpers and candidates will be allowed in the gym.

- Please pick up your student-athlete promptly at 4:30 each day. Candidates are expected to arrive at least 5 minutes prior to start time and will stay until dismissed.
- Candidates will wear black shorts and a solid white t-shirt for the duration of tryouts. (ECCHO dress code applies)
- Hair should be pulled away from the face, in a ponytail if possible
- No jewelry will be permitted at tryouts
- Nails should be trimmed. False nails are permitted but must be kept at a short length.

Candidates will be evaluated throughout the week, and scoring will be based on the following:

- How they work as a team member
- Are they able to learn choreography/ are they teachable?
- Attitude, friendliness, respectfulness. Will they represent ECCHO well?
- Appearance – come prepared in proper attire, clean well-cared-for clothing
- Learning and performing the following:
 - 2 cheers: cheer enthusiasm, motions and techniques
 - short portion of a dance: motion and technique
 - voice and projection
 - cheer jumps
 - overall spirit and enthusiasm
 - tumbling (optional)
- May 11th will be the final evaluations. Candidates will perform all they have learned in a small group.
- Results will be posted by Monday, May 15

*Videos will be sent to the candidates so they can be practicing choreography at home.

Mission:

The ECCHO cheerleader program provides students the opportunity to develop and promote unity within ECCHO. Squad Members will support other students and programs. They will be known for their faith in Jesus Christ, strength, self-control, and leadership skills. They will lead by example how to Shine His Light, as individuals and as a group throughout the entire school year.

Commitment:

- ECCHO cheer is a year-long program. The squad member's term begins the day that the squad is announced, after tryouts, and ends once the tryout process is complete the following year.
- Squad members must be free to spend the necessary time, as decided by the coach, both during the summer and the entire school year.
- Yearly approximate costs will be posted at the cheer informational meeting before season tryouts.
- All squad members are financially responsible for the following:
 - Camp payment – which must be received before participation in camp
 - Uniforms/ Supplies as designated by the coach and approved by the athletics coordinator and ECCHO board
 - Fundraising participation
- All payments are non-refundable. If a squad member is removed from or quits the team, refunds are not guaranteed.

Practices:

- Cheer practice will be held each Tuesday and each Thursday starting in August. The exact times are TBD.
- Squad members are expected to arrive to practices at least 5 minutes early
- All squad members are expected to wear proper workout clothes and workout shoes that follow the ECCHO Dress Code
- Hair should be pulled away from the face, in a ponytail if possible
- No jewelry is permitted at practice
- Squad members are responsible for bringing all necessary equipment. (poms, megaphones, water, sweat towel, etc.)
- Squad members will wait to leave until dismissed by the coach.
- Squad members are expected to stay with the team at all times. There will be no wandering around campus permitted.
- Cell phone use is not permitted during practice.
- Gum chewing and snacking are not permitted at practice. Please eat before arrival.

Cheer Class:

All squad members will be required to enroll in a Cheer Class. The purpose of a cheer class is to free up practice time for practice. Class time will be used for communication, covering program details, team building, and squad member development. The cheer coaching team will do everything possible to avoid conflicts with other classes. Squad members will participate in Bible Study/ devotionals as well as health and nutrition classes. They will learn about the sporting teams they cheer for volleyball, soccer, and baseball. They will memorize cheers and chants and when to use them. They will study game etiquette, create posters and other advertising material for ECCHO programs, strengthen relationships with each other through team-building and participate in fundraising communications. Class time TBD

Camp:

ECCHO Cheer Camp will be August 7-11, 9:00 am - 12:00 daily at Longbranch Community Church Midlothian. 200 Longbranch Rd, Midlothian, TX 76065

Squad Members are required to attend cheer camp in its entirety.

Attire: athletic clothes, athletic shoes, hair up, no jewelry.

