

**St. John Neumann Catholic School
Mustang Athletics
Handbook**



Information, Policies, and Procedures for Parents
and Student Athletes

625 St John Ct, Knoxville, TN 37934

www.sjnks-knox.org

@sjnksknox

@sjnksmustangs

St. John Neumann Catholic School

Contact Information :

Principal—Dr. Kelly Mechelke, kmechelke@sjncs-knox.org

Pastor—Father Joe Reed

Academic Dean—Sabrina Talley, stalley@sjncs-knox.org

Athletic Director—Melissa Barnett, mbarnett@sjncs-knox.org

School Secretary—Jill Jabaley, jjabaley@sjncs-knox.org

School Bookkeeper—Christine Roeck, croeck@sjncs-knox.org

School Phone Number: 865-777-0077

SJNCS Athletics website : <https://sjncs-knox.org/athletics/>

Follow Us on Social Media:

School: @sjncsknox

Athletics: @sjncsmustangs

To Share Sports Scores, Pictures, and Information :

Stephanie Greiner sgreiner@sjncs-knox.org Subject line: Athletics

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Administration Welcome

Welcome to St. John Neumann Catholic School's (SJNCS) Athletic Programs! I am proud of you for your commitment to being active, becoming part of a team, and having fun learning and growing with a group of people. As a member of the SJNCS athletic family, our expectations for you are to act responsibly as you represent SJNCS, study, go to class, practice hard, and do your best to excel.

SJNCS strives to maintain an outstanding athletics program conducted in a manner that sets an example for good sportsmanship. The department recognizes that its primary commitment is education of the student-athlete. We encourage you to be responsible as a student-athlete so that you can maintain satisfactory grades and continue being a part of our wonderful sports programs.

We want you to succeed at the highest level both academically and athletically.

Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, which you have from God?

You are not your own - Cor 6:19 - Dr. Mechelke

Mission of St. John Neumann School and Athletics

The purpose of St. John Neumann Catholic School Mustang Program is to allow each participant to reach his or her highest potential by providing a Christ-like atmosphere that fosters sportsmanship, commitment, self-sacrifice, honest, and respect. We are a competitive program. While winning is not the primary goal, it is very important and we want to achieve at every level.

Program Goals

Devote our thoughts, words, and actions to the glory of God.

Develop our individual talents to our fullest.

Do our best regardless of outcome.

Respect and care for our bodies and minds

Recognize that teamwork and sportsmanship help create community and school spirit.

Prayer from the field, court, and track

God, let me play well but fairly.

Help me to learn something that matters
once the game is over.

Let competition make me strong but never hostile.

Always let me help my opponent up.

Never catch me rejoicing in the adversity of others.

If I know victory, allow me to be happy; if I am denied, keep me from envy.

Remind me that sports are just games.

If through athletics I set an example,
let it be a good one. Amen

Prayer from the sidelines

God, I thank you for the wonderful blessing it is to watch my children play sports. Thank you for the smile that it brings to their face and for the ways in which sports help them to grow in virtue and skill. I ask that as they participate you protect them from injury and harm and bless them with the grace to reach their full potential. Bless their coaches that they may embrace their role and have the courage to always do what is right for the children you have entrusted to their care. Grant all sports parents the graces we need to be supportive and to have perspective. May we seek not our own will for our child, but yours, and in doing so be freed to let them enjoy this experience no matter the result. May each of us - child, coach and parent - glorify you through our actions and come to know you better through this experience. I ask this through Christ, our Lord. Amen

Athletic Opportunities and Affiliations

| Sport | Grade | Participants | Season | League |
|---------------|-------|--------------|--------|----------------|
| Basketball | 2-8 | coed | Winter | SJNCS/WBBL |
| Cheerleading | 5-8 | coed | Winter | SJNCS/KISL |
| Cross Country | 2-8 | coed | Fall | SJNCS/KYA |
| Flag Football | 3-8 | male | Fall | SJNCS/KISL |
| Golf | 5-8 | coed | Spring | SJNCS |
| Soccer | 5-8 | coed | Spring | SJNCS/KISL |
| Tennis | 1-8 | coed | Fall | Catholic Youth |
| Track | 2-8 | coed | Spring | SJNCS/KYA/KISL |
| Volleyball | 5-8 | female | Fall | SJNCS/KISL |

