



ATHLETIC HANDBOOK

Dear Parents, Guardians, and Student-Athletes,

Welcome to the St. John Neumann Catholic School Athletic Program. We are grateful for your participation and support as we work together to provide a positive, faith-centered athletic experience for our students. Athletics offer opportunities for growth in character, teamwork, leadership, and personal responsibility while promoting physical fitness and healthy competition.

This handbook outlines the expectations, policies, and procedures governing participation in athletics at St. John Neumann Catholic School. Parents and student-athletes are encouraged to read the handbook carefully and discuss its contents together. Participation in school athletics is a privilege. Student-athletes are expected to represent themselves, their families, their teams, and St. John Neumann Catholic School with integrity and respect at all times.

We look forward to a successful athletic season and appreciate your commitment to supporting our student-athletes.

Chris Carroll
Athletic Director
athletics@sjncs-knox.org

ST JOHN NEUMANN CATHOLIC SCHOOL ATHLETIC SPORTS CALENDAR

FALL SPORTS: Cross Country, Flag Football, Tennis, Volleyball

WINTER SPORTS: Basketball, Cheerleading, Swimming

SPRING SPORTS: Golf, Soccer, Track & Field

ATHLETIC PHILOSOPHY

The goal of the athletic program is to provide students with opportunities to grow physically, mentally, emotionally, socially, and spiritually through participation in organized sports.

At the elementary and middle school levels, emphasis is placed on:

- Skill development
- Sportsmanship
- Teamwork
- Character formation
- Leadership development
- Personal responsibility
- Competitive excellence

Competition is important, but student growth and enjoyment remain the primary focus.

ELEMENTARY LEVEL - participation is encouraged whenever possible; equal playing time is encouraged as much as possible among participants.

MIDDLE SCHOOL LEVEL - participation is encouraged whenever possible; however, playing time may vary depending upon attendance, effort, attitude, preparedness, team needs, and demonstrated skill development. Participation on certain athletic teams, performance groups, or extracurricular teams may be determined through a tryout process.

GENERAL ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Participation in athletics is open to eligible students who meet the academic, behavioral, age, grade-level, and physical requirements established by St. John Neumann Catholic School and any athletic league in which the school participates.

Students must:

- Be enrolled in St. John Neumann Catholic School.
- Meet all academic requirements.
- Meet all behavioral expectations.
- Submit all required athletic forms.
- Maintain a current sports physical.
- Comply with league eligibility standards.

At SJN academic success remains the highest priority for all student-athletes. Participation in athletics is considered a privilege and is dependent upon maintaining satisfactory academic performance and conduct.

ACADEMIC POLICY

Each Friday, middle school students' grades are reviewed by administration. Students who have below 70% in two or more subjects due to incomplete or missing assignments will be placed on Academic Alert and are not permitted to participate in any school sponsored athletic/extracurricular activity, pep rallies, out-of-uniform, etc. until all assignments are turned in. Students are required to complete missing or late work during lunch recess and/or homeroom. Parents will be notified by email if their child has been placed on Academic Alert. Grades are reassessed each week.

DISCIPLINE POLICY

Any student earning 5 or more demerits for the week will be placed on disciplinary Conduct Alert

- First Conduct Alert- Lunch detention the next day. No in-school activities, such as out-of-uniform and pep rallies for one school day. If the student has an athletic contest or extracurricular event on the day of the consequence, the student may attend but may not compete, or participate.
- Second Conduct Alert - Five days of lunch detention. No in-school activities, such as out-of-uniform and pep rallies for five school days. Discussion/writing about how to

improve behavior. If the student has an athletic contest or extracurricular they are ineligible to participate in athletic contests or extracurricular performances/events for five school days, the student may attend but may not compete, or participate. Students may still be expected to attend practices unless otherwise directed by the coach or administration.

- Third Conduct Alert - One day in-school suspension. Ten days with no in-school activities. If the student has an athletic contest or extracurricular they are ineligible to participate in athletic contests or extracurricular performances/events for ten school days, the student may attend but may not compete, or participate. Parents will need to meet with the administration and possibly other staff to formulate a plan of action before student returns to classes. Pastor and Superintendent may be consulted. Dismissal may be warranted.

Students with a conduct grade lower than 70% will not be eligible to play or practice sports for a week. Any week of below 70% after that will result in two weeks of suspended play.

Students assigned In-School Suspension (ISS) or Out-of-School Suspension (OSS) are ineligible to participate in practices, games, team activities, or athletic events during the period of suspension.