Competition:

ECCHO Cheer is planning on participating in a Christian Cheer competition. Squad members are not required to participate in the competition. Squad members will notify the coach if they are able to participate as soon as the competition date and cost are posted. Fundraising will be done to assist in covering the cost of the competition, but squad members are responsible for any remaining balance needed to attend.

Events:

Squad members are an important part of ECCHO as they are ambassadors for the program. Squad members are expected to represent ECCHO at events including, but not limited to new family meetings, homeschool 101 workshops, book fairs, pep rallies, parades, ECCHO meetings and events, class days, and sporting events.

****Gum chewing, snacking, and cell phone use are not permitted at any cheer event***

Important Dates:

Coaches and the Athletics director will supply all dates for games and events as soon as they are available. Communication for ECCHO cheer events will be posted through a Google Cheer calendar, a Cheer Live List Schedule through Google Docs, as well as frequent email updates.

- May 8th-11th - Cheer Tryouts – 2:30 pm - 4:30 daily
- May 23rd - Mandatory Cheer Meeting for parents and squad members: Celebrate new squad members, uniform measuring, camp details – 6:00 pm - 8 pm
- August 1st - Mandatory Cheer Meeting for parents and squad members – season dates, expectations, fundraising, competition – 6:00 pm - 8:00
- August 7th-11th - Cheer Camp – 9:00 am - 12:00 daily
- Cheer Practice - Every Tuesday and Thursday, exact time TBD
- Cheer Class – exact time TBD

****Squad members will cheer for home games and possibly some away games for all ECCHO Sports: Dates will be posted as soon as teams release them.***

Attendance, Absences, and Communication:

Communication is extremely important! It is expected that parents and squad members will communicate any and all cheer issues with the coach and/ or athletics director in a timely manner. A main form of frequent communication will be through an ECCHO Cheer GroupMe. At least one Cheer parent must be active on the Cheer GroupMe for frequent communication updates. Squad members are permitted to be included on GroupMe with parent permission, but a parent will still be required to participate.

Squad members are expected to be at all practices, classes, events, and games on time and ready to participate unless the coach has been previously notified in writing (via GroupMe, email, or written note) by a Squad member or parent, or if previous arrangements have been made between the coach, squad member, and squad member parent. It is understandable that squad members cannot always be at every event. We expect that when possible, vacations, family events, and other commitments will be scheduled around cheer commitments. If a squad member cannot make it to a scheduled cheer event, it is expected that communication with coaches about the absence is communicated as soon as possible.

Squad members are expected to arrive at all events at least 5 minutes early, dressed appropriately and ready to participate. If a squad member is going to be late because of unforeseen circumstances, they are expected to notify their coach BEFORE the event starts.

If improper attendance or punctuality becomes an issue, a meeting will be arranged with the coach, athletics director, squad member, and parent to discuss the consequences.

Fundraising:

ECCHO cheerleaders will have fundraising opportunities throughout the year. Fundraising gives the program a chance to grow, helps each squad member further develop leadership skills, benefits the community, and lightens the financial load for our cheer families. Each squad member is expected to participate in fundraising.

Other Programs:

The ECCHO cheer coaches and athletics director encourage squad members to participate in other ECCHO programs besides cheer. The cheer squad coaches will do what they can to work with other program directors and the busy schedules of squad members.

Communication will be of utmost importance if a squad member chooses to be involved with other ECCHO programs. Squad members should notify the coach right away if they choose this route.

Because ECCHO Theater is a very popular program, all cheer commitments will be on hold during theater tech weeks and theater performances.

If a squad member chooses to participate in an additional ECCHO program they will still be expected to participate in any and all cheer events that they are able to attend.

