



SAINT JOSEPH'S
CATHOLIC SCHOOL • EST 1993

ATHLETIC POLICY MANUAL

2023-2024

PURPOSE

To establish the policies for participation in athletics at St. Joseph's Catholic School (SJCS) that are to be enforced by the SJCS administration and coaches and adhered to by the parents and student athletes.

SJCS MISSION

St. Joseph's Catholic School seeks academic excellence and strives to form the minds, hearts, and souls of its students in the likeness of Christ.

GOALS OF THE ATHLETIC PROGRAM

- To teach the values of fair play and good competition
- To encourage teamwork as an important part of a student's growth toward maturity
- To develop proper care and respect for one's body, knowing that conditioning the body also helps develop the mind
- To nurture respect for other athletes, fans, and authority on the athletic fields as a means to learning respect for others in day-to-day living
- To enhance school spirit through the active participation of students, parents, etc.

MEMBERSHIP

SJCS is a member of the South Carolina High School League (SCHSL). We adhere to the policies and regulations set forth by SCHSL.

The organization and administration of the interscholastic athletic programs are the responsibility of the Athletic Director and the coaches with the approval and support of the Headmaster.

SJCS Athletic teams represent the school, its mission, and the values of Catholic education. Coaches, student-athletes, faculty, parents, and fans are expected to bring greater pride to themselves, their families, and community by their conduct and participation in the interscholastic sports program.

The St. Joseph's Way Ramifications for Athletics

INFINITE WORTH

The St. Joseph's Way affirms the infinite worth and innate religiosity of each member of the school community.

- As coaches we show respect for our student-athletes by giving our best to them by preparing well for practices and games.
- We expect all of our athletes to treat each other with respect and to provide support to all members of the team regardless of their ability or role on the team. We stress that everyone has an important role to play.
- We focus effort on the least talented players as well as the most talented athletes, coaching up 2nd and 3rd string players, demanding 100% effort from all players.
- We show respect to our opponents & officials by refraining from derogatory comments and remarks, by always playing by the rules, and by offering friendly greetings and congratulations.
- As coaches, we set the standard by using language that builds up and encourages our athletes. When correcting and motivating them to improve, we always refrain from derogatory remarks and tactics that demean kids and/or take God's name in vain.
- We create an affirming and welcoming culture on our teams that is free from all forms of harassment and hazing.
- Out of respect for our opponents we are careful not to run up the score when an athletic contest is firmly in hand.
- The music played at games and practices will be consistent with the school's Catholic mission and be free from bad language, racial slurs, and sexual content and innuendo.

POSITIVITY OF REALITY

The St. Joseph's Way embraces all of reality, believing that it comes from God and therefore reveals signs of His presence in the world today.

- No matter what happens in a game, we believe that there's always something good that we can look for and expect, because we believe that God is present and is calling each person to Himself through the reality we are experiencing.
- We revere and value participation in athletics as a place for discovering beauty, truth, goodness, and even transcendent realities. As coaches, we look for opportunities to point these things out to our athletes to help them see that their love for sports is related to their innate desire for God.
- We believe that there are as many life lessons to learn from losing as from winning. Therefore, we seek to discover those lessons and to teach them to our student-athletes. (Some of the possible life-lessons include: the importance of working hard to overcome adversity; being gracious in defeat & victory; showing compassion for teammates and opponents who fail; practicing forgiveness toward teammates, opponents, & officials when wronged; remembering that our common humanity unites us more than being opponents divides us).
- We help our athletes embrace and be grateful for their gifts and encourage them to use them for the good of others.

- We help our athletes recognize their limitations and encourage them to overcome those that can be improved upon while accepting and making the most of those that cannot be changed.
- If we must cut a student from a team, we are thoughtful and gracious in our communication of that news.

FULFILLMENT IN CHRIST

The St. Joseph's Way proposes that fulfillment is found in communion with Christ, who remains a living presence today in the friendship of His followers, the Church.