Communication

Effective communication is essential for fostering a positive and supportive environment in sports. Open and transparent lines of communication are vital to ensuring a seamless and rewarding experience for our student-athletes. To ensure effective communication among young athletes, coaches, and parents, the following policy is established:

1. Respectful Communication: a. All individuals involved (young athletes, coaches, and parents) are expected to communicate in a respectful and courteous manner at all times, both in person and through digital channels. b. Verbal, written, and non-verbal communication should be free from profanity, insults, bullying, or any form of harassment. c. Differences of opinion should be addressed constructively, without personal attacks or belittling remarks.
2. Clear Channels of Communication: a. Coaches will establish clear channels of communication with parents and athletes, including providing contact information such as email addresses and phone numbers. b. Regular communication methods, such as team meetings, newsletters, or digital platforms, will be used to share important information, updates, schedules, and any changes that may arise.
3. Timeliness: a. Coaches will strive to respond to athlete and parent inquiries in a timely manner, respecting a reasonable timeframe for a response. B. Parents are expected to provide information also in a reasonable time frame. c. both parties are asked to remind themselves of the tough work to be a coach/parent and that neither lives can revolve strictly around athletics.
4. Private Conversations: a. Private conversations between coaches, athletes, and parents should be conducted in appropriate settings, such as face-to-face meetings, phone calls, or private messaging platforms. b. It is important to maintain confidentiality when discussing sensitive or personal matters.
5. Positive Feedback and Constructive Criticism: a. Coaches will provide constructive feedback and positive reinforcement to young athletes, focusing on areas of improvement and celebrating achievements. b. Parents are encouraged to provide support and positive reinforcement to their child, avoiding overly critical or negative feedback.
6. Conflict Resolution: a. In the event of a disagreement or conflict, all parties are expected to approach the situation with an open mind and a willingness to find a resolution. b. If necessary, conflicts should be addressed through the coach → Athletic Director → School Administration.
7. Compliance with Policies: a. All athletes, coaches, and parents are expected to comply with the school's policies, including this communication policy, as well as any relevant codes of conduct or guidelines established by the sports governing bodies.

By adhering to this communication policy, we aim to foster an environment that promotes respect, effective collaboration, and open dialogue among young athletes, coaches, and parents. Regular review and feedback will help refine and improve this policy to ensure the best possible communication practices within our sports community

It is important for parents to remember that coaches spend countless hours of their time and energy into creating a successful coaching experience. It is equally as important for coaches to remember parenting young children is tough. Both need to recognize the part they play in developing, encouraging, and empower our student athletes, who are the primary focus.

Code of Conduct

The Coach—The job of a coach is a tough one that involves the game at play and the growth and development of the athletes both physically, mentally, and spiritually.

1. Uses words and actions that encourage the athletes to reflect on living their faith through sports participation
2. Serves as a role model for good sportsmanship, fair play, honesty, and team spirit
3. Treats all players and opponents with respect
4. Inspires in the athletes a love for the game and the desire to compete fairly
5. Disciplines those on the team who display un-sportsman-like behavior
6. Respects the judgment and interpretation of the rules by the officials
7. If a coach is ejected from a game, he/she will be suspended for two games.

The Parents—The job of a parent of a student athlete is a difficult one. It takes a lot of effort to do it well.

1. Make sure your children know that win/lose, you love them, appreciate their efforts, and are not disappointed in them.
2. Try your best to be completely honest about your child's athletic capability, their competitive attitude, sportsmanship, and actual skill level.
3. Be helpful but don't coach them; remember, that is the coach's job.
4. Don't compare your child with other team members.
5. Teach your child to enjoy competition, but avoid creating pressure on him or her.
6. Always remember that children tend to exaggerate both when praised and criticized.
7. Keep in mind that your child's playing time is at the discretion of the coach.
8. When a teacher/coach is not directly responsible for students, parents are required to supervise their children and are responsible for their behavior at all school events, including but not limited to, sporting events. Lack of parental supervision could result in the student being excluded from future events.

The Spectator- the job of a spectator is to be an encourager.

1. Attempts to understand and be informed of the rules of the game
2. Appreciates a good play no matter who makes it
3. Respects the judgment and strategy of the coach
4. Does not criticize or second-guess coaches or players for a loss
5. Does not heckle, jeer or distract players, referees, or coaches
6. Avoids use of obnoxious language or behavior

Preseason and Tryouts

Prior to tryouts, all coaches will send out communication to all perspective members/parents explaining expectations, rules, etc. The coaches shall select the teams. The number of players/teams selected is determined by the league and varies by sport. We will make every attempt to provide athletes with opportunities, however it is not always possible to keep everyone who is interested. Coaches may hold a makeup tryout, but are not required to do so.

