

ATHLETIC HANDBOOK

2023-2024

ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN

Reaching, Teaching, Sharing the Gospel

Revised: July 2023~Approved: SJLS School Board

PHILOSOPHY

St. John's Lutheran School feels that it is our goal to provide every individual student-athlete with opportunities to contribute in a unique and special way to the overall success and growth of our teams. Athletics can be an important tool in teaching students to make use of their God-given talents and put into practice Christian love. Our program strives to improve the talents of each athlete, while stressing the importance of teamwork, love of sport and a positive Christian attitude.

GOALS & OBJECTIVES

1. To learn to glorify God on and off the playing field/court and grow in faith, while maintaining the highest level of Christian sportsmanship.
2. To develop positive attitudes toward winning and losing, success and failure – win humbly and lose graciously. A “winning” attitude is defined as “an individual or team working as hard as they can to develop their abilities together.”
3. To encourage and develop respect for fellow athletes whether they are teammates or members of opposing teams, realizing that working as a “team” encompasses coaches, parents, and peers.
4. To orient all participants and fans to abide by the rules, regulations, and official decisions that govern each sport.
5. To create a positive athletic experience that develops a lifelong enjoyment for sports and recreational activities.

AGE LIMITATIONS

The Winnebago Area Lutheran League (WALL) and St. John's – Mayville limits participation to those student-athletes who have not reached their fifteenth birthday by September 1 of the school year in which they desire to participate. If, for any reason, this is not met, the athletic director can present a request to the board and league to have that particular student-athlete instated for that particular year.

ATHLETIC AWARDS

Student-athletes who participate in a St. John's sport may receive an athletic award for the sport that they participated in. In order to receive his/her award, each student-athlete must adhere to the following requirements which are in order of significance:

1. Display Christian sportsmanship and conduct in practices and games.
2. Principal and coach(es) recommendation.
3. Remain academically eligible for the full sports season.
4. Attend 95% of the practices and games, unless acceptable excuse has been given.

ATHLETIC FORMS

The following forms must be signed and returned to the athletic director prior to student participation in the athletic program. These forms will be made available in the school office and from the athletic director directly.

1. St. John's Athletic Participation Consent
2. Medical Treatment and Insurance Statement
3. Emergency Notification
4. Release and Affirmation
5. Concussion and Cardiac Arrest Notification Form
6. Physical Exam and Doctor Consent (every two years)

ATHLETIC OPPORTUNITIES

Sports offered may vary depending on availability of coaches and athlete numbers. Squad size will vary according to the number of students participating. Every effort will be made to keep the squad size optimal for practice and participation. If St. John's does not have enough interested participants or coaches to field a team, that particular sport will not be offered for that season.

FALL	WINTER	SPRING
Girls Volleyball Co-Ed Soccer	Girls Basketball Boys Basketball Co-Ed Spirit Squad	Co-Ed Softball Boys Volleyball

In some situations, it may be necessary and beneficial for an athlete(s) to be brought up to provide an opportunity for a higher level of competition or for the completion of a squad. Such action will only be done with the approval of the athletic director and the student-athlete's parents. The 7th & 8th grade teams will be given priority when fielding teams. Therefore, it **may be the case** that a 5th or 6th grader may be pulled up to fill or enhance a team. This movement does not exclude the individual(s) from the opportunity to play with a 5th and 6th grade team. If the player is pulled up to enhance a team, their priority will be to their grade level team first and to the upper grade second. If a 7th and 8th grade team is full, but a 5th and 6th grade team still needs players, 4th graders may be invited to play with parental permission and the required forms.

CLOTHING

Practices: Practice clothing should be clean, in good repair, and reflect Christian modesty. Shoes should be of good quality, laced, and appropriate for the sport. Slip-ons are not acceptable footwear. No jewelry is to be worn during practices or games.

Games: Uniforms will be assigned to student-athletes by the athletic director and/or coaches. These are to be worn for every game. **If the student-athlete does not have his/her complete uniform, he/she will not be able to participate in that particular game.** Uniforms are not to be worn for anything other than games or school day dress up on the day of a game. The uniform is to be returned in the same condition it was received. If not, parents will be billed the replacement cost of the entire uniform. Student-athletes who have not returned or replaced their uniforms are not eligible to participate in future extracurricular activities until they are returned or replaced.

