

Royal Athletics



Handbook
St. John's Lutheran School
Chaska, Minnesota

St. John's Lutheran Athletic Handbook

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St. John's Athletic Handbook

Introduction

This athletic handbook contains the philosophy, goals, and policy statements pertaining to the athletic program of St. John's Lutheran School, Chaska, Minnesota. St. John's feels that the opportunity to participate in a variety of extra-curricular activities is a vital part of the student's educational experience. Through extra-curricular activities, students can grow spiritually, physically, emotionally, and socially. Our sports program offers several opportunities for the students to discover new talents and to improve in their overall knowledge of and appreciation for athletics.

Athletic Philosophy

Our athletic philosophy is based on the official philosophy of St. John's Lutheran School. Our school's mission statement says, ***"St. John's Lutheran School provides excellence in education, gathering in an environment of compassion, reaching out and serving others with the love of Christ."*** This statement is at the core of all of our actions on and off the court and playing field.

Our athletic philosophy is in agreement with all of the goals listed in the school's philosophy. Two of those goals are of particular note:

St. John's Lutheran Church and School Desires:

"To allow each child the chance to discover his/her God-given talents and abilities, and to allow those talents and abilities to flourish."

"To provide a warm, safe, and caring environment in which our children can learn and develop."

To enable our student-athletes to discover God-given talents in athletics, **we will offer extra-curricular sports to all students in grades 4-8, but please note that some sports are only offered to grades 5-8.**

To enable those talents to flourish, and to provide the caring environment needed to learn and develop skills, we will provide opportunities for our athletes to compete **at the skill level that best allows them to be challenged but not overwhelmed.**

We believe scripture commands our commitment to excellence as Christians. We are to be wise stewards of the talents God has given us, and to be men and women of excellence. Therefore, our athletic program strives to be the best it can be. In turn, we believe our athletes should strive to do their best when competing, and that they should use their God-given talents to the best of their ability.

Goals

1. To glorify Jesus in all that is done and said on and off the field/court.
2. To provide another avenue for students to have fun and participate in Christian fellowship.
3. To provide guidance as each student-athlete searches to discover and use his/her God-given talents.
4. To allow all students to participate in a program or on a team that is appropriate for their level of skill and experience.
5. To prepare the student-athletes for the next level of competition.
6. To provide additional school spirit and pride.
7. To develop an understanding of the rules and concepts of the game that will encourage a lifelong enjoyment of the sport (both competitive and recreational).

Code of Christian Conduct

Coaches

1. I will treat each player, coach, official, parent, and administrator with respect, Christ-like love, and dignity.
2. I will become familiar with the philosophy and goals of the athletic program at St. John's. I will strive to achieve these goals and communicate them to my players and their parents.
3. I will do my best to learn the fundamental skills, teaching and evaluation skills, and strategies of my sport.
4. I will become thoroughly familiar with the rules of my sport.
5. I will learn the strengths and weaknesses of my players so that I might place them in situations where they have a maximum opportunity to succeed.
6. I will communicate to my players and their parents the rights and responsibilities of individuals on our team.
7. I will cooperate with the athletic director and principal in the enforcement of rules and regulations, and I will report any irregularities that violate school policy and that are not in accordance with Christian behavior.
8. I will protect the health and safety of my players by insisting that all of the activities under my control be conducted with their welfare in mind.

Players

1. I will demonstrate a Christ-like example on and off the playing field/court.
2. I will make academic success a higher priority than athletic success.
3. I will be respectful of coaches, players, officials, and spectators at all times.
4. I will be diligent in preparation, relentless in effort, unified in teamwork, pure in speech, and humble in spirit.
5. I will know the team schedule and take responsibility to attend all practices and games.
6. I will take pride and care in the facilities I play in and the equipment I use.

Spectators

1. I will support and respect the players, coaches, and officials in a Christ-like manner.
2. I will be respectful towards the participating schools, their facilities, and equipment.
3. I will applaud the effort and sacrifice each player, coach, and official is making.

Eligibility Requirements

Participation in sports at St. John's is a privilege and not a right! In order to participate in sports, students must meet the following requirements.