All tryouts are closed tryouts, with only coaches, players, athletic director and school admin. Multiple sports are encouraged, but open communication and realistic expectations need to be brought to the forefront early so a plan can be put together that each person involved feels will be successful.

Practice and Game Attendance

Student athletes are expected to attend team practices and competition each day they attend school. While scheduling conflicts arise and issues to happen, every effort should be made by the athletes to participate to the fullest. Communication is vital and should other arrangements need to be made athletes are responsible for communicating with coaches. All competitions are mandatory. Please use best communication practices and recognize that team sports require team attendance.

Absences

If a student misses more than a ½ day of school or has a fever, vomiting, or diarrhea they will not be permitted to participate in after-school sports activities. Students need to be symptom free for 24 hours.

Students leaving school early to participate in a sporting event are responsible for making up any work that is missed in a timely manner without penalty.

Injury

All injuries should be reported to the coach at the time they occur so further injury can be avoided. If you are injured, remember the following:

- 1.) Tell the athletic coach that you are injured before leaving practice / game.
- 2.) No matter how small the injury, get treatment and discuss with coach
- 3.) No one should miss practice without doctor or coach permission and or communication.
- 4.) Anyone who becomes sick, nauseated, dizzy, and / or hot should notify the coach immediately.
- 5.) Please check in with the school nurse for any injury requiring treatment.

Athletic Director will be notified on all injuries of serious in nature. These injuries will require an accident report to be completed.

Academic Expectations

Student athletes are held to the academic expectations of the school as follows.

Students with a conduct grade lower than 70 percent will not be eligible to play or practice for a week. Any week after that will result in two weeks of suspended play. If a student athlete is suspended (ISS or OSS) eligibility for participation in sports will be determined by the school administration. Fall sports eligibility is determined by the final term grades of the prior school year.

If a student is not allowed to participate in a sport due to consequences from conduct or grades, he or she may not sit with the team during games.

If a student has more than one grade of 76 percent or lower (D or F) the student is off any sports team for one week.

Students with grades of 76 percent or lower will be allowed to try out for a team, but will not be able to practice or participate in any games until the child is no longer on Academic Alert.

Athletic Dress Code and Equipment

The school will ensure that uniforms are up to par for each athlete. The school and coaches will provide necessary information for other equipment needs. With an attempt to keep all costs down, the school will take responsibility for supplying the uniforms and other equipment as able and necessary. Athletes and parents will be expected to treat the provided athletic wear, uniforms, and equipment with care and using them only for their intended purposes. Athletes must report any damages, defects, or issues with the athletic wear, uniforms, or equipment to the designated personnel promptly. Athletes must return all issued gear at the end of the season or upon request by the coach or be fined for a replacement.

Holiday Breaks, School Cancellations

Practice and or competition may occur during school breaks and holidays. If a student athlete will be out of town during practice or competition, please communicate this with the head coach in a timely manner.

Transportation

See that your child has transportation to all games and practices. It is not the responsibility to the coach to provide transportation. Coaches may provide transportation only if the Diocesan Form for Volunteer Driver is on file prior to coach transport. No less than 3 individuals should be traveling in a vehicle together. All parents and coaches who may transport children will be asked to have both the form and proof of insurance on file.

Playing Time

We believe in our coaches. Their job is to manage and direct a specific sport. Their responsibilities include evaluating and selecting students for teams, as well as determining the degree to which each student-athlete will participate, and they do this with considerable thought and sensitivity. While each member of a team will play throughout the season, there will be times when it may not be equal. We charge our coaches to develop our players for competitive play.

It is our goal in team selection to find opportunities not only for participation, but more importantly, for success. Placing each student athlete at the level where he/she can contribute physically and gain positive feelings from his/her efforts is important to the coaching staff. During the selection process, coaches will evaluate skill level, athleticism, physical conditioning, positional play, trainability, punctuality, and various other attributes.