COACHES

Coaching middle school students is a challenging and time-consuming responsibility. Yet it can be extremely rewarding. Many volunteers have experienced the joys of developing young athletes at St. John's. The role of our coaches is that of coaching the whole person – body, mind, soul and spirit. Our coaches are expected to...

- Have well-planned practice schedule that will make maximum use of the practice time to develop skill, strength, and endurance.
- Know the rules of the game and pass on that knowledge to the players.
- Model their Christian faith in all they do.
- End every practice and game with a group prayer.
- Be encouragers of each athlete so as to strengthen, not defeat, their spirit.
- Meet with the Athletic Director prior to sports season to go over responsibilities and expectations.
- Document participation (formally or informally) of athletes in practices and games.

- Be the St. John's representative and authority at all tournaments not attended by the athletic director.
- Participation in the end of the year Awards Banquet.
- Recommend athletes for lettering.
- Effectively communicate to athletes and parents the times and dates of practices via Google Calendar
- Coaches are representatives of SJLS and must dress in respectable coaching attire at all games. This includes a SJLS shirt or dress clothes. Please remember that you are the face of the team and expected to dress appropriately for the games.
- Agree to and provide personal information for passing a background check.
- Sign the Concussions and Sudden Cardiac Arrest coaches agreement.

*Anyone interested in coaching should contact the athletic director. The final decision for coaching assignments will be made by the athletic director with the approval of the school principal and will be based on experience in the sport and coaching. **From that point on**, the coaching assignment is that person(s) until they decide they no longer want to volunteer in that capacity or the athletic director and principal feel that a coaching change needs to be made. The athletic director will contact the coach(es) from the previous year to see if they are still interested in coaching. If not, the athletic director will start the process of finding a new coach for that team for that season.

COACH/PARENT CONFLICT RESOLUTION FRAMEWORK

Parents, when your child(ren) become involved in the sports program, they will experience some of the most rewarding moments of their lives. Some of the memories will last a lifetime. However, there may be times when things do not go well for you or your child. If this happens, Matthew 18 should be followed in the event of a conflict between a parent/athlete and a coach:

1. Commit the matter to prayer
2. The parent/athlete should discuss the matter **privately** with the coach.
3. If a satisfactory solution is not reached, discussion should continue with the involvement of the athletic director. The athletic director will make sure that the previous steps have occurred. The purpose of the athletic director's presence is to make sure open communication takes place between the two parties and not to make final judgement.

APPEALS PROCESS:

In the event that the guidelines above do not help in resolving the conflict, the four step process below will be used and followed starting with step one.

1. Make certain you have talked directly and privately with the parties directly involved in the conflict. Do not talk with others or post anything on social media.
2. If the complaint is not resolved in step one, provide the athletic director with written notice of your complaint. The athletic director will consider the matter again and attempt to help the parties involved resolve the issue.
3. If the complaint is not resolved in step two, refer the matter in writing to the principal. The principal will work with the parties involved to resolve the conflict.
4. If the complaint is not resolved in step three, refer the matter in writing to the School Board of St. John's Lutheran Church and School. This decision is final.

ELIGIBILITY

Participation in extra-curricular activities is a privilege to students who maintain satisfactory academic progress according to our eligibility requirements. Student athletes are expected to maintain Christian standards in word and deed during competition, practice, and school life. Eligibility is based on academic performance and a Christian lifestyle and behavior in the school, church, and community.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

- Any student whose grade point average for any quarter or mid-quarter is below 73% or who receives lower than 66% in any core subject* for any quarter or mid-quarter grade will be

ineligible for all extra-curricular activities beginning at the time report cards or mid-quarter reports are distributed.

- After 1 calendar week of ineligibility, if the student's grades have been raised to the eligibility level, (s)he will be eligible for practice and participation. (Example: Report card comes out end of day on Wednesday. Ineligibility starts on Thursday. The week will include Thursday, Friday, Saturday, Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday.)
- If grade is not raised, ineligibility will continue until that grade meets the above requirements.
- Any student who receives an incomplete at the end of a quarter or mid-quarter in any subject will be ineligible for all extra-curricular activities from the time report cards or mid-quarter reports are distributed until the Athletic Director and Principal have been notified by the teacher that the work has been completed satisfactorily.

