

# **St. John's Lutheran School Athletic Handbook**

## **Philosophy of Athletics**

St. John's Lutheran School is proud to offer its students the opportunity to participate in athletic competition. The focus during any athletic event will be on Christian sportsmanship. Christian behavior is expected at all times by every person involved – including coaches, players and fans. It is the Athletic Department's view that the avenue of athletic competition offers an excellent opportunity to witness our faith in our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ both on and off the court or field of competition.

The emphasis at the 5th/6th grade level will be on participation. Each player will play in every game. This does not necessarily mean equal playing time. The exception to this rule will be tournaments the teams participate in. Tournaments will be played with an emphasis on competition.

The emphasis at the 7th/8th grade level will be on competition. The goal of each game will be to win with Christian sportsmanship. The coach will do his/her best to play everyone when possible under those circumstances.

In the field of grade school and junior high athletics, there are two main (and completely opposite) viewpoints regarding participation. These viewpoints are:

1. A belief that every athlete should play an equal amount in every game and that competition should be de-emphasized as much as possible.
2. A belief that competition is the key ingredient in any sport and should never be ignored. The goal of every game should be to win.

St. John's Lutheran has chosen a position which lies somewhere between these two opinions. We emphasize participation at the 5th/6th grade level and competition at the 7th/8th grade level. This means that every 5th and 6th grader will participate in every game (with the possible exception stated above) and that there may be times in which a 7th or 8th grader will not participate in a game at all. An attempt will be made to include all players whenever possible.

Athletics can aid in a child's total development. Whether a student athlete participates in every game, he or she still learns from being part of a team. Please keep this policy in mind when deciding whether our program meets the needs and/or requirements you have for your child.

## **Player Eligibility**

St. John's Lutheran School provides its students with opportunities to display their God-given talents and abilities outside the normal classroom curriculum. Participation in these activities is a privilege which carries responsibilities for the student. These responsibilities are as follows:

1. As a child of God and a student at St. John's, a participant must conduct him/herself in a way which will bring honor to God, our school, and him/herself. He/She is responsible for obeying the rules of the school and of his/her specific sport.

### **Player Eligibility (cont.)**

2. If a student receives one F or two D's at the end of a grading period, he/she will be ineligible. Eligibility will be determined at the end of each midterm and quarter marking.
3. If the grades or effort are not satisfactory at the end of the review period, the athlete will be placed on a two-week probation period. During that time, the athlete will not be allowed to attend any practices or participate in any games – this includes sitting on the bench. At the end of the two-week probationary period, if the athlete has performed up to expectations in the classroom, he/she will once again be allowed to participate. The athlete will continue to be monitored and may be removed from the team if grades or effort fall. An athlete will be allowed two probationary periods throughout the school year. If a student fails to meet expectations for a third time, he/she will be removed from that sport.
4. Incomplete work at the end of a quarter is cause for ineligibility. The child may be able to rejoin his or her activity when all work is finished to the satisfaction of the teacher.

An athlete that is ineligible is not allowed to wear his or her uniform or any portion of it for any activities that would otherwise require them to wear it i.e. games, assemblies, etc.

### **Church Attendance**

School policy requires families of St. John's Lutheran School to attend regular congregational worship services (Sunday morning, mid-week, and special) equivalent to at least 50% of the Sundays per school year. The Athletic Department's view is that student athletes should not only meet but exceed this requirement. Our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ has provided St. John's student athletes with the talents and opportunity to participate in sports. In praise and thanks for this gift, St. John's student athletes should look for every opportunity to attend church.

### **School Attendance**

Any student athlete who arrives after 11:30 am is considered absent from school for the day of competition and may not participate in practice, game, or any other athletic event on that day. This does not include medical or dental appointments.

## **Schedules**

Schedules will be handed out prior to the start of each season. The schedules will include practice dates and times, game dates and times, and dates of any tournaments. Schedules may and most likely will change from what you receive at the start of each season. The Athletic Director and coaches will do their best to communicate these changes to you as quickly as possible. If changes are made to the schedules and the change is on a school day versus non-school day, the student athlete is expected to attend the practice or game.

There will be NO practices or games scheduled after 5:30pm on Wednesdays during the Advent and Lenten seasons if there are church services scheduled.

## **Parental Discipline**

Since an athlete has made a commitment to the team, parents are asked to strongly consider other discipline options besides pulling their son or daughter off of a team. If you do decide this form of discipline for your son or daughter, you need to communicate your decision to the Athletic Director, School Principal and Team Coach.

## **Tryouts**

In certain situations, tryouts and cuts may occur in a sport. While the athletic department encourages all students to participate, keeping everyone who tries out for a team may not always be possible. In such cases, the athlete and parents will be made aware of the circumstances before the tryout period.

## **Training Rules**

Any athlete who is caught or observed violating the law (smoking, drinking, using drugs, etc.) will be banned from all athletics for the current and following sports seasons.

## **Conflict Resolution / Parental Concerns**

Please direct any parental concerns to the head coach of the team first. If you still have concerns after you've addressed them with the coach, then contact the Athletic Director. Discussion with other parents does not address your parental concerns with the appropriate people. A phone call, email and text message is an acceptable means to request a meeting with the coach and Athletic Director. They are NOT an acceptable means to discuss your concerns. Use of social media i.e. Facebook, Twitter, etc. is NOT an acceptable means to address your parental concerns. Parents choosing to use social media to address parental concerns may result in the dismissal of your student athlete from their team.

