SOUTH ST. PAUL PACKERS 2026-2027



PROGRAM HANDBOOK

Program Philosophy

Do your best
Control the controllables
Attitude
What's Important Now

Season Theme

MUDITA

Program Philosophy

We believe in developing respectful, competitive, honest and caring individuals through the game of basketball. The **Packer Way** is a system that will foster growth and success on and off the court.

Season Theme

MUDITA

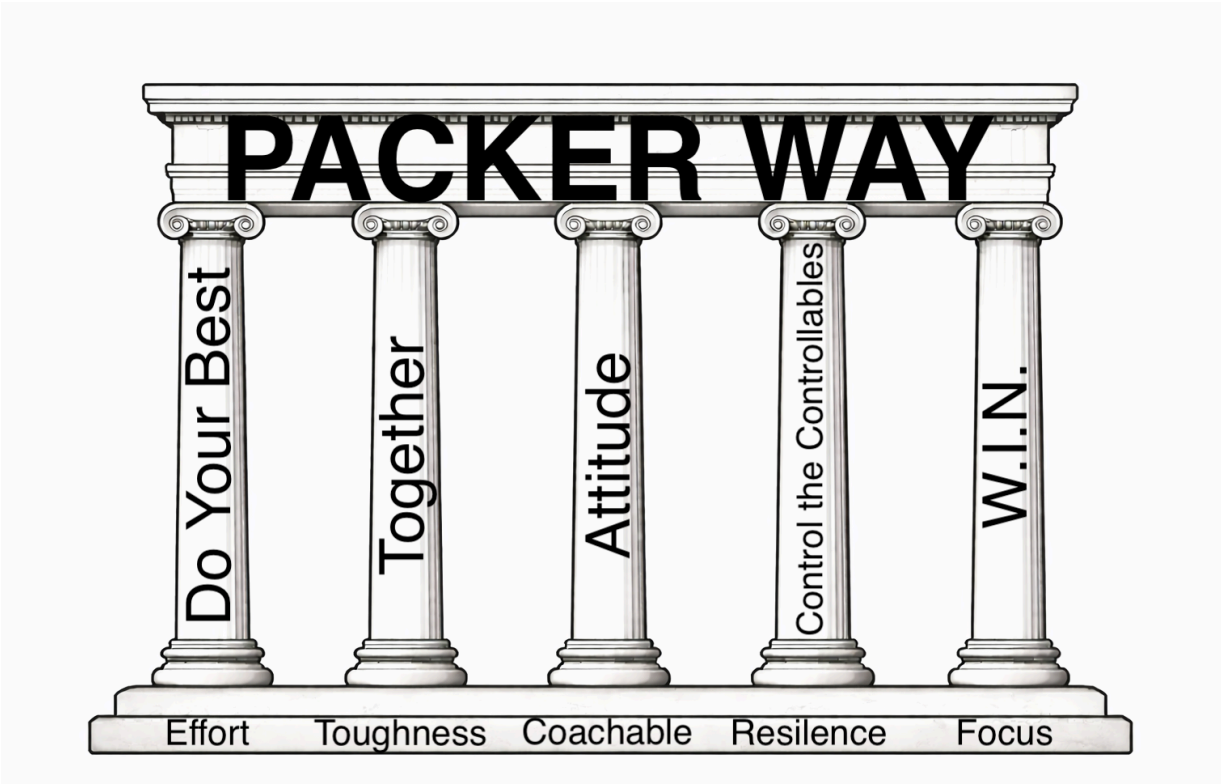
Mudita is pure, vicarious joy in someone else's success

Mudita is the ultimate antidote to jealousy and envy

- Mudita practice - thoughts, words, body language and actions
    - Thoughts - What did another person do well?
    - Words - Tell a teammate how their effort helped them or the team.
    - Body Language - Am I actively engaged?
    - Actions - What can I do to show genuine appreciation and joy for a teammate.

5 pillars of the Packer Way

1. Do your best
    a. Academics, work ethic, toughness, competitiveness.
    b. Every rep
2. Together
    a. Everything we do, we do together
    b. Together starts with personal accountability and trust
3. Attitude
    a. Maintain positive attitude with yourself, teammates and coaches
    b. Passion, teamwork, belief, trust, selflessness, integrity, accountability
4. Control the controllables
    a. Control what you can control & don't worry about what you can't
    b. Commitment, effort, star in your role, respect, communication
5. What's Important Now
    a. Next play mentality
    b. Do the next right thing