Additional disciplinary consequences may be imposed for behavior that violates school or athletic program expectations.

If a student is ineligible to play due to consequences from conduct or grade, that student may not sit with the team during team events.

The Athletic Director or school administration will provide written notification to students and parents regarding academic ineligibility decisions.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Student-athletes must attend at least one-half of the school day to participate in practices, games, or other extracurricular activities occurring that day.

Students must be present by 11:30 a.m. unless excused by school administration.

GRADE AND AGE REQUIREMENTS

Participation in KISL athletics is open to students in grades five through eight who meet the academic, physical, and behavioral standards established by SJNCS. Because the school participates in multiple athletic leagues, student-athletes must also comply with all eligibility requirements established by those organizations.

SPORTSMANSHIP EXPECTATIONS

Sportsmanship is a core value of the St. John Neumann Catholic School Athletic Program.

Student-athletes, coaches, parents, and spectators are expected to conduct themselves in a manner consistent with Christian values and good sportsmanship at all times.

Participants are expected to:

- Respect officials and their decisions.
- Treat opponents with dignity and courtesy.
- Demonstrate self-control.
- Use appropriate language.
- Represent the school positively on and off campus, including on social media.
- Accept victory with humility and defeat with grace.
- Encourage teammates and support positive team culture.

Unsportsmanlike conduct, abusive language, harassment, taunting, intimidation, or inappropriate behavior by athletes, parents, coaches, or spectators may result in disciplinary action, removal from events, or suspension from participation.

THE FUNDAMENTALS OF SPORTSMANSHIP

All members of our athletic community (student-athletes, coaches and parents) are expected to:

- Understand and respect the rules of the sport.
- Demonstrate exemplary conduct at all times.
- Appreciate skilled performance regardless of team affiliation.
- Show respect for contest officials.
- Display respect toward opponents.
- Take pride in representing St. John Neumann Catholic School.

TRYOUTS

While every effort will be made to provide opportunities for student participation, team roster imitations may require tryouts and selections in certain sports. Tryouts are conducted to assess participants' skills, readiness, what is best for the student-athlete, and suitability for the team. Selection decisions are made at the discretion of the coaches.

Student athletes must attend scheduled tryouts if they want to be considered for the team. If it's known in advance that it's impossible for a student to attend a tryout, prior contact should be made with the coach to discuss an alternative arrangement.

All tryouts are closed tryouts, with only coaches, players, athletic director and admin permitted to attend.

COMMUNICATION AND THE 24-HOUR RULE

Healthy communication between parents, student-athletes, and coaches is essential to a successful athletic program.

Team meetings will be held between coaches and parents before the start of each season. A student-athlete's parent or guardian must attend this meeting. If you can not attend, please contact your coach prior to the meeting. Failure to attend a required parent meeting, or to communicate with your coach, may result in a student being ineligible to participate in team activities until the requirement has been satisfied.

Game schedules, practice schedules and other important information over the season will be communicated by the coach on the GameChanger app.

24 HOUR RULE

Parents and guardians are asked to observe a 24-hour waiting period before discussing concerns with a coach following a contest or emotionally charged situation. It is important for parents to remember that coaches spend countless hours of their time and energy trying to create a successful and positive experience for all our student athletes. Finding a balance between success and a positive experience for every athlete, (and parent) is a coach's biggest challenge, so please respect the 24 hour rule and approach your coach respectfully with any issue you may have. Playing time policy should be discussed by Coach and parents at the pre-season coach/parent meeting, not after games during the season..

The following communication process between a parent and coach should be followed:

- Wait at least 24 hours.
- Schedule a meeting with the coach.
- Communicate respectfully and professionally.
- If concerns remain unresolved, request a meeting with the Athletic Director.
- Angry confrontations will not be tolerated between parent and coach, and may result in a student being excluded from future events.

Appropriate topics for discussion include:

- Student-athlete well-being
- Academic concerns
- Behavioral concerns
- Suggestions for improvement

Topics not appropriate for discussion include:

- Playing time
- Team strategy
- Play selection
- Other student-athletes

ATHLETIC PHYSICAL EXAMINATION REQUIREMENTS

Students wishing to participate in any school-sponsored athletic activity must submit documentation of a current sports physical examination completed by a licensed healthcare provider. Required forms may be obtained from your doctor or a licensed healthcare provider. Sports physical forms may also be found on the Tennessee Secondary School Athletic Association (TSSAA) website.