## **Uniforms**

The athletic department has developed a cycle for purchasing new uniforms. This will help ensure our athletes of wearing quality and proper fitting uniforms. Each athlete is responsible for the care of his/her uniform. Please take extreme care when washing a uniform. We will charge the cost for replacing a damaged, ruined, or lost uniform (this could exceed \$100 in some cases). Uniforms are never to be worn to or during school. They are only to be worn at games, or at designated special events only, i.e., pep rallies, etc.

At the end of each sport season there will be a designated day which uniforms must be returned to the athletic department. The uniform will be inspected for any damage including stains. There will be a \$5.00 per day fine imposed for each day after the designated day that a uniform is not returned. The fine must be paid at the time the uniform is returned. If the fine is not paid at that time, it will be added to your tuition bill.

## **Jewelry**

No jewelry of any kind may be worn during any practice or competition. This includes starter earrings.

## **Quitting a Team**

Taking “teamwork and dedication” into consideration, quitting a team is unacceptable. The only exceptions are for medical or emergency situations or parental disciplinary reasons. An athlete that quits a team for any other reason will not be allowed to participate in that sport the following year.

## **User-Fee Policy**

Each school year, the athletic department will assess each athlete a user-fee. Each athlete will be required to pay \$30.00 per sport. Cheerleading fees are \$15.00. Track and field fees are \$20.00. The money will be used to pay referees, purchase uniforms, etc. Checks should be made out to St. John’s Athletic Department. Fees for cross-country are to be directed towards Racine Lutheran High School.

## **Cougar Classic**

Our major fund raiser each year for the athletic program is the Cougar Classic basketball tournament held at Racine Lutheran High School. For the tournament to be a success, each parent or guardian that has a son or daughter participating in winter sports (basketball and cheerleading) is required to work at least two time slots (2-3 hours) at the Cougar Classic. If you do not volunteer on your own, the Athletic Director will assign you a time slot to work. If you choose not to work your time slot or you do not show up for your shift without arrangements, your son or daughter will not be able to play or cheer in his or her next game.

## **Cheer Competition**

When applicable, St. John's Lutheran School will hold a cheer competition at Racine Lutheran High School. Parents of cheerleaders are asked to work the competition.

## **Parent Volunteers**

During our winter sports season, we will need parents to volunteer for such things as selling concessions, selling tickets, running the scoreboard, etc. There will be a winter sports meeting, at which time you will be asked to sign up for the events listed above. Watch the Friday newsletter for specific details. If you do not volunteer on your own, the Athletic Director will assign you a time slot to work. If you choose not to work your time slot or do not show up for your shift without arrangements, your son or daughter will not be able to play in his or her next game.

## **Attendance Policy for Practices**

When a student participates in a sport, they are making a commitment to the coach and his/her fellow players. The head coach of the team will determine the attendance policy for practices. The policy will be communicated to the parents at the Fall and Winter sports meetings. The policy will have been reviewed by the Athletic Director prior to the sports meetings. The policy will be enforced on a consistent basis for all members of the team. Athletes are expected to be at all practices. Practices scheduled on days when there is no school scheduled per the School Calendar are considered non-mandatory practices.

## **Expectations at Practices**

- ✓ Christian behavior is expected from everyone involved at ALL times.
- ✓ Parents are responsible for any required transportation.
- ✓ Coaches will end practices at the scheduled time.
- ✓ Parents must pick up their son or daughter at the scheduled time. Repeated failure to do so could result in dismissal from the squad.
- ✓ Athletes must obey and listen and show respect to the coaches at ALL times.
- ✓ Discipline problems will not be tolerated. The first infraction will result in a warning to the parents. The second infraction will result in dismissal from the squad.
- ✓ Coaches must be given ample, prior notice of an excused absence (e.g., not at 3:15 P.M.)

## **Attendance Policy for Games**

When a student participates in a sport, they are making a commitment to the coach and his/her fellow players. Athletes are expected to be at all games. In light of that viewpoint, the following guidelines will be used regarding attendance at games.

The first unexcused absence will result in a player being required to sit out the following game in their uniform on the bench. A second unexcused absence will result in a player being required to sit out a second game in their uniform on the bench. A third unexcused absence will result in dismissal from the squad. The general guidelines of an unexcused absence are as follows:

Missing a game because of . . .

- a) attending plays, musicals, or other entertainment events
- b) attending a college or professional game of any kind
- c) playing in another game with another team
- d) being on vacation on days when there is school scheduled per the School Calendar

This list is not all inclusive, but is intended to serve as a general guideline. All absences will be deemed excused or unexcused on an individual basis by the Athletic Director.

Absences which might be considered excused would fall under such areas as:

- a) attending a special event to honor a family member i.e. – funeral, wedding. This does not include the birthday of a parent, sibling or other family member.
- b) emergencies
- c) illness or injury

## **Expectations at Games**

- ✓ Athletes, parents, family members, and coaches are representatives of St. John's Lutheran and are expected to behave in a Christian manner at ALL times and under ALL circumstances.
- ✓ Cheer for our St. John's athlete's efforts. Under no circumstances is booing acceptable.
- ✓ DO NOT cheer for an opposing athlete's mistakes. This is NOT behaving in a Christian manner and is completely unacceptable.
- ✓ Athletes, parents, family members, and coaches are representatives of St. John's Lutheran and are expected to behave in a Christian manner at ALL times and under ALL circumstances.
- ✓ Expect that the officials/referees will make mistakes. Expect that you will not always agree with the officials/referees. You are still expected to behave in a Christian manner with respect for the officials/referees.
- ✓ Parents are responsible for any required transportation.
- ✓ Please clean up after yourself. We would like to leave the premises whether home or away cleaner than when we arrived.
- ✓ Athletes, parents, family members, and coaches are representatives of St. John's Lutheran and are expected to behave in a Christian manner at ALL times and under ALL circumstances.