Uniform:

- Squad members are expected to keep uniforms clean, and in presentable condition, including shoes.
- Uniforms are only to be worn for ECCHO cheer events.
- Squad members will wear the designated uniform as directed by the team captain and/or coach. Which may include hair and accessories depending on the event.
- Appropriate undergarments will be worn at all times with the uniform. Undergarments should be discreet (not show) and neutral in color.
- If an alteration needs to be made to any uniform, written approval must be obtained from the coach. If a uniform is altered too short, too tight, etc. the uniform must be altered back to its original condition at the squad member's expense.
- All uniforms must meet the requirements of the ECCHO dress code.
- Jewelry may be worn with uniforms at ECCHO classes and at games unless notified otherwise. The following jewelry is permitted: complimentary colors to uniform, 1 tasteful necklace, 1 ring, 1 bracelet, stud earrings, or small 1/4" hoops
- Jewelry is not permitted at practice, pep-rallys, competitions, or camp. The coach will notify squad members to any changes regarding jewelry
- Fingernails, including artificial nails must remain at a length appropriate for safe participation. An appropriate length is when fingernails are not visible beyond the end of the fingers when viewed from the palm side of the hands.

Attitude/ Attire/ Dress Code:

Because ECCHO cheerleaders are seen as leaders and ambassadors for our program, squad members are expected to always follow the ECCHO dress code at ECCHO classes and events, even if not in uniform.

Squad members should always lead by example, shining their light always. Display modest dress and behavior. Be kind, courteous, uplifting, and encouraging to everyone. Show respect always, and strive to resolve any conflict or disagreeable circumstances in a Godly manner. Smile, have fun, and encourage school spirit while encouraging others to do the same.

Games:

Squad members are expected to be present (meaning aware of what's going on and paying attention) at each game they are cheering for. They should be ready to cheer at appropriate times with the appropriate cheer. Squad members will be learning the ins and outs of each sport in their cheer classes. While squad members are always encouraged to be kind and friendly to everyone, games are not a time to be socializing. Squad members will present themselves professionally and represent ECCHO well, Shining His Light.

Game Expectations:

- Arrive 30 minutes before the game starts
- Be dressed in proper uniform and ready to participate
- Eat before the game – no eating while cheering
- If sitting while cheering – keep both feet on the floor/ stands (don't cross your legs), sit up straight. Sit respectfully, watching the game in-between cheers.
- If standing while cheering, stand ready to cheer, watching the game in-between cheers.
- no gum chewing
- Cell phone use at games is not permitted without permission from the coach
- Squad members will remain with the squad at all times. Wandering is not permitted.
- Squad members must ask permission to go to the restroom and must never go alone.
- Transportation to and from games will be communicated with the coach. Squad members will have arrangements in place to depart as soon as the game is over. Coaches will stay until all squad members are accounted for, please be respectful of their time.
- Squad members will be courteous and respectful to all adults, all teams and teammates, all coaches, umpires, refs, and officials at all times.

Violations:

The ECCHO cheerleading squad will follow the ECCHO disciplinary policy, three strikes rule. Please see the ECCHO Athletic Handbook. Squad members are expected to adhere to all rules and guidelines presented in the ECCHO Cheerleading Constitution and the ECCHO Athletic Handbook and are expected to follow ECCHO's general code of conduct. If there is an extenuating issue with the behavior, attendance, etc. of a squad member, the parents of the squad member will be asked for an immediate meeting with the coach, athletics director, squad member, and in some circumstances the ECCHO board.

**In extreme cases, a squad member may be asked to step away from ECCHO cheer.*

Our ECCHO Cheerleaders SHINE

S – Sensational

H – Harmonious

I – Inspiring

N – Noble

E – Enthusiastic



ECCHO Eagles Soccer Program

The Eagles Soccer Program is new to ECCHO and we are excited to share this opportunity with our families. We are working through the various steps to get this program started and look forward to all that it will grow into! Your grace and patience are appreciated as we figure it all out. Thank you,
~Wendy Johnson, ECCHO Athletic Director

The ECCHO Eagles Soccer Program is an outreach ministry to the families of ECCHO. The purpose of this program is to provide a developmental, fun, competitive, and safe environment for boys and girls ages 13 - 18 years old. Our goal is to provide homeschooled student-athletes with the ideals of good sportsmanship, honesty, loyalty, courage, and respect for authority through the game of soccer. We strive to teach the student-athletes how to work within a team setting by respecting their teammates, portraying a team-first attitude, and then dedicating themselves through commitment and sacrifice to become more Christ-like in the manner in which they approach the game while turning soccer lessons into life lessons that go beyond the playing field. ECCHO Eagles athletes are seen as leaders within the program and are held to a higher standard as such.