****If you anticipate your child participating in a school sport over the coming year, please provide a Sports Physical from your doctor or licensed health care provider by the end of the first week of school in August, or before your child's first practice if that is during the first week of school. Failure to provide one will exclude your student-athlete from participating in tryouts, evaluations, practices and/or games.**

Signed sports physicals should be returned to school reception.

Physical examinations must be completed after July 1st for the upcoming school year. If turned in before the season of your chosen sport, it will be kept on file until required. Sports physicals will need to be renewed for the start of each new school year.

INJURY

All injuries should be reported to the coach at the time they occur so further injury can be avoided. If a student athlete is injured please remember the following:

- Tell the coach before leaving practice or the game and assess whether treatment is necessary.
- Anyone who becomes sick, nauseated, dizzy and/or hot, should notify the coach immediately.
- Check in with your doctor or school nurse with any injury requiring further treatment.

No one should miss a practice or game due to injury without a doctor or coach permission or communication.

The Athletic Director will be notified of any injury of a serious nature incurred during school activities. Such injuries require the completion of an accident report.

RETURN TO PLAY FROM INJURY

Any student-athlete who receives medical treatment from a physician or visits an emergency room due to an athletic injury must provide written clearance from a licensed physician before returning to participation.

Additionally, any student-athlete who misses three or more consecutive practices or games due to injury, must submit written medical clearance before resuming athletic activities. Parent notes will not be accepted in place of physician documentation.

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 20 days to the school. For the supplemental insurance to take effect, the insured athlete must be treated within 60 days of the accident and parents must first file a claim with their own insurance program, and file a supplemental claim within 90 days after the treatment ends. Only expenses incurred within 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 from the business office.

ATHLETIC PARTICIPATION FEE

An athletic participation fee will be assessed for each student-athlete participating in a sport at St. John Neumann Catholic School.

Athletic fees help offset the costs associated with:

- Uniforms
- Equipment
- League memberships and registration fees
- Officials and referees
- Athletic program operations

Fees will be charged to a student's school account.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF COACHES

Coaches at SJNCS serve as educators, mentors, and role models. Coaches are expected to uphold the highest standards of professionalism, sportsmanship, and Christian character.

Coaches shall:

- Treat players, opponents, officials, and spectators with respect.
- Support and uphold the rules and decisions of contest officials.
- Demonstrate self-control and professionalism at all times.
- Promote sportsmanship, fair play, and ethical competition.
- Serve as positive role models for student-athletes.
- Follow all school policies and supervision requirements.
- Comply with all school, league, and athletic department regulations.
- Maintain a safe and positive environment for all participants.
- Address unsportsmanlike behavior appropriately and consistently.
- Use school facilities only as authorized by the Athletic Director.
- Refrain from using profanity or inappropriate language.
- Conduct themselves in a manner that reflects positively on St. John Neumann Catholic School.
- Extend courtesy and respect to opposing coaches and teams following contests regardless of outcome.

Coaches recognize that athletics are an extension of the educational mission of the school and that every athletic experience should contribute to the growth and development of the student-athlete.

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR A COACH

- A coach should use both words and behavior to help athletes connect their faith with their experiences in sport.
- A coach should serve as a role model for good sportsmanship, fair play, honesty, and team spirit.
- A coach should treat all players and opponents with respect.

- A coach should inspire in the athletes a love for the game and the desire to compete fairly.
- A coach should discipline those on the team who display unsportsmanlike behavior.
- A coach should respect the judgment and interpretation of the rules by the officials.
- If a coach is ejected from a game, he/she will be suspended for a minimum of two games.

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR A PARENT

- As a parent make sure your children know that win or lose you love them, appreciate their efforts, and are not disappointed in them.
- Try your best to be completely honest to yourself about your child's athletic capability, their commitment to the team, their competitive attitude, sportsmanship, and actual skill level.
- Be helpful, but don't coach your child; remember this is the coach's job.
- Give positive, encouraging feedback to your child about their performance or game.
- Don't compare your child with other team members. Children develop at different rates so every child's athletic developmental path is different.
- Teach your child to enjoy competition, but avoid creating pressure on him or her.
- Keep in mind that your child's playing time is at the discretion of the coach.
- When a coach is not directly responsible for students, parents are required to supervise their children. Parents 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.

