

Coach Flowers FAQs of Ereckson Huskies Football

Philosophy

Q: What is the philosophy of having middle school football?

A: We want as many kids to participate as possible. We want as many kids to play as possible. We do not encourage win at all costs on the middle school level, we encourage participation and learning the sport and enjoying the middle school experience while physically maturing.

Q: Would you recommend my son play football if he has never played the sport before?

A: Yes, now is the time to try something new. Now is the time to try to find a spot on the field that suits you. Being involved with the football team makes the middle school experience more fun. You may participate and not like it. If that is the case then we encourage you to do something else you like. Just find something that you enjoy and keeps you active and makes you happy.

Games

Q: When are games?

A: Tuesday nights, 7th and 8th grade teams play at opposite sites, the Blue Team (B Team) plays the first game (6 pm first game kickoff unless we play another Allen middle school and then we will start at 5:30 pm) of the night and the Silver Team (A Team) plays the second game of the night.

Q: Are the rules the same as other tackle football leagues?

A: Basically yes. 4 quarters in a game, each quarter is 8 minutes, halftime is 8 minutes. After scoring a touchdown each team can attempt to kick for two points or run in the ball for 1 points (this is to encourage teams to develop their kicking game).

Q: Does it cost anything to get in to the games?

A: Yes, \$3 for students and \$5 for adults. Look to buy an Allen season pass at the first game of the season that could save you and your family some money for Allen events over the course of the school year.

Q: Can my son sit with me in the stands at the game when his team is not playing?

A: No, he will be sitting in the endzone with his teammates when his team is not on the field playing. Parents remain in the stands during the games and players are on the field surface either playing or sitting with the rest of their team in an endzone.

Q: Can I bring him some food to eat while he is not playing his game and is in the endzone?

A: No. Lunch is served between 11 am and 12 pm, and we have our team meal between 3:30 pm and 4:00 pm. There is no eating on the field in the endzone at the games. We don't want kids carrying money with them to the games. We are responsible for your son from the time we get on the bus to leave the school and go to the game and until we get back to the school after the games. We are treating all the kids we are responsible for the same. It is a team rule not to eat anything from a concession stand (we don't practice going to the concession stand at daily football practice so we are not going to go to the concession stands at the games) and we can't watch all of our kids if we did let our kids go to buy concessions. Sneaking food from concession stands or from parents at a football game is a violation of team rules.

Q: So, buying the team meal is not optional?

A: The team meal is there for kids to quietly relax before leaving the school to participate in their activity. The team meal gives the parent peace of mind that their son will be taken care of until they get home from their football game. We encourage every player to buy the pregame meal. Unless there are some dietary constraints that does not allow your son to eat what everyone else is, everyone will eat the same thing. Please email Coach Flowers with any meal considerations other than what is offered. We have a healthy option available, we do not want kids eating pizzas and greasy cheese burgers and fries before playing in their games.

Q: What if I can't afford the cost of the season long team meals?

A: If you are on the Free/Reduced Meal Program then you will not be charged for your son's meal. Contact Coach Flowers and the FRL status will be confirmed in confidence.

Playing Time

Q: How does my son earn playing time?

A: Playing time is earned. Playing time is earned by attendance, behavior, and grades. Prompt and consistent attendance to practice with all materials and equipment will earn a player participation in game day activities. However, privileges to participate will be lost if a player does not have good behavior in school during regular class time and or during extracurricular activity time (after school, riding to games on the bus or during endzone time of when they are not on the field). Failing grades can cost a player to lose participation. Otherwise, if grades, behavior and attendance are meeting expectations then the player will be included in offensive and defensive rotations during the game.

Q: If all players are promised to play in the game will all the playing time be equal?

A: Playing time does not work out equally. There is no perfect way to distribute playing time where everyone will be satisfied. However, the 'rotations' system Ereckson coaches will use gives coaches and players a something to use to get everyone on the field. Each player will be given an offensive and defensive rotation (a rotation could be the same as a 'string' or depth chart) and those rotations will be used during the games, to determine who will be on the field. There will be more than one person your son shares a rotation with. Coaches practice getting players on the field using the rotations system, and this is how kids know when to take the field at the game. Sometimes a game situation (like a fumble or interception or scoring play) will result in a short offensive or

defensive rotation. Coaches do the best we can to get everyone on the field and we try our best to make it fair and consistent as the game allows.