We want our student athletes to learn the value of being on a team and the contribution each must make. Team members have a responsibility to themselves, their teammates, and their coaches to learn and perform their role on the team. Teamwork requires the development of many interpersonal skills such as listening, following directions, accepting constructive criticism, being respectful, and supporting teammates and coaches.

Playing time will not be discussed with parents nor will team strategy, play calling, or other student athletes.

Student athletes are encouraged to speak to their coach if they have any questions regarding playing time and/or improvement. Parents may contact the coach

24 Hour Rule

Do not attempt to confront a coach immediately before or after a contest or practice.

These can be emotional times for both the parent and coaching staff.

You should wait at least 24 hours before contacting the coach.

Appropriate concerns for parents to discuss with coaches are athletes mental and physical treatment, suggestions for athlete's improvement, and concerns about athlete's behavior.

Not following the 24-hour rule could result in suspension or immediate dismissal from the team for the student athlete.

If you have an emergency, please contact the Athletic Director, Melissa Barnett, mbarnett@sjncs-knox.org.

Insurance

SJNCS provides insurance for all athletes while practicing for, competing in, or traveling to and from athletic contests as a representative of SJN. The school insurance is supplemental or secondary insurance with payments made only after the primary carrier makes payment. This policy is for medical bills resulting from accidents and is subject to specific limitations and exclusions. Accidents must be reported within twenty days (20) to the school. For the supplemental insurance to take effect, the insured athlete must be treated within sixty (60) days of the accident and parents must first file a claim with their own insurance program and file a supplemental claim within ninety (90) days after the treatment ends. Only expenses incurred within fifty-two (52) weeks of the date of the original accident are considered. The ultimate responsibility of filing and receiving payments of claims rests with the parents. (Claim forms can be obtained in the Business Office.

Sportsmanship

All participants in the "Mustang" athletic program will commit themselves to good sportsmanship. Sportsmanship is defined as "honest rivalry, courteous relations, and graceful acceptance of results." All participants need to understand and accept that each opponent and each team has the right to win. Winners are not always judged by the final score but in their struggle to win, doing their best, and not giving up. Everyone involved in the athletic program is responsible for good sportsmanship

Discipline

SJNCS has established an athletic code that clearly defines certain behaviors as inappropriate and harmful to the student athlete and his/her athletic endeavors. Using illegal or harmful substances, exhibiting improper conduct, not maintaining proficient academic progress, or engaging in activities considered inappropriate for an SJNCS student athlete are areas that will be dealt with by suspension from athletic contests and/or from the athletic program. Additional consequences will be determined by the Principal and/or Dean of Students as deemed appropriate. Athletes are expected to comply with the Parent/Student Handbook to be eligible to participate in sports.

Social Media

As members of a team and students of a school, we want to represent SJNCS with pride at all times. Posting inappropriate or derogatory pictures or comments that reflect negatively on our community or those within via social media accounts would be in violation of the SJNCS Conduct Code. This may be grounds for suspension or expulsion.

Iron Mustang

Students who participate in a sport for each season and an additional 2 service hours will receive the Iron Mustang Award. This award is to honor commitment to the athletic teams and school. The award will coincide with the school year and culminate in May.

Fundraising

While fees are required for each sport, SJN athletes and parents will not be asked to do outside fundraising. There may be event and activities throughout the year that athletes and parents will be asked to promote or volunteer for, but the act of fundraising will not be required in order to participate in any sports. Any needs that a sport may have or feel needs to be met should be addressed with the coach and athletic director so an equitable, consistent, and sustainable choice can be made.

Banquet and Awards

The banquet for each sport and awards will run through SJN and be streamlined so we are sure to celebrate our athletes, coaches, and parents for all that they do. Please bring ideas to the Athletic Director so that we can plan accordingly for each sport season.

Reminder

The coach reserves the right to take additional disciplinary action against players violating policies located in the Athletic Handbook. The School Administrators and Athletic Director will handle exceptions and rulings on an individual basis as they occur and are brought to the attention of the group. We realize that every possible event or circumstance that could potentially go wrong / happen during the season may not be covered in this handbook. Events and clarifications not covered in this handbook will be resolved at the discretion of the head coach in collaboration with the Athletic Director and School Administration. We apologize if we overlooked some things; please feel free to bring it to our attention.

