ATHLETICS HANDBOOK
ST. HELEN CATHOLIC SCHOOL

2026 – 2027

INTRODUCTION

The SHCS athletic program is under the jurisdiction of the school and is administered by the Principal, the Athletic Director, and the part-time coaches that are hired to coach the sport. The School hires the coach for each sport, and the coach will communicate to the student athletes about the sport that he/she coaches. Parents should check the athletic link on the school website for updated information. St. Helen Catholic School is a member of the Galveston Houston Catholic Athletic Association (GHCAA).

St. Helen Catholic School offers a variety of sports, including co-ed soccer, girls' volleyball, boys' and girls' basketball, soccer, and spirit squad. (However, there is no guarantee that a sport will be offered if there is not enough student participation to make a full team.)

2026 – 2027 ASSIGNMENTS

Athletic Director, Communication Coordinator, Equipment Manager:	Mr. Jones
Volleyball Coach:	Ms. Filer, Mr. Miley and Mr. Jones
Girls Basketball Coach:	Ms. Filer
Boys Basketball Coaches:	Mr. Jones and Dr. Earls
Soccer Coaches:	Mr. Ybarra. Mr. Landry, and Mr. Crespo
Track:	Ms. Filer, Mr. Rhem, and Mr. Jones
Uniform maintenance:	Mr. Jones & other coaches
Field Maintenance:	TBA

MISSION STATEMENT

The purpose of interscholastic athletics at St. Helen Catholic School is to support the mission of the school which is centered on the continuous formation of the whole Christian person and *to grow children in wisdom, age, and grace!* The athletic program also supports the responsibility that is shared by the school and the parents to encourage the spiritual, moral, intellectual, social, cultural, and physical development of our students.

St. Helen Catholic School believes that athletics provide a unique opportunity for students to learn Christian values such as teamwork and good sportsmanship. Athletics can also encourage personal growth in the areas of hard work, leadership skills, commitment, healthy competition, and fair play. In addition, athletics will help provide a venue to aid in the physical development of the student. Another important goal of the athletic program is the development and cultivation of school spirit.

GHCAA

St. Helen Catholic School participates in the Galveston Houston Catholic Athletic Association. Although some games may be scheduled against schools that do not participate in this league, the majority of our games will come from within the GHCAA. St. Helen School supports and abides by all rules and regulations, as well as the goals set forth by the GHCAA. The following is the mission statement and a list of goals provided by the GHCAA.

The Galveston Houston Catholic Athletic Association is an integral part of the educational mission of the Catholic schools of the Archdiocese of Galveston Houston. The GHCAA is dedicated to fostering human development, within the framework of a Christian environment, encouraging a positive vision in our young men and women through exercise, positive athletic competition, and fully recognizing the dignity of each student in Christ's image.

All affiliated schools agree to the following goals:

- To build a community which strives to image Christ;
- To develop Christian spirit, school spirit, team spirit and personal acceptance;
- To instill Christian sportsmanship in the life styles of the participants;
- To teach the participants the proper attitude towards winning, losing and competing with dignity;
- To develop an acceptance and appreciation of others;
- To train and instruct in athletic rules;
- To develop the students' physical abilities and coordination;
- To help form well-rounded students by fostering good health habits;
- To provide a Christian environment and outlet for youthful energy;
- To teach the positive value of athletic participation; and
- To show the necessity of practice, work and management of time.

These goals are founded upon the principle of the infinite worth of each person because he/she is created in the image and likeness of God.

ELIGIBILITY OF STUDENTS

Participation in athletics is a privilege, not a right. Students must earn the privilege of participating through hard work, dedication, desire, and self discipline. Any student participating in any sport at St. Helen are required to participate in Track. If student does not participate in Track, student will not be allowed to participate in any sport the following school year and a fee will be access.

Enrollment: Students must attend St. Helen Catholic School.

Grade Level Requirements: Students in grades 6, 7, and 8 are eligible to participate in athletics; however, certain sports may not be available to all grade levels due to league or school restrictions. 5th graders will only be eligible if numbers are needed for a particular sport.

