

LEONA LIBBY MIDDLE SCHOOL FOOTBALL PROGRAM HANDBOOK

2026



Purpose

This document explains the philosophy, objectives, guidelines, and policies of Libby Middle School Football. The information included in the handbook is provided to players and parents as a reference to keep throughout the season.

1. Coaching Staff Philosophy & Objectives:

Our goal is to teach and prepare athletes for High School football by teaching fundamental football techniques and basic Offensive and Defensive formations, terminology, and schemes that the athlete will use at the next level.

- Normalize the acceptance of challenges and adversity, and how it correlates to everyday life. **ACCEPT THE CHALLENGE!**
- Primary focus of player development, teamwork, and sportsmanship.

We will accomplish that Goal by:

- Learning to play football fast, efficiently, effectively, and safely.
- Learning proper football and tackling techniques that can be used by athletes of all sizes.
- Learning how to use leverage to control our opponent, no matter the opponent's size or speed.
- Being efficient in everything we do. Maximizing our time so we can get the most out of our drills
- Develop a practice tempo from play to play/drill to drill, never walking on the field.
- Being a good teammate!

To Reach Our Goals We Will:

- **Have a Positive Attitude, Vigorous Effort and a Willingness to Learn -**
These are the only things a player has control of. The better they are, the better the athlete can learn and develop.
- Create a fun environment for everyone to thrive and enjoy the game of football no matter the skill level or natural athletic talent. Football is an EVERYONE sport and EVERYBODY can be efficient and an effective member of their team.

The Libby Middle School Football Staff will (*coaches expectations*):

- **Embrace the role of educator-**
 - Teach the game of football to young athletes.
 - Give young athletes skills that transfer to high school football.
- **Model exemplary behavior-**
 - Communicate with the athlete in a constructive, positive way.
 - Showing respect, honesty and fairness to all players.

2. Team Rules and Expectations

- **Practice Requirement**
 - In order to play in a game, each athlete must participate in 12 practices.
 - All players are under the supervision of coaches at the end of the school day. Leaving campus before practice or games is not permitted and consequences will be determined by coaches and school admin staff.
- **Practice Schedule**
 - **You are expected to be at practice on time!**
 - Before school starts 3:00p-5:00p. Mon 8/24 - Fri 8/28 + (Mon 8/31)
 - Once school starts, 2:45p-5:00p. Everyday Mon-Thurs.
 - Friday's 1:45-4:00 (except 8/28: see before school starts above)
 - Every player's first three practices will be helmets only, no pads.
 - Once we transfer to full pads players are required to bring their full practice attire to the field. (Helmet, Shoulder Pads, Practice Pants, Practice Jersey, Practice Leg Pads, Ect.)
 - We will practice on the playing field whenever we can to let our athletes get a feel for field size and to understand when they can walk (off the field) and when they need to be hustling (on the field at all times!).

If an athlete is unable to make practice

- Call, text or email and let us know if you can't make it. **Telling another player is not acceptable.**
- You can Call/Text Coach Valdez at (509) 873-2263 or email: santiago.valdez@rsd.edu

- Students must attend at least half a school day (excused or unexcused) to be able to practice or participate in a game.
- If a student is assigned ISS during the school day they **may not** participate in practice, or a game that day.
- If seen by a doctor for an injury, concussion, etc. a doctor's note is needed before you can resume practice.
- **If practice is missed the day before a game, that student cannot play in the game. Some exceptions can be made (coach discretion) for emergencies, funerals, etc.**

- **Games**

- Jamboree tentatively set for Saturday September 12th from 9 am - 11 am
- 8th Grade will have games on Wednesdays from 4-6 pm. (typically)
- 7th Grade will have games on Tuesdays from 4-6 pm. (typically)
- ***days and times subject to change**

- **Travel**

- All travel is provided to and from football games via Richland School District bus.
- In the case of in-district travel (Enterprise, Carmichael, Chief Jo) the athlete will be provided one way transportation to the football game and will need to receive a ride home from their Mom, Dad, or legal guardian.

- **Player Expectations**

- **Be on time-**
 - Practice begins at 2:45 pm. (1:45 on Friday's)
- **Be dedicated-**
 - To his/her teammates.
 - To learning basic skills and positions on the offense, defense and special teams.
- **Be willing-**
 - To sacrifice individual recognition for team success.
 - Football is a team sport and every athlete has a chance to go out for whatever position they like but in the end the coaches will sort the players by what the team needs.
 - Football is not about being a quarterback or being a wide receiver, it's about being an efficient and effective team player that can do whatever the team needs of them to win.
 - Be the best team player you can be! This mindset will help players their entire career.
 - To overcome adversity under a variety of circumstances.
- **Be prepared-**
 - to Compete at Practices and Games.
 - Football is fun when athletes and teammates are ready to compete.
 - Preparation is the product of 'HARD WORK.'