CONCUSSION

INFORMATION AND SIGNATURE FORM FOR STUDENT-ATHLETES & PARENTS/LEGAL GUARDIANS (Adapted from CDC "Heads Up Concussion in Youth Sports")

Public Chapter 148, effective January 1, 2014, requires that school and community organizations sponsoring youth athletic activities establish guidelines to inform and educate coaches, youth athletes and other adults involved in youth athletics about the nature, risk and symptoms of concussion/head injury.

Read and keep this page.

Sign and return the signature page.

A concussion is a type of traumatic brain injury that changes the way the brain normally works. A concussion is caused by a bump, blow or jolt to the head or body that causes the head and brain to move rapidly back and forth. Even a "ding," "getting your bell rung" or what seems to be a mild bump or blow to the head can be serious.

Did You Know?

- Most concussions occur *without* loss of consciousness.
- Athletes who have, at any point in their lives, had a concussion have an increased risk for another concussion.
- Young children and teens are more likely to get a concussion and take longer to recover than adults.

WHAT ARE THE SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF CONCUSSION?

Signs and symptoms of concussion can show up right after the injury or may not appear or be noticed until days or weeks after the injury.

If an athlete reports **one or more** symptoms of concussion listed below after a bump, blow or jolt to the head or body, s/he should be kept out of play the day of the injury and until a health care provider* says s/he is symptom-free and it's OK to return to play.

| SIGNS OBSERVED BY COACHING STAFF | SYMPTOMS REPORTED BY ATHLETES |
|---|---|
| Appears dazed or stunned | Headache or "pressure" in head |
| Is confused about assignment or position | Nausea or vomiting |
| Forgets an instruction | Balance problems or dizziness |
| Is unsure of game, score or opponent | Double or blurry vision |
| Moves clumsily | Sensitivity to light |
| Answers questions slowly | Sensitivity to noise |
| Loses consciousness, even briefly | Feeling sluggish, hazy, foggy or groggy |
| Shows mood, behavior or personality changes | Concentration or memory problems |
| Can't recall events prior to hit or fall | Confusion |
| Can't recall events after hit or fall | Just feeling "off" or "feeling down" |

*Health care provider means a Tennessee licensed medical doctor, osteopathic physician or a clinical neuropsychologist with concussion training

CONCUSSION DANGER SIGNS

In rare cases, a dangerous blood clot may form on the brain in a person with a concussion and crowd the brain against the skull. An athlete should receive immediate medical attention after a bump, blow or jolt to the head or body if s/he exhibits any of the following danger signs:

- One pupil larger than the other
- Is drowsy or cannot be awakened
- A headache that not only does not diminish, but gets worse
- Weakness, numbness or decreased coordination
- Repeated vomiting or nausea
- Slurred speech
- Convulsions or seizures
- Cannot recognize people or places
- Becomes increasingly confused, restless or agitated
- Has unusual behavior
- Loses consciousness (*even a brief loss of consciousness should be taken seriously*)

WHY SHOULD AN ATHLETE REPORT HIS OR HER SYMPTOMS?

If an athlete has a concussion, his/her brain needs time to heal. While an athlete's brain is still healing, s/he is much more likely to have another concussion. Repeat concussions can increase the time it takes to recover. In rare cases, repeat concussions in young athletes can result in brain swelling or permanent damage to their brains. *They can even be fatal.*

Remember:

Concussions affect people differently. While most athletes with a concussion recover quickly and fully, some will have symptoms that last for days, or even weeks. A more serious concussion can last for months or longer.

WHAT SHOULD YOU DO IF YOU THINK YOUR ATHLETE HAS A CONCUSSION?

If you suspect that an athlete has a concussion, remove the athlete from play and seek medical attention. Do not try to judge the severity of the injury yourself. Keep the athlete out of play the day of the injury and until a health care provider* says s/he is symptom-free and it's OK to return to play.

Rest is key to helping an athlete recover from a concussion. Exercising or activities that involve a lot of concentration such as studying, working on the computer or playing video games may cause concussion symptoms to reappear or get worse. After a concussion, returning to sports and school is a gradual process that should be carefully managed and monitored by a health care professional.

*Healthcare provider means a Tennessee licensed medical doctor, osteopathic physician or a clinical neuropsychologist with concussion training.

Student-athlete & Parent/Legal Guardian Concussion Statement

Must be **signed and returned** to school or community youth athletic activity prior to participation in practice or play.

