



Athletic Handbook
(Revised 2015)

School Mission Statement

Learning and living as God's Baptized Children

The mission of St. John's Lutheran School shall be to nurture young people in God's Word, sound Lutheran doctrine and worship practice, and a strong academic foundation so that they might be better equipped to live out their lives as God's baptized children in this world wherever He puts them and also be equipped to carry out Christ's command to "make disciples of all nations." (Matthew 28:19)

Athletic Philosophy

It is the aim of St. John's athletic program to facilitate the school mission statement through sports activities. Through a student's participation in interscholastic sports, it is hoped that the student will further develop spiritually, mentally, emotionally, physically, and socially. Students will be encouraged to use their talents to the best of their abilities as we are guided by scripture, "do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body." (1 Corinthians 6:19-20)

Students in grades 3-8 have different opportunities to participate voluntarily in athletics throughout the year. It will be the role of the athletic directors and coaches to facilitate the growth and development of players as they participate in the St. John's athletic program.

Program Goals

The goals of the St. John's athletic program will be:

1. to glorify Jesus Christ in all that is done on and off the playing field and/or court.
2. to help the athletes realize the importance of other people in their lives and the value of working cooperatively with them.
3. to encourage the athletes to be free in allowing themselves to experience emotions, yet not to let these emotions control them or make them ineffective people.
4. to improve the athletes overall physical condition and athletic skills.
5. to provide another avenue for students to enjoy Christian fellowship.
6. to provide additional school spirit and pride.
7. to prepare athletes for the next level of competition and allow them to participate on a team that is appropriate for their level of skill and experience.
8. to develop an understanding of the rules and concepts of the game that will encourage a lifelong enjoyment of the sport both competitively and recreationally.

Athletic Program Policies

Practice and Game Attendance

Being a part of a team requires that players attend practices and games. We do understand that situations exist that may not make attendance at every activity possible.

1. Excused Absences - In these situations it is required that a coach or athletic director be notified for the absence to be excused. A team member who misses a practice or game without proper notification being sent will be charged with an unexcused absence. Parents may send notification via e-mail, phone message, text, or written note explaining the absence.
2. Illness - If a student is ill or misses school due to an emergency, he/she will be excused from practice or a game for that day. A student cannot participate in a game on a day they have been absent from school due to illness. If a student misses the morning but attends school in the afternoon, he/she may play only if the parents give permission to play that day, and the coach gives his/her consent. Students missing school for reasons other than illness must seek permission to play on that day from the athletic director.
3. Unexcused Absences - Unexcused absences will affect playing time. One unexcused absence will be a warning. A second unexcused absence will result in missing the first half of the game/match. A third unexcused absence will result in another missed half and it is encouraged that parents and coaches discuss the recurring situation. The fourth violation will require a meeting with the coach, athletic director, player, and parent to discuss continued participation on the team.

Team Selection

1. Multiple Teams - In the event that the number of students who wish to participate in a given sport exceeds standard team size, the athletic director may choose to form additional teams to help with the challenge of a large number of athletes. Accomplishing this will require that there are qualified

coaches, gym/field time available, and sufficient teams to compete against. This may take the form of an intramural program if necessary.

- a. Level C (3rd-4th grade) – Teams will be created with the idea of distributing playing experience and talent equally between the teams.
 - b. Level B (5th-6th grade) – Teams will be created with the idea of distributing playing experience and talent equally between the teams.
 - c. Level A (7th-8th grade) - Evaluations may be used to form Level A teams. The athletic director and coaches will organize these evaluations. Team 1 will consist primarily of players who are more experienced in the sport and who are looking for opportunities to challenge themselves against tougher competition to prepare for the next level of the sport. Team 2 may consist of less experienced and/or players who may not be compelled to play at the next level.
2. Promotion to Higher Level
 - a. Any 6th grade student may participate in the Level A evaluation sessions. In order for this student to be selected to play at Level A, he/she must possess the ability to be a starter on Team 1 and play at least 50 percent of the game. If the 6th grade student is able to participate on the Level A team, they will not be able to play on the 5th-6th grade team unless the seasons do not run concurrently. The coaches and athletic director in consultation with student's parents will make final decisions in regard to team participation.
 - b. In the case of a small number of athletes for a particular sport, the athletic director may also move up or ask a lower level grade to participate on a higher-level team. (Example: If there are not enough 7th-8th graders for the Level A team, then 5th-6th graders may be asked to play up.)