- **Playing Time**
 - At its heart, the purpose of Middle School Football is to give athletes an opportunity to develop their skills and attitude before they reach the High School level.
 - The Rule book states that every player will play at least 2 plays a game. But the only reason a player would only play 2 plays is because of disciplinary action or lack of Attitude and Effort in practice.
 - Our goal as coaches is to prepare all athletes for football at a higher level. All athletes will be given specific assignments and rotated throughout the game.
 - To create a consistent competitive atmosphere some players will play more than others but all players will be an important, effective member of the football team.
 - We will get the most out of our athletes and the best way to do that is to prepare them for live game action and to give them live game action.

- **Parent/Guardians Expectations**
 - Be a fan of their child.
 - Encourage all players on the field of play.
 - Be a parent and let the coaches coach.
 - The practice field/game field are reserved for players, coaches and Libby staff only.
 - Parents, family and friends are welcome to come and support the young athletes by watching practice and games but we ask that everyone respect the practice field and playing field and remain in the designated spectator sections.

- **Parent Communication**
 - If a parent has a concern that needs to be communicated, the Libby Middle School Football Staff encourages you to contact Coach Valdez. As coaches we understand there are times when situations can only be resolved directly. Players can be present when the coaches meet with parents. If an initial meeting cannot resolve the parent concerns, the following steps will occur:
 - A meeting will be scheduled with the specific coach involved to discuss the parent concern.
 - If the issue is not resolved, and the parent is still concerned, the Athletic Director, Mr. Jeff Julio should be contacted.

3. Injury Protocol

- The Libby Middle School Football staff is dedicated to the safety and welfare of all of our players. Players **MUST** report all injuries to a coach immediately. When a player is injured, the following procedure will be followed:
 - The coaching staff will determine the extent of the injury
 - Parents will be informed of the injury
 - If a player is determined to have an injury that requires medical attention, the player and parent should seek medical advice and halt football participation

immediately.

NOTE: If a player requires immediate medical attention, the coaching staff will follow the steps necessary to insure the safety of the athlete who is hurt.

- If a player is injured and unable to practice, the following procedures will be followed (*injured athlete*):

- **Temporary Injury**

- Practice: attendance is required; absence excused if meeting with a physician or receiving physical therapy for injury.
- Home/Away Game: Attendance is required at all contests; must travel with the team.
- The temporarily injured athlete (if seen by a doctor) will not be allowed to practice again until the coaching staff receives a note saying he can “Return to Participation.”

- **Season-Ending Injury**

- No requirements to attend any football related activities, but can still be part of the team and help out.

- **RSD Head (Concussion) Protocol**

- The Libby Football staff will follow the RSD protocol for head injuries. In summary, no football until cleared by a doctor. When in doubt sit them out.
- This is an emphasis in the Richland School District, the Tri-Cities School Districts and statewide.

4. **Equipment**

- **Each player will be issued the following gear.**

- (Helmet, Shoulder Pads, practice/game pants)
- Helmets must be school issued, if a player shows up to a game with any helmet that has not been school issued the athlete will be unable to play in that game.
- Game and practice jerseys.

- **Each player will need to Purchase**

- Under shirt - does not have to be compression.
- Long Black Socks for Games
- Football Cleats
- **Mouthguard: (must attach to helmet)**

- **Optional to purchase: Integrated Pants (black)**

- *Butt Pad*
- *Hip Pads*
- *Thigh Pads*
- *Knee pads*

- *Belt*
- **The gear that is issued is the Property of the Richland School District.**
 - Any item not returned at the end of the season will result in a fine.
- No athlete can modify district issued equipment.
- If it is determined equipment has been modified and must be replaced, the athlete will receive a fine.
- Athletes are responsible to report faulty equipment to the coaching staff.

5. Absence Policy

- Absences due to family emergencies, academic requirements, scheduled health and wellness appointments or illness will be excused if the Coaching Staff is contacted prior to the absence – all other reasons will be unexcused.
- Students should use their school issued chrome book or have their parents send an email to Coach Valdez prior to missing practice.
- **A player telling a fellow player to tell the coaching staff he will not be at practice IS NOT considered contacting a coach.**
- **Attendance Consequences:**
 - Unexcused Absence: 1st – one quarter; 2nd – half game; 3rd – game; 4th – two games; 5th – Forfeit of playing time requirement.
 - Unexcused Tardy: If a player is tardy they will make up the time with extra conditioning (5 minutes late = 5 additional minutes of conditioning).

6. Coaches Contact Information

Head Coach Santiago Valdez Santiago.Valdez@rsd.edu (509) 873-2263	Assistant Coach Jordan Arquette Jordan.Arquette@rsd.edu
Assistant Coach Tino Valdez Tino.Valdez@rsd.edu	Assistant Coach Israel Hepburn Israel.Hepburn@rsd.edu
Assistant Coach TBD	Athletic Director Jeff Julio Jeff.Julio@rsd.edu

Leona Marshall Libby Middle School Libby Middle School Football Program – 2026

Acknowledgement Form

I have carefully read the contents of the Program Handbook; I understand and agree to abide by the policies and procedures of the Program.

Parent Name (Print)_____

Parent Signature _____

Athlete's Name (Print)_____

Athlete's Signature _____

Date Signed_____