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR A SPECTATOR

- A spectator should offer encouragement.
- Attempt to understand and be informed of the rules of the game.
- Appreciate a good play, no matter who makes it.
- Respect the judgment and strategy of the coach.
- Do not criticize or second-guess coaches or players during a game or following a loss.
- Do not heckle, jeer or distract players, referees, or coaches.
- Avoid use of obnoxious language or behavior.

Displays of behavior opposite to these could result in a spectator being asked to leave the game facility.

PRACTICE AND GAME ATTENDANCE

Once a student athlete has committed to a team, whether through tryouts or not, the student athlete should complete the full season. By allowing your child to just drop out of a team sends the wrong message about commitment, resilience and team loyalty. Honoring a commitment and being a reliable teammate are huge life lessons for a young athlete to learn. Parents should use sports to reinforce these teaching opportunities.

Student athletes are expected to attend team practices and competition each day they attend school. While scheduling conflicts arise, and issues 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.

A student athlete must have been committed to the team for the whole season, in order for that

sport to go towards any of the school athletic awards.

PLAYING TIME

The responsibilities of a coach include evaluating and selecting students for teams, as well as determining the degree to which each student athlete will participate. They do this with considerable thoughts and sensitivity. While each member of a team will play throughout the season, there will be times when playing time may not be equal. We ask 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 individual and team success. Placing each student athlete at the level where he or she can contribute physically, and gain positive feelings from his or her efforts, is the goal of the coaching staff.

During the selection process for both the season and for individual games, 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.

Student athletes are encouraged to speak to their coach if they have any questions regarding playing time and or 'in game' improvement.

ATHLETIC DRESS CODE AND EQUIPMENT

The school will ensure that uniforms are up to par for each athlete. Should they be required, 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 to supply 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 use them only for their intended purposes. Athletes must report any damages, defects or issues with the athletic wear, uniforms or equipment to their coach promptly.

RETURN OF UNIFORMS

Athletes must return all issued uniforms at the end of the season as directed by the Coach or Athletic Director. There will be a replacement charge for any uniforms not returned.

HOLIDAY BREAKS AND SCHOOL CANCELLATIONS

Practices 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 of the coach to provide transportation. Coaches may provide transportation only if the Diocesan Form for Volunteer Driver is on file prior to the transportation. No less than three 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.

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.

CONCESSIONS

The sale of concessions at our games is an opportunity for the school to generate income to support our athletics department. We really encourage and appreciate everyone's help with this. Parents of each student athlete will be expected to help work the concession stand on at least one occasion during the season. A time slot will be allocated to each family by your coach. If you can not fulfill your time slot it is the responsibility of the parent to trade time slots with another family.

ATHLETIC AWARDS

PENNANTS

To encourage our students to participate in at least one sport per season, a pennant will be awarded at the end of each season to any student athlete who participates in a school sport. A student can only earn one pennant per season regardless of how many sports are participated in. A total of three different pennants over the year can be earned, one each for the Fall, Winter and Spring seasons.

MIGHTY MUSTANG

Any Elementary school student who participates in a school sport in each of the three seasons, fall, winter and spring (in the same school year), will receive a Mighty Mustang award for their sustained effort throughout the school year.

IRON MUSTANG

Any Middle School student who participates in a school sport in each of the three seasons, fall, winter and spring (in the same school year), will receive the Iron Mustang award. This award is to recognize students who have often successfully earned a place at tryouts, and have demonstrated dedication and commitment to proudly represent the school throughout the year.

COACH'S AWARDS

A coach will award the following three end-of-season individual awards to members of the team:

- COACH'S AWARD - To the player most deserving for overall commitment etc. over the season.
- ST. SEBASTIAN AWARD - To the player who has approached games and the season with respect for others, positive teamwork, perseverance etc. A great team mate!
- MVP AWARD - Most Overall Valuable Player of the season

END OF SEASON TEAM PARTY

To celebrate the team spirit developed throughout the season, each team will hold its own end-of-season celebration, where coaches' awards will be presented. The party can be held on or off school grounds. Parents and/or Coach can have input on what kind of party your team would prefer. Coaches will notify the Athletic Director of any plans for the end of season party.

ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT DONATIONS

Other than serving at the concession stand or taking entrance fees, SJN parents will not be asked to do outside fundraising to navigate a regular sports season. Costs for regular sports

seasons are covered by the school and by player participation fees. However, should you wish to make a donation to the athletic department in order to purchase new sporting equipment or to improve our athletic facilities please approach the athletic director and our director of development. These generous offers will then be discussed with school administration before approval.

OTHER

We realize that every possible event or circumstance that could potentially happen during a 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.