Student-Athlete Name:

Parent/Legal Guardian Name(s): _____

After reading the information sheet, I am aware of the following information:

| Student-Athlete initials | | Parent/Legal Guardian initials |
|--------------------------|--|--------------------------------|
| | A concussion is a brain injury which should be reported to my parents, my coach(es) or a medical professional if one is available. | |
| | A concussion cannot be "seen." Some symptoms might be present right away. Other symptoms can show up hours or days after an injury. | |
| | I will tell my parents, my coach and/or a medical professional about my injuries and illnesses. | N/A |
| | I will not return to play in a game or practice if a hit to my head or body causes any concussion-related symptoms. | N/A |
| | I will/my child will need written permission from a <i>health care provider</i> to return to play or practice after a concussion. | |
| | Most concussions take days or weeks to get better. A more serious concussion can last for months or longer. | |
| | After a bump, blow or jolt to the head or body an athlete should receive immediate medical attention if there are any danger signs such as loss of consciousness, repeated vomiting or a headache that gets worse. | |
| | After a concussion, the brain needs time to heal. I understand that I am/my child is much more likely to have another concussion or more serious brain injury if return to play or practice occurs before the concussion symptoms go away. | |
| | Sometimes repeat concussion can cause serious and long-lasting problems and even death. | |
| | I have read the concussion symptoms on the Concussion Information Sheet. | |

•*Healthcare provider* means a Tennessee licensed medical doctor, osteopathic physician or a clinical neuropsychologist with concussion training

Signature of Student-Athlete

Date

Signature of Parent/Legal guardian

Date

Athlete/Parent/Guardian Sudden Cardiac Arrest Symptoms and Warning Signs Information Sheet and Acknowledgement of Receipt and Review Form

What is sudden cardiac arrest?

Sudden cardiac arrest (SCA) is when the heart stops beating, suddenly and unexpectedly. When this happens, blood stops flowing to the brain and other vital organs. SCA doesn't just happen to adults; it takes the lives of students, too. However, the causes of sudden cardiac arrest in students and adults can be different. A youth athlete's SCA will likely result from an inherited condition, while an adult's SCA may be caused by either inherited or lifestyle issues. SCA is NOT a heart attack. A heart attack may cause SCA, but they are not the same. A heart attack is caused by a blockage that stops the flow of blood to the heart. SCA is a malfunction in the heart's electrical system, causing the heart to suddenly stop beating.

How common is sudden cardiac arrest in the United States?

SCA is the #1 cause of death for adults in this country. There are about 300,000 cardiac arrests outside hospitals each year. About 2,000 patients under 25 die of SCA each year. It is the #1 cause of death for student athletes.

Are there warning signs?

Although SCA happens unexpectedly, some people may have signs or symptoms, such as:

- fainting or seizures during exercise;
- unexplained shortness of breath;
- dizziness;
- extreme fatigue;
- chest pains; or
- racing heart.

These symptoms can be unclear in athletes, since people often confuse these warning signs with physical exhaustion. SCA can be prevented if the underlying causes can be diagnosed and treated.

What are the risks of practicing or playing after experiencing these symptoms? There are risks associated with continuing to practice or play after experiencing these symptoms. When the heart stops, so does the blood that flows to the brain and other vital organs. Death or permanent brain damage can occur in just a few minutes. Most people who experience SCA die from it.

Public Chapter 325 - the Sudden Cardiac Arrest Prevention Act

The act is intended to keep youth athletes safe while practicing or playing. The requirements of the act are:

- All youth athletes and their parents or guardians must read and sign this form. It must be returned to the school before participation in any athletic activity. A new form must be signed and returned each school year.

- The immediate removal of any youth athlete who passes out or faints while participating in an athletic activity, or who exhibits any of the following symptoms:
 - (i) Unexplained shortness of breath;
 - (ii) Chest pains;
 - (iii) Dizziness
 - (iv) Racing heart rate; or
 - (v) Extreme fatigue; and
- Establish as policy that a youth athlete who has been removed from play shall not return to the practice or competition during which the youth athlete experienced symptoms consistent with sudden cardiac arrest
- Before returning to practice or play in an athletic activity, the athlete must be evaluated by a Tennessee licensed medical doctor or an osteopathic physician. Clearance to full or graduated return to practice or play must be in writing.

I have reviewed and understand the symptoms and warning signs of SCA.

Signature of Student-Athlete

Print Student-Athlete's Name Date

Signature of Parent Guardian

Print Parent Guardian's Name Date