Program Guidelines & Expectations

1. To participate in Boys Basketball, the following forms are required, as laid out in the South St. Paul Athletic and Activities Handbook.
    a. Parental Permit and MSHSL Form
    b. Transportation Agreement
    c. Physical Examination
    d. Emergency Medical Authorization
2. Academics
    a. High school athletics are academic based sports. Athletes must maintain eligibility as laid out by South St. Paul High School and the Minnesota State High School League
    b. To be eligible for participation a student must meet a 1.70 GPA criterion the previous marking period.
    c. We strive to work with students so that they may discover the importance of education, providing them with the assistance needed to develop the skills needed for success after graduation.
    d. Our program will always work to cultivate a positive faculty attitude towards athletes, creating a family atmosphere within the building
    e. Study hall, grade checks, and attendance checks
    f. Be where you are suppose to be when you are suppose to be there
    g. Absences should be communicated properly
    h. Failure to meet academic expectations may result in consequences, including suspension or dismissal from the team at the discretion of the coaching staff.
    i. Students who miss part of the school day due to illness must be in attendance by 9:57 a.m. in order to participate in a contest or practice on that day. Students missing school for reasons other than illness must have an excused absence in order to participate. A parent or guardian signed note from home (due to illness) is not an excused absence.
    Students who are in attendance at the start of the school day will not be allowed to participate in any extra-curricular activities if the student leaves school due to personal illness.
    Final authority for infractions of this rule will rest with the overseeing administration. Examples of excused absences: doctor excused, family emergency, death in family, school authorized absences (i.e. field trips, college visits, etc...), religious release and family vacations.
3. Respect
    a. We will operate with respect for other people and property. This includes; faculty and staff, locker room, weight room, gym and spaces we use at ours and other schools, equipment and gear, busses/drivers, other teams, fans, and referees.
4. Practice
    a. Attendance at all practices, games, lifting, film, or team/boosters events is mandatory
    b. Excused absences will be given to players who contact a member of the coaching staff in a timely manner with a realistic reason.
    c. Your assigned practice jerseys and shorts must be worn to every practice and lift unless told otherwise by the coach. Hats, jewelry, and other non-basketball attire is not allowed. We practice like we play.
    d. Players are expected to practice with their best effort, competitiveness, and attitude.
    e. Players should enter every practice with a drive to get better as a team and individual.
    f. Players are expected to manage their time before practice. Before practice starts at 3:00pm, players must be with one of the following (unless otherwise communicated with coach) between school ending and 3:00pm: academic instructor, athletic trainer, in gym.

g. When a player enters practice before practice beginning at 3:00pm, they are expected to be either working on something from the posted pre-practice menu, or preparing their body for practice (i.e stretching, rehab, etc.).

5. Games
    a. Attendance at all practices, games, lifting, film, or team/boosters events is mandatory
    b. Players are expected to wear their travel suits to away games, if applicable
    c. All levels should support each other at home and on the road when present
    d. All players should ride the bus to away games.
        i. Players will only be permitted to leave away games with a parent or legal guardian if a signed parent or guardian note has been turned in to the Activities Office within the proper timeframe as laid out in the South St. Paul Athletics and Activities Handbook.
    e. Players should be where they are supposed to be between school end and game responsibilities (home and away). This will include academic advising, concessions prep, shootaround, and supporting other levels and will be communicated by each head coach.
6. Other code of conduct expectations
    a. The South St. Paul Athletics and Activities Handbook addresses other issues regarding participation in a South St. Paul athletic program such as boys basketball. All these rules and regulations apply to the signing of this program handbook
    b. The MSHSL code of conduct addresses other issues such as hazing and drugs and alcohol. We hold all student-athletes to these standards, at a minimum.
7. Tryouts/Playing time
    a. Tryouts will be held to help determine team assignments. The tryout period will consist of a minimum of three (3) practices. Following the tryout period, athletes will meet with the coaching staff to discuss which team they are on. Players will be assigned to a team based on their demonstrated ability. These assignments are not permanent. Teams will remain fluid for the entire season, athletes will have the opportunity to move up or down based on practice and game attendance/performance, school attendance, grades, and behavior.
    b. Players must complete the registration process and have an up to date sports physical on file to try out.
    c. Criteria for evaluation
        i. Academics; Student-Athletes must maintain eligibility
        ii. Skill; Their ability to demonstrate high level fundamentals; dribble, shoot, pass, defend, and rebound
        iii. Basketball IQ; Knowledge of the game
        iv. Attitude; Accept coaching and maintain positive attitude with teammates
        v. Effort; Do their best
    d. Playing time is entirely up to the head coach and is decided by many factors, both measurable and subjective. It is our priority to make decisions that we believe will provide our team with the best chance to be successful.
8. Lettering
    a. Baseline requirements for receiving a varsity letter are:
        i. Maintaining academic eligibility
        ii. Academic and athletic attendance
        iii. Behavior
        iv. Participation in half, or more, of the season on the varsity team
9. Communication
    a. Our program will be using Bound for communication.
    b. Players should communicate directly with their coach with any questions or issues.

c. Communication about missing any organized team activity or being late should go directly to the coach and should be made previous to the conflict.
d. Coach will send out a weekly communication newsletter to all parents with weekly schedules, upcoming events and other important information.