Playing Time

1. Level C (3rd-4th grade) - Students at the C level will have near equal playing time the whole game as long as they are in good standing with their attendance. Students at this level will be learning the most basic skills and knowledge of the game. Coaches are encouraged to track playing time to help distribute playing time.
2. Level B (5th-6th grade) - Students at the B level will be able to participate in every regular season and tournament game that they attend as long as they are in good standing with their attendance. Coaches will provide each player with playing time in every game, but the length of that playing time will be determined by that coach's discretion of a student's ability, knowledge of the game, and ability to perform within the game situation.
3. Level A (7th-8th grade) - Students at this level will be able to participate in every regular season game. Playing time for regular season games will be dependent on the coach's discretion of a player's ability, knowledge of the game, ability to execute plays, and how they will help the overall team. Playing time for tournaments will be solely at the discretion of the coach after determining what is in the best interest of the team as a whole. All participants at the A level are not guaranteed playing time in tournaments.

Uniform and Equipment

To participate in games/meets, participants will need to be properly dressed according to the list below. There is also recommended equipment listed for each sport. Water bottles and snacks are recommended for these after school activities.

1. Cross Country – For meets, runners will need to purchase or use a previous year's St. John's Cross Country t-shirt. Black shorts can be provided by families or can be borrowed from school. Proper running shoes are recommended.

2. Soccer – Soccer jerseys are provided for each player to use for the season. Black shorts can be provided by families or can be borrowed from school. Soccer shinguards and soccer socks are required equipment that is not provided by St. John's. Soccer cleats are recommended but not required.
3. Basketball – Level C (3rd/4th) will be provided with a jersey to use for the season and families will need to provide black shorts. Level B & A players will be provided with a Jersey and Shorts for use during the season. Proper basketball shoes are recommended for each player.
4. Volleyball – For games, players will need to purchase or use a previous year's St. John's Volleyball t-shirt. Black shorts can be provided by families or can be borrowed from school. Volleyball kneepads and proper indoor footwear is recommended for each player.
5. Softball – Players need a softball glove and must wear a red St. John's t-shirt. Cleats are recommended for players.
6. Track – All participants must wear a red St. John's t-shirt.

Transportation

The coach and athletic director will assist in arranging transportation to away games that are scheduled after school. Parents are strongly encouraged to help drive during the season. Each child that is transported by car must wear a seat belt. Please try to pick up players immediately after practices and games so that coaches do not have to stay late to supervise.

Sport participation Fees

A sport participation fee is charged per athlete for participating in some sports to help offset the costs for tournament fees and officials. The soccer fee is \$20 per athlete, cross country is \$15, basketball is \$40 and volleyball is \$20.

Roles and Guidelines

Players

1. Eligibility Requirements
 - a. All participants must turn in a signed permission form along with fees.
 - b. All participants must maintain a 2.0 GPA and may not have more than one failing grade. (See parent handbook page 13 for more detail.)
 - c. Student athletes represent St. John's Lutheran School. Athletes must remain in good standing at school, home, and in the community. The Christian education and discipline of St. John's is a team effort that includes teachers, coaches, administrators, and parents. Students can be suspended from sports teams for violations of any rules that are listed in the parent handbook.
 - d. All students participating in athletics are encouraged to have a physical on file in their health folder.
2. Athletes will:
 - a. demonstrate a Christ-like example on and off the playing field/court.
 - b. make academic success a higher priority than athletic success.
 - c. be respectful of coaches, players, officials, and spectators at all times.
 - d. know the team schedule and take responsibility to attend all practices and games. If a player is unable to attend a practice or game, it is the parents responsibility to inform the coach or athletic directors. Lack of notification will be deemed an unexcused absence.
 - e. take pride and care in the facilities played in and the equipment used.