Tryouts:

Soccer Evaluations are held in late spring and again during the summer. Students ages 13 (by September 1st) to 18 are eligible to try out. Tryout dates and times will be determined by the athletic director and soccer coaches. Dates and times will be posted on the ECCHO website and social media platforms. Student-athlete candidates are expected to come prepared in appropriate soccer attire (head to toe) and bring all necessary soccer equipment, and water to every evaluation.

Candidates will be evaluated during tryouts by coaches. Student-athlete candidates may be asked to return on additional evaluation days before a final decision is made. Results will be emailed to parents of student-athletes within one week following the evaluations.

Commitment:

Eagles Soccer is an academic year-long program. The team member's term begins in August and ends at the end of May of the following year. Team members are expected to attend practices in the fall, participate in soccer class during the "academic year" and participate in the full soccer season - class, practice, games, and tournaments. Team members commit to participating in various activities, fundraisers, parades, etc. as part of their place on the team. (Special circumstances are considered on a case-by-case basis - please talk to the coaches and athletic director.)

Practices:

Practices are two days a week starting in the fall and continuing through spring. Practice days and times for fall 2023 are TBD.

Soccer Class:

Eagles Soccer will have a soccer class on Fridays as part of the high school classes offered by ECCHO. The purpose of the soccer class is to free up practice time for practice. Class time will be used for communication, covering program details, team building, team development, soccer knowledge, and scenarios. Team members will participate in devotionals as well as health and nutrition.

Competition:

Our goal is to be a competitive team who works hard on and off the field and shines His light for the world to see. The Eagles soccer teams will play a full season of regular season games each fall. The Varsity team will enter into tournaments as deemed appropriate by the coaches and athletic director during the regular season. The Eagles Soccer program may enter into a National championship as deemed appropriate by the coaches and athletic director.

Calendar:

The Eagles games will be posted on the team calendar, and team game changer. Parents and team members are responsible for keeping up with the calendar.

Groupme:

The Eagles Soccer team has a GroupMe dedicated to team members and at least one parent per player. It is important that you have the app and keep up with notifications.

Attendance and Absences:

It is expected that parents and team members communicate to the coach and/or athletic director any issues or problems that arise in a timely manner. Team members are expected to be at all practices, classes, games, etc. It is understandable that things come up and sometimes team members are unavailable, please communicate with coaches and/or the athletic director as soon as possible. When possible please schedule vacations, family events, and other commitments during the off-season. Team members are expected to be on time, dressed appropriately, and ready to participate.

Fundraising:

Soccer is an expensive sport and ECCHO recognizes the need for fundraising to help cover some of the costs for the program. Team members and families are expected to participate in all fundraising opportunities.

Fees:

The ECCHO soccer program season fee is still being worked out. We are working on getting a budget determined. The budget will be reviewed and approved by the ECCHO board of directors before it is put out to the public. Thank you for your patience.

Soccer Team members are expected to follow all the guidelines as laid out in the ECCHO Athletic Handbook.



ECCHO Lady Eagles Volleyball Program

The Lady Eagles Volleyball Program is an outreach ministry to the families of ECCHO. The purpose of this program is to provide a developmental, fun, competitive, and safe environment for girls ages 13 - 18 years old. Our goal is to provide homeschooled student-athletes with the ideals of good sportsmanship, honesty, loyalty, courage, and respect for authority through the game of volleyball. We strive to teach the players how to work within a team setting by respecting their teammates, portraying a team-first attitude, and then dedicating themselves through commitment and sacrifice to become more Christ-like in the manner in which they approach the game while turning volleyball lessons into life lessons that go beyond the court. Lady Eagles athletes are seen as leaders within the program and are held to a higher standard as such.