1. All participants must turn in a completed sports physical every two years.
2. Our 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 student-athletes is a team effort that includes teachers, coaches, administrators, and parents. Students can be suspended from sports teams for violation of rules. Any violations listed in the student handbook can cause suspension from the team. The final decisions on suspension will be made by the athletic director and the principal after consultation with the student/s, parents, teachers/staff involved, and coaches. This suspension can be temporary or permanent depending on the violations.
3. Athletes must remain in good academic standing. If, at the mid-quarter or quarter grading periods, a student has an *F* or two *D*'s, he/she will be placed on **Initial Academic Probation**. Initial Academic Probation is a two-week period where the student can practice with the team, but cannot play in games. The student can participate in games if he/she raises deficient grades during the two-week period. If, after two weeks, the student still has deficient grades, a **Secondary Academic Probation** will be issued. Any student who is given a Secondary Academic Probation during the course of the entire school year will be excluded from all practices and games for a minimum of two weeks (ten school days). Regularly scheduled breaks (Christmas, Spring Break, Thanksgiving, etc.) will not be counted towards fulfilling the two-week minimum probation unless games or practices are held during those times. If a student has not raised deficient grades by the end of the Secondary Probation period, he/she will be ineligible to participate in all sports indefinitely until all grades remain at a C- level or higher for a minimum of four weeks. If a student goes through this entire process and remains ineligible or becomes ineligible again during the school year, he/she may be ruled ineligible for the remainder of the school year. The athletic director reserves the right to make exceptions to this rule in cases where a student does not have the ability to achieve higher grades or when extreme circumstances are involved. Exceptions will be made only after consultation with the students, parents, teachers, coaches, and principal.

Practice and Game Policy

A team member who misses a practice will be charged with an unexcused absence unless a signed note is received from the parents or guardian explaining the absence. If a student is ill or misses school due to an emergency, he/she will be excused from practice for that day. A student cannot practice or play in a game on any 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 send a note giving 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. Three unexcused absences from practice or games will result in the player being removed from the team.

Athletes must be properly dressed for games and practices. Uniforms must be worn for games, and shorts and T-shirts (sweats allowed for outdoor sports) for practices. Tennis/basketball shoes are also required to participate in sports. Any athlete not properly dressed for a game or practice will not be allowed to participate and will be charged with an unexcused absence.

In the event that a student will miss a game or tournament, parents must notify the coach as soon as possible.

Qualifications of Coaches

St. John's makes every effort possible to have members of our faculty and staff act as head coaches for the sport that we offer. In the event that we have more teams than we can find faculty coaches for, volunteers will be asked to help coach teams as needed. All head coaches must be at least 21 years of age. All coaches must be approved by the athletic director and the principal. All head coaches must go through a criminal background check. In the event that we need coaches from outside of our faculty and staff, St. John's will look for other qualified coaches from our church and school family.

Duties of Coaches

1. Serve as Christ-like examples of fair play and good sportsmanship. Emphasize the glory of God over the glory of self and school.
2. Attend games and practices arriving at each event promptly and prepared.
3. Be responsible for their own conduct and that of their team at all times.
4. Organize and run practice sessions in conjunction with practice times coordinated with the athletic director.
5. Give adequate notice to parents in regard to game and practice times.
6. Provide supervision for all athletes before, during, and after practices or games.

7. Assistant in asking for parent volunteers to transport students to and from away games.
8. Provide directions to parents and drivers for all away games.
9. Secure the facility and return all equipment to its proper location at the end of each practice or game.
10. Maintain all equipment and communicate all equipment needs to the athletic director.

Duties of Parents

Parents/guardians strongly influence their children's attitude toward and participation in athletics. Therefore all parents will:

1. Model and foster Christ-like attitude and behavior.
2. Assist students to establish proper priorities with respect to church, family, peers, academics, practice, and games.
3. Support my athlete, team, and coaches.
4. Respect the officials and their decisions.
5. Attend the athletic meetings for each sport that their child participates in.
6. Share the responsibility with my child for promptness to games and practices.
7. Take responsibility in ensuring my child is picked up promptly at the end of games and practices.
8. Sign up to work concessions and admissions for games and tournaments as needed.

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. All of our coaches are well trained and have the children's best interests at heart. Parents should feel free to approach the coaches 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:

1. ***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 director, principal).

2. We ask that parents not speak to a coach regarding concerns about a particular game for **at least 24 hours after the game**. This serves everyone a chance to calm down and will enable everyone involved to think more clearly before they speak. **We want all our words and actions to glorify God and show love to our Christian brothers and sisters.**
3. Parents with concerns *need to make an appointment* to speak with the coach. Immediately prior to, during, or after a game is **NOT** an appropriate time!
4. Any concerns regarding the school's athletic policy, scheduling, or equipment should be brought to the attention of the athletic director.
5. 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 may not necessarily be "resolved" to the satisfaction of the person who has the concern. 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.

Transportation

When we have away games, we depend on parents for transportation. We will often leave school before the end of the school day due to our late dismissal time. Coaches will inform parents of the time of departure. Unless other arrangements have been made with the coach, parents are to pick up their child at the end of the game at the game site. Parents who cannot be at the game site should make every effort to arrange transportation with other parents. Our coaches sacrifice a great deal of family and personal time during the year. Please do not ask your child to call you after they arrive back at school. Arrange to be at school by the estimated time of arrival or to have your child transported home with another parent. Students must have a signed note from a parent or guardian to ride home with another adult. All volunteer drivers must:

1. Be at least 21 years of age.
2. Have a valid driver's license.
3. Be able to show proof of insurance.
4. Make sure the office has a copy of license and insurance.
5. Provide a seat belt for each person they transport.