Failure to comply with expectations will result in consequences determined by the coaching staff

On Court Program Objectives & Goals

1. Develop respectful, competitive, honest and caring individuals
2. Create meaningful relationships
3. Implement a championship culture
4. Create a memorable high school experience
5. Grow pride in the program, school and community
6. Increase overall basketball skills and IQ

OFFENSE

- *Mission*: Get a good shot for **US**
    - Layups
    - Inside-out 3s
    - Free throws (shoot more than opponent)
- *Philosophy*
    - PACE
    - Paint Touches
    - Sprint the floor to space
    - Execute for each other (assists on more than 70% of FGs)
    - Take care of the ball (less than 12 TOs)
    - Shot selection (Who, Where, When, Why)

DEFENSE

- *Mission*: Force opponent to take contested shots
- *Philosophy*
    - No Paint
    - No Baseline
    - 5v1 Effort
    - Rebound - win rebound margin
    - Kills (3 stops in a row) - more than 5 kills per game

Player/Coach Meetings

As a staff, we subscribe to an “open door” policy. We strive to develop open and honest relationships with each individual student-athlete. The goal is to put everyone in a position to be successful on and off the court. We will be honest with each athlete so that they are never guessing what is expected of them.

Each player will have at least three scheduled individual meetings with the staff. One at the beginning of the year, one about halfway through the season and one at the conclusion of the season. The goal of these meetings is to make sure everyone is on the same page with a player's role, goals and improvement plan.

Parent/Guardian Issues

If a parent and/or guardian has an issue, we will handle the conflict with the following procedures, with the goal of resolving all issues with step one. A coach will not discuss any coaching strategy, issues or conflicts after a game or practice, there will be a mandated 24 hour no contact period for all parties when a conflict arises.

1. Coach and player talk about issue
2. Coach meets with player and parent
3. Schedule a meeting with athletic director, coach, parent, and player
4. If needed after those meetings, the correlating principal/district personnel will get involved.

Volunteering and Fundraising

There will be a number of events throughout the calendar year that we will ask players to participate in to help further the program. This is an expectation of everyone in the high school program, regardless of level. These events may include, but are not limited to:

1. Working with South St. Paul Youth Basketball Association
    a. Practices
    b. Skill Clinics
    c. Tournaments
2. Working Youth Summer Basketball Camps
3. Fundraising Events/Opportunities
4. Volunteering/Community Engagement Opportunities
5. Helping with concessions on game day
    a. One of our main and consistent fundraisers is through the concessions stand at our home games
    b. Players will be required to help with concessions in whatever capacity we are needed. This usually means helping unload and load products into the concessions stand.

Newsletter

There will be a weekly newsletter sent out to all parents/guardians on Sundays via Bound. This newsletter will contain important information for the upcoming week, program happenings, upcoming events, highlights, links, etc. so please keep an eye out.

Coaching Staff

Varsity Head Coach: Sam Esboldt
JV Head Coach: LeRoy Bryant
JV/Varsity Assistant: Daevonte Munson
B Head Coach: Cody Schatz
9 Head Coach: Steven Miner

Varsity Assistant: Ross Forman
Varsity Assistant: Alex McCoy
Varsity Assistant: Fil Embaye

CONTRACT

As a student athlete, I understand failure to comply with the conduct expectations described in this Boys Basketball Program Handbook may result in sanctions, up to and including suspension or dismissal from the team, and suspension or expulsion from ISD 6.

As a parent/guardian, I understand failure to comply with the conduct expectations described in this Handbook, with focus on the parent/guardian issues (stated again below).

If a parent and/or guardian has an issue, we will handle the conflict with the following procedures, with the goal of resolving all issues with step one. A coach will not discuss any coaching strategy, issues or conflicts after a game or practice, there will be a mandated 24 hour no contact period for all parties when a conflict arises.

1. *Coach and player talk about issue*
2. *Coach meets with player and parent*
3. *Schedule a meeting with athletic director, coach, parent, and player*
4. *If needed after those meetings, the correlating principal will get involved. Followed by district assistant superintendent*

By signing below, I am consenting that I have read, understand and agree to everything laid out in the 2026-2027 South St. Paul Boys Basketball Team Handbook. All athletes must have a signed and returned Boys Basketball Program Handbook (Student & Parent) **and** South St. Paul Secondary School Activities Department Student Handbook (student) to be able to participate in a contest.

Student-Athlete Name: _____

Student-Athlete Signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent/Guardian Name: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____