Coaches

1. Qualifications
 - a. All coaches will be approved by the Athletic Directors and/or Principal based on their knowledge of the sport and qualification to work with athletes. Faculty will have precedence over volunteers when selecting coaches.
 - b. All head coaches must go through a criminal background check.
 - c. All head coaches will complete NFHS Concussion in Sports course. (www.nfhslearn.com)
2. St. John's coaches will:
 - a. serve as Christ-like examples of fair play and good sportsmanship. Emphasize the glory of God over the glory of self and school.
 - b. attend games and practices arriving at each event promptly and prepared.
 - c. work with athletic directors to coordinate practice schedules, game schedules, driving volunteers, and communicate with families in regards to these things.
 - d. provide supervision for all athletes before, during, and after practices or games.
 - e. secure the facility and return all equipment to its proper location at the end of each practice or game.
 - f. treat each player, coach, official, parent, and administrator with respect, Christ-like love, and dignity.
 - g. will become familiar with the philosophy and goals of the athletic program at St. John's and will strive to achieve these goals and communicate them to players and parents.
 - h. do their best to learn skills, strategies, and rules of the sport.
 - i. learn the strengths and weaknesses of their players in order that they might place them in situations to maximize player and team success.
 - j. cooperate with the athletic director and/or principal in the enforcement of rules and regulations according to school policy.

- k. protect the health and safety of players in regards to facilities and game situations.

Parents

1. Parents will:

- a. model and foster Christ-like attitude and behavior.
- b. assist students to establish proper priorities with respect to church, family, peers, academics, practice, and games.
- c. support athletes, team, and coaches.
- d. respect the officials and their decisions.
- e. attend the parent meeting. This meeting will take place at the conclusion of the first practice.
- f. take the responsibility for promptness to games and practices.
- g. assure that their child will be picked up promptly at the end of games and practices.
- h. support the Booster Club by volunteering to help with running score table, concessions, and tournaments.
- i. follow procedure for resolution of parental concerns when needed.

2. Resolution of Parental Concerns

Occasionally parents may have concerns about the athletic program of St. John's Lutheran School. When concerns arise, it is best to use the Biblical approach of going directly to the person we have the concern with and trying to work out a solution with them.

With that in mind, all concerns regarding decisions of coaches as to game or practice situations should be taken up directly with the coach. It is our goal that coaches will have the children's best interests at heart, and parents should feel free to approach them without fear of retaliation or ridicule. Your input is important in this joint effort of educating your children. In order to facilitate a smooth and orderly process, parents are to follow these guidelines when they have concerns:

- a. Go directly to the coach with any concerns you have regarding his/her coaching decisions. When we go to others with our concerns regarding a coach, we place ourselves in danger of violating the 8th commandment. Concerns shared will be kept confidential. Information will be disclosed only to those who need to know in order to review, investigate, and respond to the concern (e.g. athletic directors, principal).
- b. It is requested that parents allow at least 24 hours after a game to approach a coach with concerns. We want all our words and actions to glorify God and show love to our Christian brothers and sisters.
- c. Parents with concerns need to make an appointment to speak with the coach. Immediately prior to, during, or after a game is not appropriate time.
- d. Any concerns regarding the school's athletic policy, scheduling, or equipment should be brought to the attention of the athletic director.
- e. Most athletic-related concerns can be resolved through open and honest communication with the coach. If the problem remains unresolved, the parents should contact the athletic director. The athletic director will meet with the parents and the coach together to resolve the conflict. If the athletic director is also the coach that the parents have concerns with, this second meeting will include the principal.

It should be understood that all issues might not necessarily be "resolved" to the satisfaction of the concerned person. The coach, athletic director, or principal may make decisions that do not require a change or that do not fully meet with the parents' expectations. However, those who use this process should be satisfied that their concern was heard, taken seriously, and that consideration was given to the issue consistent with the philosophy and goals of our school and its athletic department.

Spectators

1. St. John's students are encouraged to participate as spectators at athletic events. Supervision is required for all students at all times. It is the responsibility of the parents to arrange supervision of their child if they are not participating on the athletic team. This may include contacting another parent, coach, teacher, or athletic directors to help provide that supervision.
2. Spectators, including children, are to remain in the gymnasium or at the game field when attending athletic events.
3. Spectators will:
 - a. support and respect the players, coaches, and officials in a Christ-like manner.
 - b. be respectful towards the participating schools, their facilities, and equipment.
 - c. applaud the effort each player, coach, and official is making.