Financial Obligations: Students must be in good standing on all financial obligations to the school: tuition, fees, etc. Students will also be required to pay an athletic fee for each sport in which they participate. Athletic fees are due before the ***first game*** of each season and are non-refundable. The non-refundable fee will consist of $225 per child per sport (with the exception of a start-up sport, which may incur a larger expense.) ***Students who have not turned in their athletic fee by the first game will NOT BE ALLOWED TO PLAY until payment is received. If more time is needed for payment, then alternate payment arrangements must be arranged with the School Accounting Office before that student may participate in games.***

Attendance:

Consistent and productive practice is essential for any athletic team to be successful. All team members are expected to attend all mandatory practices and meetings, as well as games. If a student cannot attend an athletic contest, meeting, or practice for any reason, the coach of that sport must be notified prior to the event. Students that miss practices and games without prior notification or without valid reason may lose playing time in future games at the coach's discretion. Participation in other club or intramural sports is not a valid reason to miss a school sport game or practice. ***If a student is absent from school (or is suspended at home or in the office for the day), he or she may not participate in any athletic events, including games or practices on that day. A student must arrive at school by lunch or the last period of the day in order to be eligible to participate in athletics that day.***

Parent/Families are encouraged to support students by attending game events.

Academics/Behavior:

Students must maintain a "C" average in **all** classes (77 or above) and a conduct grade of "S" or better in **all** classes. Classroom and conduct grades will be checked on a weekly rotation. (The Athletic Director will inquire about student grades each Monday.)

If a student is placed on probation, the student will be expected to participate in all practices, but will not be allowed to participate in games for a period of two weeks. However, the student will be expected to attend and suit up for the games in support of his or her teammates. Administration will check grades weekly throughout the season. ***A two-week probationary period will begin the day after administration checks grades and will end two weeks from that day.*** At the end of the two-week period, if the grades have been raised to the appropriate level, then the student will be off of

probation. If the grades have not improved, the student will miss the remainder of the season for that sport. **The student must then improve his or her grades before beginning participation in another sport.** If a student goes on probation twice in the same season, he or she will not be allowed to participate in games or practices for the remainder of that season. If a student is placed on probation three times in one year, then he or she will not be allowed to participate in athletics for the rest of that school year.

Any student who serves a suspension, is placed on home study, or is expelled from school will not be allowed to participate in St. Helen School Athletics. Once a suspended student returns to the classroom, re-admission into the athletic program will be reviewed by the Coach and Principal. A student that serves an in-school suspension will not be allowed to participate in any school athletics on that day, including practices or games. For students serving before or after school detention, their behavior for the week will be reviewed for improvement prior to the game/practice. Refunds are not permitted for students who are removed from athletic teams due to behavior.

If a student checks out early or is sent home early from school, he/she is not allowed to return to school or participate in school events. This includes athletic events. For special circumstances, approval must be sought from the AD prior to the game/event.

Health Physical Forms:

Before every practice, conditioning class, or game, every student athlete maybe required to have his/her temperature taken. Also, some student athlete will be asked routine health questions on a health-screening questionnaire.

Physical forms signed by the athlete's doctor are required before a student can participate in any sport. These forms are located in the front office of the school.

Please note that if the athlete is suspected to have COVID or any other communicable or serious disease/illness, he/she will be required to take a COVID test or visit a physician. Based upon the results of that test, the athlete may not be able to return to sports for a period of time TBD.

SEXUALITY

The learning environment and religious nature of Catholic schools are guided by the Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC). The Catechism of the Catholic Church can be found at the website for the United States Catholic Conference of Bishops. Among other things, the Catechism of the Catholic Church states: "By creating the human being man and woman, God gives personal dignity equally to the one and the other. Each of them man and woman, should acknowledge and accept his/her sexual identity." (CCC)

In accordance with Saint Helen standards, all students will play as the gender that is reflective on his or her birth certificate.