Tryouts:

Volleyball tryouts are held in early summer. Students ages 13 (by September 1st) to 18 are eligible to try out. Tryouts for the fall 2023 team will be June 5 - 9th. The tryout fee is \$50 per candidate. Tryout dates and times are posted on the ECCHO website and social media platforms. Student-athlete candidates are expected to come prepared in appropriate volleyball attire (head to toe) and bring all necessary volleyball equipment, and water to every evaluation. Attire must align with the ECCHO dress code (see dress code section for clarification).

Candidates will be evaluated during tryouts by coaches. Student-athlete candidates may be asked to return on additional evaluation days before a final decision is made. Results will be emailed to parents of student-athletes within one week following the evaluations.

Commitment:

Lady Eagles Volleyball is an academic year-long program. The team member's term begins in July and ends at the end of May of the following year. Team members are expected to attend practices in the late summer and fall, participate in volleyball class during the "academic year" and participate in the full volleyball season - class, practice, games, and tournaments. Team members commit to participating in various activities, fundraisers, parades, etc. as part of their place on the team. (Special circumstances are considered on a case-by-case basis - please talk to the coaches and athletic director.)

Practices:

Practices are two days a week starting in July and continuing through fall. Practice days and times for 2023 are Mondays and Fridays.

Volleyball Class:

Lady Eagles Volleyball will have a volleyball class on Fridays as part of the high school classes offered by ECCHO. The purpose of the volleyball class is to free up practice time for practice. Class time will be used for communication, covering program details, team building, team development, volleyball knowledge, and scenarios. Team members will participate in devotionals as well as health and nutrition.

Competition:

Our goal is to be a competitive team who works hard on and off the field and shines His light for the world to see. The Eagles volleyball teams will play a full season of regular season games each fall. The Varsity team will enter into tournaments as deemed appropriate by the coaches and athletic director during the regular season. The team may enter into a National championship as deemed appropriate by the coaches and athletic director.

Calendar:

The Lady Eagles games will be posted on the team calendar, and team game changer. Parents and team members are responsible for keeping up with the calendar.

Groupme:

The Lady Eagles Volleyball team has a GroupMe dedicated to team members and at least one parent per player. It is important that you have the app and keep up with notifications.

Attendance and Absences:

It is expected that parents and team members communicate to the coach and/or athletic director any issues or problems that arise in a timely manner. Team members are expected to be at all practices, classes, games, etc. It is understandable that things come up and sometimes team members are unavailable, please communicate with coaches and/or the athletic director as soon as possible. When possible please schedule vacations, family events, and other commitments during the off-season. Team members are expected to be on time, dressed appropriately, and ready to participate.

Parent Responsibilities:

Parents are required to help the team in several ways. Each home game the Lady Eagles team will need two line judges, a scorekeeper, a libero tracker, and a scoreboard operator. At tournaments, parents must be available to help as needed.

Fundraising:

Volleyball is an expensive sport and ECCHO recognizes the need for fundraising to help cover some of the costs for the program. Team members and families are expected to participate in all fundraising opportunities.

Fees:

The ECCHO Volleyball program season fee is TBD. The budget will be reviewed and approved by the ECCHO board of directors before it is put out to the public. Thank you for your patience.

Volleyball Team members are expected to follow all the guidelines as laid out in the ECCHO Athletic Handbook.

Signature Page

I, the student-athlete whose name is printed below, along with my parents, whose name is listed below state that I have read the ECCHO Athletic Handbook. We understand the guidelines, rules, and information written within. By signing this signature page, I agree to follow said guidelines, rules, and information. I understand the fees involved with sports and agree to pay the agreed-upon fees for my student-athlete team in the time frame set forth by ECCHO.

Student-Athlete Printed Name

Student-Athlete Signature

Parent/Guardian Printed Name

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date Signed