- We strive to create a strong sense of Christian community and family on our teams such that they are animated by the belief that every member on the team has a unique and irreplaceable role on the team and in the body of Christ.
- While we value winning and we strive to do so, we don't see winning games and championships as the ultimate objective and meaning of our athletic programs, but rather we view participation in sports as an opportunity to get to know ourselves, our teammates, our coaches, our opponents, and our innate desire for God better.
- We start practices and games with prayer and end with prayer in order to ask God's blessing on all of our activities and to help us keep the proper perspective and attitude.
- Under normal circumstances we don't practice or play on Sundays so as to keep the commandment to "sanctify the Lord's Day" and allow time for family.
- When we travel as a team over a weekend, we always make time to go to Sunday Mass as the first priority of that day together.
- While expecting athletes to make a serious commitment to our team, we also work creatively in conjunction with other divisions of the school to allow space for our players' other interests.
- We see coaching as a special opportunity to participate in the overarching academic and Catholic mission of the school; and therefore, we don't isolate athletics from the larger purpose of the school.

PERSONAL ACCOMPANIMENT

The St. Joseph's Way calls on teachers and staff to accompany their students as they use their freedom to verify the school's Christian proposal.

- We strive to build relationships with our athletes (while maintaining appropriate adult/ boundaries) by being approachable and making sure our athletes know that we love and care for them as people.
- We set high expectations, push our athletes to improve, and hold them accountable while giving them grace as well as firmness when it is needed.
- While we value skill and strive for excellence, we hold up as examples athletes who act with integrity and virtue and point to them as role models for their teammates.
- We strive to make it known that we are there for our players and coaches to serve as sounding boards for whatever is going on in their lives, both "on and off the court/field."
- We are there for our students when they fail whether that failure is athletic, academic, or personal, always taking the long view and never giving up on them.
- We look for ways to stay involved and accompany our students even after they graduate from high school.

SJCS ATHLETIC TEAMS

FALL:

BOYS:

- Middle School Football (Grades 6 – 8)
- Junior Varsity Football (Grades 8 - 11)
- Varsity Football (Grades 9 - 12)
- Middle School Cross Country (Grades 6 – 8)
- Junior Varsity Cross Country (Grades 7 – 11)
- Varsity Cross Country (Grades 7 – 12)
- Varsity Swimming (Grades 7 – 12)

GIRLS:

- Middle School Volleyball (Grades 6 – 8)
- Junior Varsity Volleyball (Grades 7 – 11)
- Varsity Volleyball (Grades 7 – 12)
- Middle School Cross Country (Grades 6 – 8)
- Junior Varsity Cross Country (Grades 7 – 11)
- Varsity Cross Country (Grades 7 – 12)
- Varsity Swimming (Grades 7 – 12)
- Middle School Cheerleading (Grades 6 – 8)
- Varsity Cheerleading (Grades 7 – 12)
- Junior Varsity Tennis (Grades 7 – 11)
- Varsity Tennis (Grades 7 – 12)
- Varsity Girls Golf (Grades 7 – 12)

WINTER:

BOYS:

- 6th Grade Basketball
- Middle School Basketball (Grades 6 – 8)
- Junior Varsity Basketball (Grades 7 – 11)
- Varsity Basketball (Grades 7 – 12)
- Middle School Wrestling (Grades 6 – 8)
- Varsity/JV Wrestling (Grades 9 – 12)

GIRLS:

- 6th Grade Basketball
- Middle School Basketball (Grades 6 – 8)
- Junior Varsity Basketball (Grades 7 – 11)
- Varsity Basketball (Grades 7 – 12)
- Middle School Cheerleading (Grades 6 – 8)
- Varsity Cheerleading (Grades 9 – 12)

SPRING:

BOYS:

- Junior Varsity Tennis (Grades 7 – 11)
- Varsity Tennis (Grades 7 – 12)
- Middle School Baseball (Grades 6 – 8)

