

# 2017-2018 Athletic Handbook



## St. John Lutheran School

### MISSION STATEMENT

United in faith, we serve the Kingdom of God by building lives that are rooted in the Word, centered on Christ, and motivated by Grace; to reflect Christ's love and share His Gospel with all.

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**“Laying Foundations for the Future”**

"Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever." Hebrews 13:8

## **Philosophy**

The athletic program of St. John Lutheran School serves as an extracurricular arm of the school. Its purposes and goals are consistent with the philosophy, purposes, and objectives of the school as listed on pages 2-3 of the Parent –Student Handbook.

We believe that participation in athletics can be a positive component in the growth and development of any child’s physical, mental, and spiritual health. Our purpose and aim include:

1. Christian fellowship and sportsmanship
2. Opportunities for Christian witness
3. An outlet for physical exercise
4. An opportunity to participate in athletic competition
5. The fostering of an individual’s self-confidence.

These purposes rank higher than a team’s achievement in winning games by score or a team’s accomplishment of an “impressive” won-loss record. If athletic success does occur, then all praise and glory go to the Lord.

## **St. John Athletic Objectives**

1. That each participant understands that the victory of eternal life in Jesus Christ, our Lord, is the major goal in life. (This includes athletics!)
2. That each participant honors God and accords Him praise for the blessings of physical health and the ability to participate.
3. That each participant grows in Christian fellowship, teamwork, and sportsmanship in a setting that includes athletic training and competition.
4. That each participant experiences an increase in self-confidence.
5. That each participant develops a greater capacity for physical fitness.
6. That each participant advances or improves in his or her individual skill level, principally in the sports offered at St. John.

## **Sports Offered**

- Cross Country
- Volleyball
- Basketball
- Track and Field

The sports listed above will be offered at St. John as long as we have willing volunteer coaches and we have enough interest and participation to support a team. Teams will be combined when necessary to have adequate numbers on each roster.

## **Participation**

Participation in the athletic program is offered for students in grades 5-8. Fourth grade students may be included if there is a need for players on the junior varsity team. The decision to include fourth grade is made by the school board in conjunction with the athletic director. Fourth grade parents will be notified if a sport is open to fourth graders.

Generally there are two levels of participation:

Junior Varsity (JV) - Ideally comprised of 5<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> grade. JV may include 4<sup>th</sup> and/or 7<sup>th</sup> grade depending on team numbers

Varsity (V) – Ideally comprised of upper middle school, 7<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade. Varsity may include 5<sup>th</sup> and/or 6<sup>th</sup> grade depending on team numbers.

The roster of each team is determined by the athletic director. Students at the lower level may be asked to play at the higher level if the need arises. The coaches of both levels would determine which additional players would be used to fill the need.

## **Sports Physical**

Students are required to take an annual health exam or physical before participating in a sport. One physical per year qualifies the student for entry into all sports.

A physical form must be on file in the school office prior to participating in practice or competitions. An exception can be made allowing the student to practice if an appointment has been made and the form will be forthcoming. Student will not be allowed to compete in games or meets until a form is on file. For extenuating circumstances, please see the school office.

## **Concussion Form**

Each student-athlete is required to have a signed Concussion Information Form on file in the school office before they may participate in sports practices, games, or meets. A new concussion form must be signed each year. One form allows participation in all sports.

## **Fees**

Students are required to pay a fee for each sport in which they participate. The participation fee is used to pay entries to tournaments, home officials, facility rentals, purchase awards, equipment, uniforms, etc. The fee for each sport is listed on the “Athletic Intent Form” which is filled out for each 5<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade student for enrollment/re-enrollment. Fee amounts are also available by request at the school office. The uniform user is responsible for replacement costs if the uniform is damaged, lost, or not returned. Parents are required to complete the proper agreement forms and satisfy the participation fees before the student can participate in regularly scheduled games.

## **Finances**

The athletic department operates as a non-profit organization and a non-budget function of St. John Lutheran Church and School. Income to meet expenses is accrued from the concession stand and the gate admissions at home sporting events, tournament sponsorships, individual participation fees, and the generous support of the Parent Teacher Fellowship (PTF) Organization.