This policy includes all four grading periods. Fourth quarter grades affect eligibility for the first quarter of the next year.

While ineligible, the student may attend and but may not participate in practices. They may not in any way dress, participate, or compete in actual games or performance but will sit with their team in dress clothes.

The ineligibility notice given to the student is expected to be returned to the Principal, within 3 days after the grades have been issued with all appropriate signatures, regardless of circumstances. Should the form be late, the parents will be contacted by email in regards to the athlete's ineligibility with the form to be signed attached.

*Core subjects are Religion, Reading, English, Math, Social Studies and Science.

ENFORCEMENT OF RULES

If a breach of the policies described in this handbook should occur, disciplinary action will take place. This action may be taken by the coach, athletic director and/or principal. Discipline may include a temporary suspension, or expulsion from the team, depending on the severity of the problems.

FEES

Students in grades 5 through 8 will pay an athletic fee of \$50.00 for the school year. This will also include 4th graders if they are playing on a B Team. Students in grades 2 through 4 will pay a yearly participation fee of \$25.00. These fees are due before the first practice of the student's first sport season. All fees and forms must be turned in to the AD. The Student Athlete will not participate in any practices or games until the fee is paid along with all forms (page #3) completed and turned in to the Athletic Director/School Office.

ILLEGAL ACTIVITY

Student-athletes that engage in illegal activity (in or out of school) necessitating disciplinary or legal action may be suspended and/or dismissed from all athletic activities.

INSURANCE

St. John's does not provide medical insurance for student athletes. The school, coaches, and athletic director assume no responsibility for such expenses. In the event that an athlete needs medical care, parent(s)/guardian(s) are responsible for the cost of such care.

Athletes injured during practices or games are to bring the injury to the coach's attention the day of the injury. The coach should document on the injury form to be given to the AD and notify the parent(s)/guardian(s) during or after any practices or games in which an injury has occurred.

PARTICIPATION

Student-athletes must return their athletic forms and pay the athletic fee before participation will be allowed in a given sport. A student-athlete must also have the proper physical form on file with the athletic director.

In order to participate in a practice or game the student-athlete must fully participate and be in attendance in afternoon classes. Students who have an excused absence from school the day of a practice or a game will be considered excused from that practice or game. If there is any extenuating circumstances, a parent must contact the athletic director prior to any planned absence that the proper decision can be made.

If an athlete is going to miss a practice or a game, a written excuse or a parent/guardian phone call needs to be given to the coach at least 48 hours prior to the event. If an emergency arises that prevents prior notification, written notice should be given to the coach the following practice or game. Failure to provide notification either prior to missing an event or after an emergency event will be considered an unexcused absence and will affect lettering. Any athlete with multiple unexcused absences will be subject to coach's discipline and notification to the athletic director. Any subsequent unexcused absences could result in removal from the team. Students will not be penalized for missing optional practices during school vacations.

Coaches are representatives of St. John's and are responsible for the athletes. During day long events, athletes are to follow the guidance of their coach and represent SJLS in showing good Christian sportsmanship throughout the entire athletic event. If an athlete is to be under the care of a non-parent adult, the coach will need a note from the parent stating that arrangement. If a parent/guardian wants to take the athlete during non-playing time, they should respectfully let the coach know in regards to returning at the designated time for the next game preparation.

PHYSICALS

St. John's does require a physical for all student-athletes prior to the first participation in interscholastic athletics. Student-athletes shall undergo a medical examination and be approved for interscholastic athletic competition by a medical authority licensed to perform a physical exam. This examination is valid for two years.

Physical forms are available in the school office or can be downloaded and printed from our webpage under the Athletics tab.

PLAYING TIME

Student-athletes and parents who are involved in the athletic program need to understand that games are played not only to have fun and to learn skills, but also to win and be successful. Our philosophy is not to win at all costs, but our athletes and coaches will still play to win.