Students are only eligible to participate on our school's sport teams consistent with their biological sex (as stated on the birth certificate).

GENERAL INFORMATION

Uniforms and Equipment:

School-issued uniforms and equipment are to be used exclusively for St. Helen Catholic School games and practices. These uniforms are not to be used for P.E. class or any non-school related function. It is important that all uniforms are treated with care, as they will be used for future teams. All issued uniforms or equipment must be returned to the school at the end of the season. The student will be responsible for replacing any lost or damaged uniforms that are the result of abuse. If a uniform is not turned in on time, and in good condition, a fee of $100 will be charged. That student will not be allowed to continue to participate in athletics at St. Helen until the fee has been paid.

Student athletes need to ask permission from a teacher to use the restroom to change into sport clothes during or after school. Student athletes are encouraged to wear their team uniform on Wednesday Spirit Days **during the season that the sport is being played**.

Transportation:

All students are responsible for providing their own transportation to and from all practices and games. All normal pick-up procedures from school will apply. If students wish to carpool to games or practices, arrangements must be made off campus. If a student plans to ride home with another parent from practice or a game, they must have written permission on file with the school on the appropriate forms.

Coaches should have visual confirmation that a student is being picked up by a parent or other previously approved source of transportation. Students will not be allowed to wait at any place that is not within sight of a coach.

Students are never allowed to walk over to any practice field unattended and unsupervised by an adult.

Parents need to be on time for designated pick up times from practices or games. The Coach may call a parent if the student is not picked up within 5 minutes of the designated pick up time. A Coach is not allowed to leave a student unattended, so it is important that parents be on time. If a parent is late more than once, a fee may be incurred of $1 per minute past the 5 minute “grace period.”

Games or practices might be cancelled without notice due to weather, availability of competing schools, or other conditions that are beyond the school’s control. We expect full cooperation and understanding from families when these unpredictable situations occur. The coach/school staff will make every attempt to provide notification of cancellations to you or your child.

Injuries:

While every effort is made to ensure the safety of the athletes at St. Helen Catholic School, there is always a risk of injury when participating in athletics. The school is not held responsible for injuries that occur during practices or games. St. Helen Catholic School provides a limited insurance plan for students participating in athletic activities. Information on this program is sent home at the beginning

of the school year. However, this is not a primary insurance, and it is the responsibility of the parents to provide additional insurance coverage or to pay expenses incurred due to accidents and injuries.

Playing Time:

For a "varsity" level team, each member will receive playing time throughout the course of the season. While every effort will be made to play all members of the team in each game, there is no guarantee that each player on the "varsity" team will receive playing time in each game. (In volleyball, "game" refers to a set of games.)

Junior Varsity and "C" teams will rotate players, with all players being guaranteed to get some playing time. During tournaments, play-offs and championship games, individual participation is at the coach's discretion, meaning that not every team member is guaranteed playing time.

Playing time for all teams will be determined by a variety of factors including: skill, strength, physical development, attendance, following directions, dedication, aggressiveness, accepting constructive criticism, attitude, work ethic, respect, willingness to be coached, potential for improvement, and performance in practice and previous games. Absences from practice will affect play time.

Students in 8th grade must play on the Varsity team. Students in 6th or 7th grade will play on the Junior Varsity team or C team.

Each sport is allowed to have a total of three events per week during the school year. Events include practices/games/tournaments/competitions. Each event is usually no longer than two hours in length.

Parent Communication with Coaches:

St. Helen Catholic School both welcomes and encourages the communication between coaches and parents. There are many positive results that can occur as a result of these types of meetings; however, there is a proper time and place for this to occur. **Immediately before, during, or after a practice or game is not the appropriate time for a meeting** unless a prior agreement has been made with the coach. Parents may contact the coach and set up a time that is convenient for both parties to meet. The focus of such meetings should be on **the student's standing on the team and how he or she can improve to be more successful.** The focus should not be on comparisons to other players or another player's weaknesses. **Coaches are not expected to explain or justify team strategy, personnel decisions, or accept coaching advice or suggestions from parents.**

Team Meeting: All coaches will hold pre-season meetings. Attendance of at least one parent of a player is mandatory. This requirement must be met prior to the student being allowed to participate in competitions because the philosophy of the school and season guidelines are discussed at this meeting. Students/Parents will be provided with a copy of the Athletic Handbook, fee requirements, transportation information, uniform details, and practice/game schedules.