- Junior Varsity Baseball (Grades 7 – 11)
- Varsity Baseball (Grades 7 – 12)
- Junior Varsity Golf (Grades 7 – 11)
- Varsity Golf (Grades 7 – 12)
- Junior Varsity Soccer (Grades 7-11)
- Varsity Soccer (Grades 9-12)
- Middle School Track and Field (Grades 6 – 8)
- Junior Varsity Track and Field (Grades 7 – 11)
- Varsity Track and Field (Grades 7-12)
- Junior Varsity Lacrosse (Grades 7-11)
- Varsity Lacrosse (Grades 9-12)

GIRLS:

- Middle School Soccer (Grades 6 - 8)
- Junior Varsity Soccer (Grades 7 – 11)
- Varsity Soccer (Grades 9 – 12)
- Varsity Softball (Grades 7 - 12)
- Middle School Track and Field (Grades 6 – 8)
- Junior Varsity Track and Field (Grades 7 – 11)
- Varsity Track and Field (Grades 7 – 12)
- Junior Varsity Lacrosse (Grades 7-11)
- Varsity Lacrosse (Grades 9-12)

TEAM TRYOUTS/SELECTION PROCESS

All students wishing to participate on a SJCS sports team will be required to tryout for that particular sport. The tryout/selection process will be established by each coach in conjunction with the Athletic Director and appropriately communicated prior to the start of the tryout process. Large numbers may require the coach to conduct a selection process as necessary. Final team rosters will be determined after an assessment by the coaching staff. Middle school students (7th and 8th grade) will be allowed the option to tryout for a junior varsity or a varsity team provided the SCHSL rules that apply to that specific sport are adhered to. A middle school student may be offered a position on a junior varsity or a varsity team ONLY after the Athletic Director and the parents of the student-athlete have granted approval.

STUDENT-ATHLETE ELIGIBILITY

Due to the school's association with the South Carolina High School League (SCHSL), the following must be met:

- The required SCHSL Physical, History, Parent Permission Statement, and Athlete/Parent Concussion Statement must be completed and/or submitted online to Student Central at Big Teams at www.studentcentral.bigteams.com. These documents must be dated after April 1st of the previous school year in order for athletes to participate in any St. Joseph's upcoming summer team practices and must be submitted prior to the start of summer practice. If your child does not plan to be involved in summer practice, the form must be uploaded prior to his/her particular sport tryouts. Forms dated on or after April 1st will be

good for the rest of that school year, the upcoming summer, and the entire upcoming school year. Parents should keep a copy of the physical form for their records.

- A copy of your child's birth certificate must be uploaded to Student Central at Big Teams in order for students to be eligible to try out and/or participate on any sports team over the course of the school year. This is only required once. Birth certificates are not required in order to participate in summer practices.
- Bon Secours St. Francis Health System offers St. Joseph's athletes the services of an athletic trainer. You must also complete the online Athletic Training Services Consent & Authorization Form found on the Student Central at Big Teams website.
- Any student who begins 6th grade at St. Joseph's Catholic School will be eligible to participate in middle school athletics only. Under current SCHSL rules, any 7th grade student who begins at St. Joseph's Catholic School on the first day of school will be eligible. Most students who begin 9th grade at St. Joseph's Catholic School will be eligible to participate in athletics. Any 7th through 12th grade student who transfers to St. Joseph's Catholic School after the start of the school year, or any new students entering 8th, 10th, 11th, or 12th grade will be subject to SCHSL transfer rules (which can be found in Section 10 of the SCHSL Bylaws found on the SCHSL website) that may affect athletic eligibility. Questions about eligibility should be directed to the St. Joseph's Catholic School Athletic Director.
- Sixth grade students are permitted to participate only on St. Joseph's middle school teams. All 7th grade students are permitted to participate on St. Joseph's Catholic School Middle School, JV, or Varsity athletic teams, excluding Varsity football, lacrosse, soccer, and wrestling. In these contact sports, only 9th-12th grade students can participate on the Varsity teams.
- Only those students who are officially enrolled at SJCS are permitted to work out/practice with SJCS teams when school is in session.
- Only those students who are officially enrolled at SJCS are permitted to participate on a SJCS athletic team.
- **Per South Carolina High School League rules, transfer students and/or students that reside outside of Greenville County (who are entering 8-12 grade), are possibly ineligible. Please notify the Athletic Director as soon as you are aware that a student, who has not attended SJCS during the past 365 days, is interested in participating on one of our teams.**
- For additional questions, contact St. Joseph's Athletic Director Eric Nash at (864) 234-9009, ext. 113 or enash@sjcatholicschool.org.

PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITY

In signing the "Agreement for Participation" online declaration noted above under "Eligibility," a parent gives explicit permission in writing for the student to participate in interscholastic sports. Such permission includes a declaration of the parents' awareness of the risks involved in such athletic participation and their acceptance of the responsibility for any injury the student might incur thereby, including, but not limited to, participation in training, practices, scrimmages, league or non-league games, and transportation to and from such events. St. Joseph's Catholic School cannot assume responsibility for medical costs incurred by students and their families as a result of participation in interscholastic sports and therefore requires parents to ensure that student-athletes are covered by adequate health care insurance.

ABSENCES

- A student athlete who is absent from school will not be allowed to participate in athletic activities that day.
- Any student that is participating in an extracurricular activity (athletics, theater, etc.) must be present for at least the last four academic periods on Monday, Tuesday, and Friday, and the last two periods on Wednesday and Thursday.
- A student may not leave school early due to illness and participate that day.
- A student-athlete must serve an issued detention on the day that the detention was issued. Exceptions can only be granted by the school administration.

ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY

- A student in grades 9 – 12 must take and pass at least four one-unit CORE courses or any five one- unit courses each semester to be eligible. Students below the 9th grade must pass four subjects each grading period/semester. A senior who has met or is meeting all requirements for graduation must pass 4 one-credit courses each marking period/semester.
- If a student is deemed academically ineligible, they are prohibited from participating on a sports team until the end of the next semester, at which time their grades will be reviewed again.
- The Head of School may remove a student from a team for academic reasons at any time.

AGE REQUIREMENTS

A student is INELIGIBLE to participate in athletics if his/her 19th birthday is before July 1 of the current school year.

EIGHT SEMESTER RULE

All students will have 8 consecutive semesters of eligibility beginning when he/she enters the ninth grade, regardless of whether he/she participates in athletics or not.

AMATEUR STATUS

A student-athlete must maintain an amateur status. A student may not have competed for money or valuable consideration other than prizes with symbolic value.

RECRUITING

The recruiting of student-athletes shall be considered a violation of the spirit and philosophy of the rules and regulations governing SCHSL athletics and considered unsportsmanlike conduct. A student shall not be subject to undue influence or any special inducement by any person or group in an attempt to entice the student to transfer primarily for athletic purposes. Recruitment in this manner shall cause the student to be ineligible upon transfer and shall jeopardize the standing of the school in the SCHSL.

MEDICAL INSURANCE

Parents and guardians must provide proof of medical insurance to the school each year via the Emergency Contact, Event/Field Trip Permission, and Medical Information Form. The Athletic department requires every student athlete to create an account at Student Central on Big Teams, and provide the following: Athletic Pre-Participation History, Physical Exam, Parent Permission/Acknowledgment, Parent/Athlete Concussion Statement, Birth Certificate, Athletic Training Services Consent & Authorization that authorizes medical treatment for injuries.

TEAM ELIGIBILITY RULES

- A student cannot participate in a JV game and a Varsity game on the same day.
- Participation is defined as dressed in team uniform and in the team area or named in the scorebook.
- Ineligible players cannot receive uniforms but are allowed to practice with teams (with approval from coach).

DISCIPLINARY STANDING

Only students in good disciplinary standing will be permitted to participate in co-curricular activities. Any student suspended from school is not permitted to participate in any co-curricular activity until the day following the last day of the suspension. A coach may suspend an athlete from participation in any sport for a period of twenty-four hours for inappropriate or unsportsmanlike conduct. The High School or Middle School Director will make a decision as to further disciplinary action.

PRESERVING THE ACADEMIC SCHEDULE

The daily academic schedule is the first priority at St. Joseph's. Athletic events will be scheduled in such a manner as to avoid unnecessary disruption in the academic schedule. Every effort will be made to schedule events involving travel after school hours. If an early dismissal becomes necessary, only members of the team will be dismissed early.