## **Academics and Grades**

Students are expected to maintain average grades (C or higher) in every class while participating on a team. Grades will be reviewed every Friday to ensure that a student remains eligible. If a student's grades are not maintained at a C average or higher, academic suspension would occur until the next review date a week later. The student would not be eligible to participate in his/her sport until the academic suspension period expired. However, the student athlete would be allowed to practice during the suspension period. Parents are expected to take responsibility for overseeing their child's grades and making contact with teachers, coaches, and the principal when necessary to achieve improvement in below average areas.

## **School Discipline**

A student could lose his or her eligibility privilege if a violation of a school rule occurs. Infractions incurred at school could lead to a suspension of one or more games as determined by the principal, athletic director, and teachers, in consultation with the parents.

## **Playing Time**

Absences from school, especially unexcused, will normally result in a reduced amount of playing time in a regular game. To participate in a game or practice, students must be present at school for a full day of instruction on game or practice days, unless there are extenuating circumstances, such as a doctor's appointment.

It is expected that a participant notify the coach if he or she is unable to attend a practice or game. Direct communication with the coach is very important.

The junior varsity teams will concentrate mainly on fundamentals, participation, and learning the rules and concepts of the game. The varsity teams will maintain this emphasis but will also increase the focus on being competitive and strategic in game situations.

Play time at the varsity level may be based on skill, effort, attitude, and practice attendance. Coaches are asked to give at least minor playing time to every athlete on the varsity team. However, it is possible that not all players on a varsity team will have playing time in each game. Due to varying ages/grades on our teams, safety is a factor that must be considered at the varsity level. Coaches will use discretion to determine if the varsity team player's age and ability level is appropriate for the team being played.

All players at the junior varsity level are assured floor time in each junior varsity game. This holds true under the condition that the player has been regular in attending practice sessions and games in the season. No player can accumulate playing time in a game without attending practice.

For Track & Field and Cross Country, meet participation will be based on skill, effort, attitude, and practice attendance. Meet participation will also depend on the level of the meet and each meet's entry restrictions. Several of our Track & Field and Cross Country meets only have 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade divisions and it may not be appropriate for a 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, or 6<sup>th</sup> grader to compete at that level. Some meets do not allow younger athletes to participate at all. Additionally, coaches are limited on the number of entries (participants) for events at each meet throughout the season, which means that not all team members may be able to participate in the same number of events. Coaches will make every effort to communicate entries with parents before the meets so that they know if their child is able to participate and if so, which event(s) they are able to do.

## **Uniforms**

All uniforms and warm ups are the property of St. John (with the exception of girls spandex shorts used for volleyball/ track, and boys and girls performance shirts worn under jerseys) and must be returned to the school within one week of the final game.

Parents are responsible for purchasing their own plain white undershirts for their boys and girls to wear underneath the sports jerseys. Undershirts must be plain white (no images). Parents are also responsible for purchasing optional black or navy blue compression shorts/pants to wear underneath uniform bottoms.

Girls volleyball shorts will be purchased through the office each season. If your daughter has a pair of volleyball shorts from previous years that she wishes to wear in games, please schedule a “shorts check” with the school office so that we can ensure that the length/fit is still within our uniform modesty requirements.

## **Traveling to Away Games**

Parents are responsible for the transportation of their child(ren) to all games. It is important not to expect or assume that your child(ren) would ride with another parent without any communication. Coaches might require that a team travel together and arrive at a game location at the same time. All drivers carrying passengers in addition to their own children must have a valid driver’s license and up-to-date automobile insurance coverage.

## **Expectations of St. John Athletes and Fans**

Participants and their parents are expected to observe the following guidelines. Failure to honor these expectations could result in disciplinary action. A St. John athlete should:

- Represent St. John Lutheran School as an ambassador for Christ.
- Celebrate the opportunity and privilege to participate as a St. John athlete.
- Scholastically achieve in the classroom according to the abilities given to him or her by God.
- Dress in a manner that is God-pleasing and consistent with the school dress code.
- Maintain athletic eligibility by regular practice and game attendance, meeting the academic standard, and managing appropriate behavior at school and school events.
- Care for your uniform properly and return it at the end of the season.
- Win games without boasting, and lose games without excuse.
- Consider all “opponents” as friends and guests and treat them with due courtesy.
- Never boo or express demeaning remarks from the sideline or bleachers.
- Applaud teammates and kindly support opponents for making good plays.
- Maintain a positive attitude in game play and on the bench.