Participation is emphasized in the St. John's athletic program. Coaches are encouraged to get all players involved. At the 5th and 6th grade level, playing time will be as equal as possible as more emphasis is placed on participation, skill development, and fundamental teamwork than on winning. However, players and parents must realize that poor attitudes, lack of cooperation, and unexcused absences from practices and games may affect playing time. Also, if 4th graders have been brought up to be a part of the 5th & 6th grade team, it is understood that they may not receive as much playing time as their older teammates because they are playing at a 5th & 6th grade level.

At the 7th and 8th grade level, more emphasis is placed in winning than on equal playing time. As these athletes sharpen their individual skills, they will also be learning to put team goals ahead of individual goals. Although playing time may no longer be equal, coaches will strive to get all players into games. As difficult as this may be at times, it, too, is part of the character building process. We expect players and parents to be publicly supportive of our coach's decisions. A student athlete's daily work ethic in practices and games, attitude, absences from practice, disciplinary actions, academic performance, the number of players on the field, court or diamond allowable at one particular time, and game conditions all contribute toward one's playing time.

Playing athletics and representing SJLS is a privilege for all students. Therefore, a student athlete's daily academic performance, work ethic, attitude, respect, and actions all contribute toward one's playing time. Good behavior, respectfulness, etc. during school is expected. Any student not upholding these qualifications may have their playing time reduced. This will be determined by the principal in consideration with the child's teacher(s).

If any student athlete is sick and unable to attend school, they are not allowed to participate in any athletic or extra-curricular activities or practices on the day they did not attend school.

PRACTICES & SCHEDULING

Practices are scheduled after school or in the early evening. This is done to accommodate the coaches' schedules, as well as utilize the availability of the facilities. Game schedules will be posted on Google Calendar. Coaches will provide practice times and dates to the parents. These schedules will not be posted on the school Google calendar as changes in the schedule are inevitable and will undoubtedly occur. Every effort will be made by the team coach to inform you of changes as early as possible and will strive to do so at least 24 hours in advance. **Please ask your student-athletes** for any notices, in writing or verbally, as they will most likely be sent home directly from school with them or given to them by their coach at practice.

Any changes in game schedules will be sent out by the Athletic Director and changed on the Google calendar immediately. Coaches may also make changes and will contact team members. All practice changes made by a coach must receive prior approval by the Athletic Director.

All student-athletes will be asked to commit 100% to St. John's Athletic Teams. St. John's athletic activities do take priority so please try to plan your other extra-curricular events accordingly. Situations in which a student-athlete intends to split time between a St. John's sport and an outside sport should be brought to the attention of the coach and athletic director BEFORE the start of the season to eliminate potential conflicts.

RESPONSIBILITY OF PARENTS

Parents/guardians strongly influence their student-athlete's attitude toward and participation in athletics. Therefore, you are encouraged to:

1. Model and foster a Christ-like example. Be positive and encourage them to be a team player in every situation.
2. Remember, when you are in the stands you are a parent, not a coach. Let coaches do their job. If you really want to be involved with coaching, please contact the athletic director.
3. Assist your student-athlete in establishing proper priorities with respect to church, family, peers, study, practice, and play. Insist that your child respects and follows team rules, school rules, and game officials with good sportsmanship and self-control.
4. Support your son/daughter, the team, and the coaches by attending their games, encourage them when they lose, and keep them humble when they win. Cheer for our athletes, not against any athlete.
5. Respect the officials and their decisions. Under no circumstances are parents to approach a game official to discuss or offer your opinions about how the game is being called.
6. Share the responsibility with your child for promptness to games and practices, as well as show promptness in picking up your child from games and practices as the coaches have been instructed to stay until every student-athlete has been picked up. Please respect their time and their commitment.
7. Follow all directions given by the coaching staff at day long tournaments. Coaches are representatives of St. John's and are responsible for the athletes at these events. Athletes are to follow the guidance of their coach and represent SJLS in showing good Christian sportsmanship throughout the entire athletic event. If an athlete is to be under the care of a non-parent adult, the coach will need a note from the parent stating that arrangement. If a parent/guardian wants to take the athlete during non-playing time, they should respectfully let the coach know in regards to returning at the designated time for the next game preparation.
8. Get involved! There are many opportunities to volunteer time to help our athletic program, especially during home games when concessions are served and during tournament time. The success of our athletic program and the opportunities provided to our student athletics is directly impacted by our tournament and concession profits. Your involvement helps provide these activities for your student athlete(s) and those of the future. As a result, we require at least 10 Booster work hours per athlete in the family with the maximum requirement of 20 hours. A \$100 penalty will be assessed at the end of the school year to any family that does not meet this requirement.
9. Coaching a team as the Head Coach will count as 10 hours served out of the 10 hours required or 20 hours served out of the 20 hours maximum. The Assistant Coach will receive the same hours served.