Q: When and where can I discuss playing time or anything else football related with a coach with regards to my son?

A: Good question. There are no conversations over playing time because that variable is not entirely in a coaches control. However, have your son discuss this with his coach. Lots of times things can be worked out between the player and coach and a better understanding can be reached.

Tryouts

Q: How does my son make the team?

A: Every 7th and 8th grader who is allowed to play will play, there are no 'cuts' as there may be in other sports.

Q: Will he play offense or defense?

A: Every player will have a position on offense and a position on defense.

Q: Will he get to pick what position he wants to play?

A: Yes, but it is ultimately the coaches decision to position the player that suits his potential and team needs.

Q: How does he tryout for the Silver Team (A Team) or Blue Team (B Team)?

A: The coaches will have all players practice together and will evaluate players and then divide the teams into Silver or Blue Team members.

Q: Once my son makes his team does that mean he stays on that team for the whole season?

A: No, whatever team your son starts out on just means that is where he is for that week. Based on performance in practice and games will determine whether or not your son moves up a team or down a team. Injuries and need could mean a player moves up or down.

Practices

Q: Can parents come to practices?

A: Absolutely. Practices are open to parents and legal guardians of the players (If you have legal custody and visitation of your son you are welcome to watch). Just remember a few things: these coaches are working at their jobs, use good judgement in your behavior around other players, keep some distance between you and the drills and activities being conducted.

Q: When do practices start?

A: There are no practices before the start of school. In fact, consult the practice schedule to see when the actual practices for 7th grade players and 8th grade players begin. 7th grade practices are held before school and 8th grade practices are after school. 7th graders are supposed to be dressed and on the field ready to practice at 7:00 am. 7th graders have practice until 9:00 am. Between 9:00 am and 9:20 the players are required to shower (this is a major health issue and we need to keep all the equipment and kids clean) and ready themselves for first period classes. 8th graders have practice that starts during 7th period, 2:40 pm and lasts until 4:45 pm.

Q: Do buses take my 7th grader to early football practice before the regular start time of the school day?

A: No, there are not any buses that will pick up your son to get him to football practice if practices start at 7:00 am. You will have to make arrangements to get your son to early football practice, coaches are at the school by 6:45 am every morning to let players in.

Q: Do buses take my 8th grader home from late football practices after school?

A: No, the buses leave school shortly after 3:30 pm but there are no other buses that run after that for 8th grade football players. So 8th graders will either have to walk home or they need a parent to pick them up after practice. Players will be ready for parents to pick them up to go home after 4:45 pm.

Equipment

Q: What do I need to buy for my son?

A: 1) Football cleats 2) a plastic mouth piece that attaches to the front of the helmet 3) socks and undies. We supply everything else the player is allowed to wear. **Make sure you put your son's name or initials on the cleats and any other personal items they bring to the locker room. Please! That includes a wallet, a watch, a pair of new school shoes, put them in your locker and have your name on them so you can claim them.**

Q: Can my son wear 'receiver' gloves?

A: Yes, if he is an 8th grader. 7th graders do not wear receiver gloves.

Q: What does my son wear besides his uniform?

A: Good Question! Shorts and a t-shirt. We have 2 good options here. You can buy a pair of navy shorts and a gray t-shirt at the beginning of school from coaches at the school. That will be yours to keep, write your name in and wear just about every day all year long. The other option is to receive a pair of school issued gray shorts and gray t-shirt. School issued 'grays' as they are called must be returned before the end of school. If grays are lost the student is required to pay for them before receiving another pair. These are the two options we have: buy the navy shorts and gray shirts we will have available at the beginning of school **or** receive the school issued 'grays' (shorts and t-shirt). These are acceptable items to wear.

Q: Can my son bring his equipment home?

A: No. After the season a player can take home the equipment that is his.

Q: Who will clean my son's uniform and workout clothes?

A: The coaches will only wash the game worn jerseys the night of the game. Everything else we ask for help from home to help keep the pants and (sweaty, stinky, smelly, dirty, rank) workout clothes sanitary and clean. The t-shirts and shorts do get very dirty and can be a germ filled health risk to your son and others if not cleaned **regularly**. We will tell our boys to bring their things home all the time but it is up to you to help get them clean.

Q: Can my son wear his own helmet and own shoulder pads from his other team?