A St. John spectator should:

- Represent St. John Lutheran School as an ambassador for Christ.
- Respect the officials and opposing coaches and players.
- Encourage and cheer for the home team.
- Never boo or express demeaning remarks to the opposing players, coaches, or spectators.

## **Coaches**

Coaches serve as volunteers. Staff persons are permitted first preference in the assignment of coaches. Parents of current St. John Lutheran School students receive next preference. Non-staff coaches are selected by the athletic director (in conjunction with the principal and school board) on an annual basis. Those wishing to be a coach, to serve as an assistant, or to help in another way are to seek out the athletic director and fill out a coaching application.

The responsibilities of a coach include the following items:

1. Participate in a “Love and Logic” coaching workshop that will teach the principles we use as a school to handle any behavioral issues that may arise (all coaches and assistant coaches).
2. Complete concussion training every two years.
3. Sign the “Coach’s Promise.”
4. Set the practice schedule in consultation with the athletic director.
5. Communicate with the athletic director information involving equipment needs, traveling details, upcoming games, and disciplinary concerns.
6. Review rules and regulations for the conferences (i.e., IESA and LSA) pertaining to their specific sport.
7. Register athletes for athletic games, tournaments, or meets, as needed.
8. Find a scorekeeper for your sport, supervise the scorebook, and complete a report form at the end of the season.
9. Supervise all practice sessions and remain at the practice site until all participants have been picked up.
10. Communicate to parents and players a list of expectations and current information as the need arises.
11. Complete the “Athletic Injury Report” form when an injury occurs and submit it to the athletic director within twenty-four hours.
12. Attend worship service at all LSA events in which St. John participates.
13. Attend the Athletic Banquet, share highlights of the season, and say something encouraging about each member of your team.

## **Parent Volunteers**

St. John Athletics is a community effort and we need each family to be involved in order for our sports program to exist! The work of parent volunteers is highly appreciated. Ways in which parents may be asked to help are: admissions desk, scorekeeper, gym cleanup, uniform collection and distribution, providing team snacks, recording split times, and photographer.

Each family with a student participating in a gym sport will be required to help in the concessions stand for a certain number of games per sport. Please be prompt in signing up for concessions stand slots when you receive notification that sign ups have begun. Families that do not sign up for concession slots will be assigned dates/times and will be responsible for switching with another family (and then notifying the school office of the switch) if their assigned dates/times do not work for them.

## **Eighth Grade Honors**

The Athletic Department will honor all eighth grade athletes and their parents at the Athletic Banquet held in May.

At the last varsity home game of the season for gym sports (basketball and volleyball), the eighth grade athletes will be called on to the court and an announcement will be made acknowledging their final St. John game.

Coaches or parents who wish to further recognize eighth grade athletes during their specific season with flowers, candy, desserts, etc. may do so on their own at a practice or at an end of the season team party. We ask that this not be done at a game.

## **Awards**

Awards are categorized into three areas. Each of these awards will be presented at the end of the year Athletic Banquet held in May.

1. **Participation Certificate**-Students must maintain eligibility by regular attendance and appropriate behavior.
2. **St. John Varsity Sports Letter**-A sports letter may be earned by seventh and eighth grade varsity participants in cross country, volleyball, basketball, and track and field. Requirements include regular attendance at games and practices, good conduct, and regular game or race participation.
3. **Christian Athlete Award**-All eighth graders will automatically be nominated for this award if they meet the academic and two sport minimum requirements. If no athlete(s) meet the qualifications for this award, then there will not be a winner. The recipient is selected by the athletic director, principal, junior high teaching staff, and pastor. This award represents the highest individual award offered at St. John. The winning recipient must qualify by being:
  - A student in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade (potentially one boy and one girl).
  - A student who modeled Christian qualities academically, socially, and athletically.
  - A student who participated in a minimum of two sports.
  - A student who practiced good sportsmanship both at practices and at games.
  - A student who achieved the requirements for a letter in a minimum of one sport.
  - A student who achieved above average grades (B or higher) throughout the year.