Sportsmanship:

Students, parents, and coaches are all expected to conduct themselves in a way that will positively reflect on our faith and St. Helen Catholic School. Any student whose conduct, dress, or other display of behavior that reflects poorly upon and discredits the reputation of the school, may be declared ineligible for athletic competition. Such decisions are made by the coach in consultation with

the Principal and are final. Parents are also expected to refrain from public and/or private remarks or behavior that may adversely reflect on our school's participation in interscholastic sports. Any parent whose conduct or other display of behavior negatively impacts the school will not be permitted to return to athletic events.

We are a Christian school and provide a Christian environment; we expect all of our students and families to follow Christian standards for athletic events. (See SHCS Handbook for "Code of Christian Conduct.")

PARENT AND FAMILY SUPPORT

As with most Catholic Schools, we depend heavily on the generosity of the parents. Without the donations of time and money from the parent community, our school mission would not be achieved. This is true in all areas of the school, including athletics. Each season we need lots of volunteer support to ensure that everything runs smoothly. Parents should not expect to have to help the coach unless specifically asked by the Coach or administration; however, there are lots of other opportunities to help support the team. Some of the main things that a coach may need help with include: scoreboard operator, organizing celebrations at the end of the season, working the concession stand, clean-up, etc.

To support each sports teams' fundraising efforts, it is required that parents volunteer and assist with concession sales, other needs, etc. The athletic department is requiring a minimum of four (5) hours per sport of volunteer hours. <u>This time does not count as your required school service hour time.</u> The 5 athletic hours are in addition to your regular service hour requirement. If you volunteer for athletic events and it goes OVER your required 5 hours, then that may be applied to your service hour requirement.

One of the largest fund-raising opportunities for the Athletic Department is Steps for Students. Athletes and their families are **required to participate** in this event annually. **Student athletes are required to participate/volunteer on the day of the event, also.** The funds from this event go directly to support athletic programming (and academic competitions) at St. Helen Catholic School.

As our athletic program and school facilities continue to grow, there is an increasing amount of activity going on in our school and, sometimes, on the Knights of Columbus field. Spectators for each sport are expected to stay within the designated spectator area. **Parents are responsible for supervising their siblings/children and any other spectator guests at all times.**

St. Helen Catholic School has the right to change or amend these policies at any time.

ATHLETICS HANDBOOK
PARENT-STUDENT ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FORM
2026-2027

(you may print or copy and return only this form below to the campus)

The school, the team coach, and/or the principal retain the right to amend the Athletics Handbook at any time. Parents will be given prompt notification via the website if changes are made.

Dear Parents:

Please view our Athletics Handbook online at www.SHCSsaints.org. You will find a printable copy of the Athletics Handbook. If you want to request a paper copy of this handbook, please contact the front office. Please sign, date, and return this acknowledgement form to your child's teacher. Your signature and that of your child/children indicate that you have read the online version or a hard copy version of the Athletics Handbook. It also means that you have discussed with your child/children the appropriate items from the handbook, and that you and your child/children agree to abide by the school procedures, regulations and policies, including the Christian Code of Conduct, discussed in this handbook. Ignorance of the policies is not an excuse for not following them. Continued violations will result in a loss of the option to participate in the school's athletic program.

Thank you for your cooperation.

We have read and discussed the St. Helen Catholic School Athletics Handbook. We agree to follow the school procedures, regulations, and policies, including the Christian Code of Conduct, covered in this handbook.

_____
Sport Child is Participating In (use for one sport; use another form when a second sport is played)

_____ _____
Parent or Guardian Signature Date

_____ _____
Student Signature Date

_____ _____
Student Signature Date