PRACTICE GUIDELINES

- Middle School Teams: All Middle School Teams are permitted to practice up to 4 days per week for 2 hours per day. No practices are permitted on Sundays, unless given a rare exception from the Head of School.
- Junior Varsity Teams: Junior Varsity Teams are permitted to practice up to 5 days per week for up to 2 hours per day, with exception of when the Junior Varsity and Varsity team must practice together and then it may extend to 2.5 hours. No practices are permitted on Sundays, unless given a rare exception from the Head of School.
- Varsity Teams: Varsity Teams are permitted to practice up to 6 days per week for 2.5 hours per day. No practices are permitted on Sundays, unless given a rare exception from the Head of School.

- During Holy Week, all practices, games and scrimmages must end by 5:00 P.M. on Holy Thursday. There will be no practices, games, or scrimmages on Good Friday, Holy Saturday or Easter Sunday.
- No practice, games, or scrimmages will be held on Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day, or New Year's Day, unless given a rare exception from the Head of School.
- In-season sports at SJCS take precedence over all other sports (club teams, AAU teams, etc.) that the student athlete may be participating in. If a conflict arises, it is expected that the student athlete will attend the school practice/game. If the student-athlete chooses otherwise, he/she may be removed from the school team by the coach with approval from the Athletic Director. In order for any exception to this rule to be granted it must be communicated to the Head Coach and the Athletic Director at least a month ahead of time.
- Student athletes participating on a SJCS team whose season is still in progress may not participate with the next season's team until that current season has officially ended, even if they have left the team. Permission must be granted from the current season's coach and the Athletic Director in order to participate in the next season's sport prior to the current sport's completion.
- Winter Sports Teams: All winter sports teams are required to schedule 5 consecutive days off during the Christmas break.

PROPER ATTIRE

- SJCS student athletes will follow the dress codes and grooming policies established by the school.
- At no time are athletes permitted to practice or play without shirts.
- Female athletes must wear appropriate practice attire. Shorts and shirts must be of appropriate length. At no time should the midriff be visible-shirts should meet the shorts.
- The Athletic Director must approve clothing purchased by a team. This includes team shirts, warm-ups etc. Acceptable color options are: royal blue, white, black, or gray.

AWARDS/BANQUETS

- The awarding of a varsity letter is based on the guidelines set up by the respective varsity coach in his or her sport. Typically, the athlete must have competed in at least 50% of the team's contests. These guidelines may also include items such as the student athlete's attitude, effort, dedication, participation in practices/games and overall contribution to the team.
- First time Varsity letter winners will receive a chenille letter and a pin representative of the sport in which the letter was earned. Student-athletes will receive the letter only once during their St. Joseph's athletic career.
- The student athlete will receive a gold bar for every year after the first that a letter is earned.
- Each team or program will hold their own End of Season Celebration.

SPORTSMANSHIP AND SCHOOL SPIRIT

In demonstrating their love for and loyalty to St. Joseph's Catholic School and the teams which represent the school, all St. Joseph's students, team members, and coaches are expected to exercise courtesy and hospitality to visiting teams and officials and to conduct themselves in a sportsmanlike manner at all times. The conduct of parents should also reflect this Christian mission of St. Joseph's. Athletes and fans are encouraged to be mindful of the fundamentals of good sportsmanship:

- Show courtesy and respect for all faculty, staff, coaches, fellow students, opponents, officials, and property
- Know, understand, and appreciate the rules of the contest
- Exercise self-control and restraint
- Appreciate skill and performance regardless of an athlete's affiliation
- Maintain a healthy desire to excel and win, while having the ability to win and lose gracefully
- If a coach is ejected from a game and the school is fined, the coach will be responsible for paying the fine.
- SJCS will aim to be regarded as excellent hosts and good Christians to all visiting teams.

Any student, parent, or fan demonstrating unsportsmanlike conduct may be asked to leave the event. A St. Joseph's student demonstrating unsportsmanlike conduct may face further disciplinary action.