SPECTATOR CONDUCT

Each spectator is expected to do the following:

1. Show through their words and actions that Christ is the center of their lives.
2. Show good sportsmanship to their team, the opponents, and the officials.

3. Refrain from disagreeing with the call of an official. It is the coach's responsibility to talk with the officials, not the spectators.
4. Refrain from criticizing a player or a coach. If you have a concern, please contact the proper person to discuss your concern in a Christian and professional manner. (Refer to "Coach/Parent Conflict Resolution Framework")
5. Refrain from any yelling or making any noise distractions during an opponent's free throw shooting.
6. Help in any possible way to make the St. John's Athletic Program a success – prayer, Christian example of sportsmanship, cleanup, concessions, coaching, etc.

SPORTSMANSHIP

Sportsmanship that models our Christian faith is what we strive to display. Whenever our teams take the field or floor for competition, they have the opportunity to make a bold witness of their faith in Jesus. We intend to maintain our tradition of good sportsmanship.

The coach is the standard-bearer of sportsmanship. As such, the coach is to help players and spectators do the right thing through self-control and dignity in the face of adversity. As long as there exists within us the drive to win and be successful, we will always need to check our sportsmanship. In this area we need each other. A positive, friendly reminder of our commitment to good sportsmanship may be just what we need to hear before we lose it. If poor sportsmanship becomes a problem, St. John's school personnel will intervene.

TRAINING RULES

A good athlete is not developed overnight. An athlete's development takes years of preparation. A dedicated Christian athlete will observe training rules year round, not just during the season. Individual coaches will have different rules. Each student-athlete is asked to follow these rules. Some general training rules that all students-athletes and coaches should follow:

1. Drinking, smoking, and/or the use of, or possession of harmful drugs is prohibited.
2. Eat well-balanced meals, especially breakfasts. Limit candy and soda.
3. Get plenty of sleep. Every individual is different and requires a different amount of sleep. As a student-athlete, you will require more rest than if you were not involved with athletics. Students should try to receive seven to ten hours of sleep of night.
4. Read and study your Bible. This includes active participation in church and chapel services as well as classroom, family, and private devotions.

TRANSPORTATION

Transportation at St. John's is done primarily through parent driven cars. Student-athletes and their parent(s)/guardian(s) are responsible for finding their own ride to games and practices. The athletic director and coaches are not expected to make transportation arrangements. Drivers need to make sure they have adequate auto insurance and that each rider wears a seat belt. There is usually no problem in finding rides, as we encourage parents and families to come to the games to watch.

BOOSTER WORK HOURS

There are many opportunities for Booster work hours to help our athletic program, especially during home games when concessions are served and during tournament time. The success of our athletic program and the opportunities provided to our student athletics is directly impacted by our tournament and concession profits. Your involvement helps provide these activities for your student athlete(s) and those of the future. As a result, we require at least 10 Booster work hours per athlete in the family with the maximum requirement of 20 hours. A \$100 penalty will be assessed at the end of the school year to any family that does not meet this requirement. All school records will be held until the assessment is paid. Coaching a team will count as 10 hours served out of the 10 hours required or 20 hours served out of the 20 hours maximum.

WEATHER EMERGENCIES

If games or practices are cancelled during the school day because of inclement weather, students will be given permission to call their parents. An email will also be sent to parents from the office. Every effort will be made to make the decision by 2:00 p.m.

Games and practices will be cancelled whenever school is cancelled due to weather.