

## Elementary Athletics Guidelines

*Runnels Elementary School offers participation in several after-school programs throughout the school year. Our athletic program for kindergarten through fifth grade students is organized by our Elementary Athletic Director. The sixth graders currently participate in athletics through our Junior High Athletic Department and follow those department guidelines.*

*Currently we work to field Runnels teams to participate in basketball in the fall/winter and in baseball, softball, and t-ball in the spring. The number of teams formed for each sport depends on the number of students interested in participating. In the interest of emphasizing the individual, team building, and sportsmanship over competition, it is our school's athletic department's policy to keep grade level teams together whenever possible. That is: we would field a 4<sup>th</sup> grade team and a 5<sup>th</sup> grade team rather than two combined grade level teams.*

*It is our goal to give every child in our elementary school who wishes to participate in our sports program an opportunity to play ball, develop a love for the sport, to learn to work together with his/her teammates, to learn the fundamentals of the sport, and to have fun. We strive to ensure that every child has a positive experience regardless of athletic ability. Competition, while a part of almost every sporting event, is not the most important part of our elementary sports program. Our athletic department and all those associated with it are encouraged to teach fairness and good sportsmanship to our young athletes through modeling. As parents, we implore you to do the same at all athletic functions. With these statements in mind we have established the following guidelines by which our program is organized.*

- *No student will be turned away from participation in any sport at Runnels for reasons of athletic ability.*
- *Athletes who attend practice and are part of the team can be assured regular playing time in all games.*
- *Elementary athletes are not permitted to play up or down for reasons tied to the individual's athletic ability.*
- *Whenever the number of participants demands multiple grade level teams, (for example: we have enough students to form two 1<sup>st</sup> grade basketball teams), we will strive to form two equal teams in terms of athletic ability. It is strictly against our school's elementary athletic department's policy to form a superior A team and a weaker B team.*
- *All of the elementary teams are coached by volunteer parents. We appreciate the time and effort these volunteers so generously donate to our young athletes.*