SUBSTANCE ABUSE POLICY

The SJCS Athletic Department will follow the same guidelines that are contained in the SJCS Parent/Student Handbook.

TRANSPORTATION TO GAMES

If transportation to away games is provided by St. Joseph's it will be done in the following ways:

- Charter bus
- SJCS small bus
- SJCS large bus
- SJCS van
- The Athletic Director must approve all travel. As representatives of the school, all students must travel to and from athletic contests neatly dressed and groomed. It is recommended that all team players, managers, cheerleaders, etc. travel to and return from athletic contests via school transportation whenever it is provided. SJCS believes that team travel helps to create team unity and encourages all team members to travel to and from sporting events together.
- If there is an occasion when a student athlete is unable to take school provided transportation, that athlete's parent must communicate to the athlete's head coach in writing (text or email will be sufficient) notifying the coach of the child's circumstance and indicating how the child will be transported. In such occasions, it is the parent's responsibility to arrange safe and timely travel.

- No other persons will be permitted to travel with the team unless cleared by the Athletic Director. The Athletic Director, coaches, or another designated authority may assign seating for travel

UNIFORMS AND EQUIPMENT

- Students are responsible for the care and timely return of all equipment and uniforms issued to them. Equipment and uniforms must be returned to the Athletic Department within one week after the end of the season.
- Student athletes will be held financially responsible for any uniforms or equipment that is not returned to the school.
- Student athletes are not to alter the uniform without permission from the Athletic Director.

ISSUES/CONCERNS

The following chain of communication should be followed if a parent or student/athlete have any/all issues or concerns:

- 1) The parent should initiate conversation with their child, if not satisfied, then
- 2) The parent should ask their child to meet with the head coach, if not satisfied, then
- 3) The parent should email the head coach to set up a meeting, if not satisfied, then
- 4) The parent should email the Varsity Head Coach of the sport to set up a meeting, if not satisfied, then
- 5) The parent should email the Athletic Director to set up a meeting

Parents should not attempt to confront a coach before or immediately after a game or practice. If a parent needs to speak with a coach concerning an issue or concern, the parent should email the coach and schedule an appointment with the coach. It is required to wait at least 24 hours before making contact to give the player, the parent and the coach time to process any situation that has arisen. As a general rule, parents should not be discussing playing time with coaches.

SAFETY

The athletic department shall abide by the following guidelines and procedures for dealing with:

- Proper prevention and management recommendations for Community-Acquired MRSA Infections (CA-MRSA) – The National Athletic Trainer's Association recommendations and guidelines.
- Guidelines for dealing with the prevention and treatment of heat-related illness from the Greenville County Schools.
- Guidelines for dealing with a concussion provided by the Steadman Hawkins Clinic of the Carolinas.
- Lightning protocol provided by the National Federation of High Schools (NFHS) rules book.

The Athletic Trainer has the final say regarding whether an athlete who is injured may re-enter a game or participate in a game and/or practice.

HAZING POLICY

- The SJCS Athletic Department will not tolerate hazing in any form. Hazing is defined as any conduct, which subjects another person, whether physically, mentally, emotionally, or psychologically, to anything that may endanger, abuse, degrade, or intimidate the person as a condition of association with a group or organization, regardless of the person's consent or lack of consent. Violators of this policy may face suspension or expulsion from the team, and/or referral of the incident to SJCS administration for further disciplinary action. In addition, the team may be subject to group discipline that can include, but is not limited to, team probation, cancellation of individual contests, and/or cancellation of the entire season.

SOCIAL MEDIA (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram etc.), AND TEXT MESSAGES

- Use **extreme caution** as to what you post online, whether on websites, blogs, or even status updates on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc. Remember that as a student, you represent SJCS. Anything you post that we would not be comfortable with you posting on a bulletin board here at SJCS, should NOT be posted. Inappropriate posts can be cause for disciplinary action.
- All students are also reminded to exercise caution in sending **text messages**. Never send a text message that you wouldn't be comfortable with everyone else seeing.