A: Ereckson players can wear their own helmet as long as the following criteria are met by Coach Flowers: the helmet has been certified by NOCSAE, the helmet fits properly, the helmet is same team color (white) without any markings or decals, and the facemask is the same team color (gray). Shoulder pads or any other personal gear must be approved by Coach Flowers only.

Q: What kind of cleats should I buy?

A: Buy the kind where the bottom of the shoe is all one piece (this is called a 'molded' cleat). Buying the cleats where the cleats unscrew from the bottom of the cleat can be a bit too much for middle school athletes to properly take care of and change out as needed. Therefore, the cleats with a molded bottom and all the cleats are bound to the bottom of the shoe are best for the different surfaces we are on. We play our games and practice on real grass and on artificial turf surfaces, we walk to practice fields on concrete, we walk to game fields on pavement, these things wear down the cleats and the molded cleats last longer, so have in mind something that could be worn on either field. Black or white cleats or cleats of school colors (navy, silver, sky blue) are fine. Skate board shoes, boots, or slip-on shoes (Vans) will not be allowed for practices or games to keep your son properly outfitted and others safe too. One more reminder, write your name on the outside of the shoe so anyone tempted to take your shoes sees your name written on the outside and they know other people will see your name too.

Home work/tutoring

Q: Can my son miss practice to go to tutoring?

A: If your son is a 7th grader they can go to after school tutoring. If your son is an 8th grade student then they can go to before school tutoring. Make sure they have a pass from the teacher to confirm the appointment. If a player misses practice due to tutoring they will have to make up for the part of practice they missed. Remember, practice time is where game time is earned.

Q: What happens if my son fails a class?

A: He does not participate in any part of the extracurricular activity. No pregame meal, no riding the bus to the game, no standing on the sideline, no wearing the team jersey until academic eligibility is regained. A player is still expected to be at football practices. If a player fails one class or more at the end of a 6 weeks grading period they do not participate for at least 3 weeks until progress reports come out. At progress report time if the student is passing all classes then eligibility is regained. At progress report time if the failing student is still failing one class or more then he has 3 more weeks without eligibility.

Missed practice

Q: My son participates in another sport with another team that is not part of the school. What can I do about practice (and game) conflicts?

A: All school sponsored events come before non-school sponsored events.

Q: My son has a school band activity that conflicts with your football practices, what do I tell him to do?

A: Usually I am able to work out an arrangement between the campus band director and there are no conflicts, just contact me and make me aware of the situation. Occasionally there is simply a decision that has to be made on behalf of the student to choose one activity or the other at times of a performance/game conflict.

Bad weather

Q: If the weather is bad then do I assume practice is cancelled?

A: We will have practice unless you are notified of a change or cancellation. If you wake up and it is raining, come to practice, it may be moved indoors. For 8th graders we will make a school wide announcement regarding weather that will cancel practice and notify parents by website or school email through daily 'e-noucement' emails where other school information is passed on to parents.

Q: How will the hot practices be monitored by coaches?

A: During the hottest and most dangerous months of the season we will take water breaks about every 10-15 minutes of practice, water will be available on the field to accommodate the entire team, we will allow any player who is feeling uncomfortable and needs water to get a drink at any time, and we will encourage our players to drink lots of water after practice and through out the rest of the day to replenish their internal water supply.

Rainouts

Q: If a game is rained out or postponed due to rain when will the games be rescheduled?

A: If a game is cancelled because of poor weather it most likely will not be rescheduled at any point. It takes a lot more to schedule a game these days than just having two willing teams that want to play.

Bus rides

Q: Can I take my son to the football games in my own vehicle?

A: No, all players stay after school, have their team meal, get their equipment for their game and ride to the game on a school bus together.

Q: Can I take my son home after the game in my own vehicle?

A: No, all players ride back to school on a bus with their teammates.

Q: Can my son bring his backpack and other belongings with him on the bus going to the game?

A: No. There is not enough room on the bus for everyone to bring their backpacks. School books, homework, phones, ipods...get lost or damaged or stolen when making field trips like this. We have just enough room for our players and they have so much on their minds and we want them to be responsible for those things on the field (equipment, position responsibilities, cheering for their teammates...). Back packs stay at school on game days.

Any questions, email Coach Flowers at brian_flowers@allenisd.org