Before driving to their first game, parents should bring their license and proof of insurance to the office to make a copy for the school office's files. In the unlikely event of an accident, the driver's insurance will cover all the occupants in the driver's vehicle.

Sports Offered

St. John's Lutheran School is a member of the Minnesota Lutheran Athletic Association (MLAA). This league is made up of 11 Lutheran schools west of the Twin Cities. We participate in the following sports:

4-8 Flag Football (Boys)	September – October
5-6 Volleyball (Girls)	September – November
7-8 Volleyball (Girls)	September – November
3-8 Cross-Country (Boys & Girls)	September – October
7-8 Basketball (Boys & Girls)	November – February
5-6 Basketball (Boys & Girls)	February - March
5-8 Boys & Girls Track	May

**Other grade levels may be added to a sport as needed. This decision will be made by the coaches, athletic director, and principal.

Scheduling

The athletic director is responsible for scheduling all games. Coaches will work with the athletic director to help schedule games, practices, evaluations, etc. A printed practice and game schedule will be given to each player at the beginning of the sports season. ***Changes in the schedule are inevitable.*** Every effort will be made to inform you of changes as early as possible.

Team Selection

In the event that the number of students who wish to participate in (only a given sport) exceeds the total number of positions available per team, the students may be subject to an evaluation session. Evaluations will be formed for the 7th-8th grade level and for the 5th-6th grade level, if needed. Forming extra teams will also depend on the conference schedule. The athletic director and coaches will organize the evaluations. However, as stated in our philosophy, all students will be given an opportunity to participate in our athletic program. Any athletes not selected for a particular team will be offered an alternative.

When more than one team is formed at the 7th-8th grade level, at least two teams will be offered. 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 is made up of players who are less experienced and/or who may not feel compelled to play at the next level. The biggest functional difference between the two teams is in the area of playing time. On

Team 1, playing time is not guaranteed to any player. **Playing time on this team is solely at the discretion of the coach after determining what is in the best interest of each player and the team as a whole.** The goal for Team 2 will be to strive for as near to equal playing time for all players as is reasonably possible during each game. Team make-up may cause some deviations from this at the discretion of the coaches and athletic director.

When more than one team is needed at the 5th-6th grade level, we will also divide into two levels of play: Team 1 and Team 2. However, the 5th and 6th grade teams, in keeping with our athletic philosophy, will be more focused on an instructional approach than just on being competitive. This means that we will strive for near equal playing time for the athletes on each respective team (Team 1 and Team 2). Team make-up may cause some deviations from this at the discretion of the coaches and athletic director.

Any 6th grade student may participate in the 7th and 8th grade evaluation sessions. In order for this student to be selected to play at the 7th-8th grade level, he/she must possess the ability to be a starter on Team 1 and play at least 50% of the game. If the 6th grade student **is** able to participate on the 7th-8th grade Team 1, they will not be able to play on the 5th-6th grade team unless the seasons do not run concurrently. If the 6th grade student **does not** meet these requirements, he/she will not be selected to play at the 7th-8th grade level, but will be invited to play at the 5th-6th grade level. Final decisions regarding team participation will be made by the coaches and the athletic director in consultation with the parents of that student.

The athletic director may also choose to form additional teams to help with the challenge of large numbers of athletes, provided that there are qualified coaches and gym time available and sufficient teams in the area to compete against. This may also take the form of an intramural program if necessary. This will be done solely in a manner that is consistent with our philosophy and goals.

Playing Up

In the event that the number of participants for a team is lower than needed, the upcoming grade level students may be offered the opportunity to participate. This decision is up to the coaches, athletic director, and principal. Any 5th or 6th grader playing on the 7th & 8th grade team will also be allowed to play during the 5th & 6th grade season.

Uniforms

All athletes will be provided with a uniform for game use if there are enough available. All athletes must be dressed in their uniform to play in a game. The athlete is responsible for the replacement cost of any lost or abused uniform. Keep uniforms clean. Do not wash the uniforms in hot water or place them in a dryer. The numbers and letters on the uniform will melt and stick together! Dryers can be used *only* if set on “Air” setting. As a general rule of thumb, cold wash and line/air dry for sports uniforms.

In the event that more teams are added to the point where we have more players than uniforms available, members of an entire team may be asked to purchase uniforms/shirts that they will be allowed to keep at the end of the season. These will be ordered by the athletic director and will be furnished to the student at cost.

Athletic Fees

We are charging an athletic fee for each sport that an individual participates in. This fee will be used to offset the cost of athletic equipment, uniforms, coaching stipends, tournament Entry Fee, referees, gym use, etc. The fees will vary according to the number of games the team will play.

Games/Meets	Fee
7-8 Volleyball	\$75.00
5-6 Volleyball	\$50.00
3-8 Cross Country	\$50.00
5-8 Flag Football	\$25.00
5-6 Boys Basketball	\$50.00
5-6 Girls Basketball	\$50.00
7-8 Boy & Girls Basketball	\$75.00