

St. Stephen's Lutheran School

Athletic Handbook



Mission Statement

As a Lutheran elementary school, St. Stephen's Lutheran School believes that our Students should strive to serve God with all their abilities, including athletics. Paul writes in 1 Corinthians 10:31, "So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God." Through extra-curricular sports we give students athletes the opportunity to use the gifts their heavenly Father has given them to honor their Savior. Athletics offer a chance to build self-esteem, work ethic, competitive drive, leadership behaviors, and understanding of teamwork, and for that reason they hold value as well. Keeping the fact that we are looking to honor our heavenly Father with our athletics program, we must keep in mind that we want to offer a Christian environment for our athletes and those whom we compete against. We pray that our student athletes always benefit from their time spent competing in athletics here at St. Stephen's Lutheran School.

Goal

The purpose of our school is to offer a Christian environment in which our students learn to be good Christian citizens and are equipped to proudly carry the Word of God with them wherever they go. We believe this includes offering an athletics program. The goals of our athletics program included but are not limited to;

- Help students learn and appreciate the physical gifts they have received from God.
- Help them learn how to increase skill level through practice and exercise.
- Help the students develop self-control, teamwork, discipline, self-esteem, leadership, how to deal with defeat and failures, and how to be humble in victory.
- Help our students to prepare to compete at a higher level if they so choose.
- Help them to realize the opportunities they have to witness for Christ simply by using the gifts He has given them in a Christian manner.

Interscholastic Athletic Activities

The Badgerland Lutheran Athletic Conference (BLAC) rules govern most of the participation requirements when it comes to what grade plays at what level. Special arrangements for teams may be made when there are unusual numbers at certain levels as determined by athletic director, principal, and school board. At St. Stephen's, we do not, as a general rule, cut players from the team. Generally, anyone who is interested in the sport will be able to participate as long as they meet the handbook requirements. We want to keep our team sizes at a manageable level for both the coaches to instruct and the athletes to participate. To that end we would first try to divide into two teams to avoid having to cut players. The standard that we will typically follow is:

- **A Teams are 7th and 8th Grade (6th grade permitted)**
 - o Ideally A teams will compete on a higher level and with such players who excel, have shown effort, know the plays, take direction, and are faithfully present at practice and games will be playing more. Students who are less gifted athletically will play and can increase their playing time through showing a willingness to take direction and putting forth the effort needed to improve.

Playing time at this level is at the coach's discretion, but we strongly request the coaches take the before mentioned ideal situation into account.

- **B Teams are 5th and 6th Grade (4th grade permitted if needed)**
 - o Ideally B teams will compete on a more amenable level, which is conducive to learning the game while building the players confidence and skill level. All players will play on this level; however there is no guarantee that it will be equal playing time. The factors will be built on effort, attitude, and following direction as well as skill level.

Student Athlete Guidelines

While playing sports should be a fun experience for St. Stephen's student athletes we want them to understand the responsibility that comes with being a student athlete at St. Stephen's. They represent our school when they wear our uniform, but more importantly, they represent our Savior when they compete, and that is the biggest responsibility they carry out into the world.

1. Student athletes have the privilege to represent St. Stephen's in extracurricular activities. Their behavior reflects directly on St. St. Stephen's and our Savior Jesus Christ whom we serve. The student can be declared ineligible based on attitude or any incident that harms the mission of St. Stephen's Lutheran School.
2. All necessary forms need to be signed and returned to the athletic director before the first practice. An athlete may not participate in practice or games until this is accomplished.
3. Transportation arrangements are the responsibility of parents/guardians, and should be made prior to the practices and games.
4. In the event that school is closed due to weather, mandatory practices and/or games are canceled for that day.
5. There are no sports practices/games Wednesdays during Lent. No mandatory practices are scheduled over school vacations. However, optional open gym times may be scheduled.
6. To encourage responsibility, leadership, and teamwork, we ask that the students make it a priority to attend St. Stephen's events first. This would mean putting St. Stephen's games and practices ahead of non-St. Stephen's sporting events.
7. Uniform care is the athlete's responsibility. Any uniform not returned, or returned in damaged condition will be replaced at the athlete's expense. A \$15 **non-refundable** uniform fee is applied for the season to help develop ownership and care for the uniform.
8. Any disrespect shown to coaches, officials, fans, or players will result in disciplinary action. Repetitive or inappropriate behavior will result in suspension/expulsion from the team. Examples of such behavior include, but are not limited to, a poor/ uncooperative attitude, lack of respect, receiving a technical foul for unchristian behavior, or inappropriate behaviors such as fighting, stealing, vandalism, use of alcohol, drugs, or tobacco.
9. Students are to be at school only during times of their practices. They are not to wait or loiter around the school for their practices to begin.

10. Student athletes are held to a high academic standard; please see details in the Eligibility section that follows

Eligibility

1. Academic performance will determine all students' eligibility in extracurricular non-scholastic activities offered at St. Stephen's Lutheran School. This includes, but is not limited to: athletics, POMs, forensics, and musical/drama productions.

2. Any student whose grade-point average for an academic quarter is below 80% (within reason and circumstance) will be ineligible for all extracurricular activities listed above from the time the teachers have reported it to the athletic director until the average has been raised to 80% or higher. Students are required to meet with the athletic director and principal prior to being allowed to return to practices.

3. Any student who is receiving a grade below 70% (within reason and circumstance) in any subject will be ineligible for all extracurricular activities listed above and will remain so until the student has raised the grade to a passing level and has met with the principal and athletic director.

4. Students may also be declared ineligible because of misconduct at school, on the bus, or any school-related activity. Persistent disrespect, lack of cooperation, habitual truancy or tardiness will lead to a student being declared ineligible.

5. Parents of children who have been declared ineligible will be notified prior to ineligibility being enforced.

6. Any assignment not completed at the set due date is considered LATE. Any and all LATE work is to be completed before a student participates in practice or games for any extracurricular activity.

7. If it becomes clear to the classroom teacher, principal, and athletic director that extracurriculars are negatively affecting a student's ability to be productive and successful in their school work, they will be ruled ineligible for the remainder of the season (This would be applied after previous attempts hadn't reached the desired effect).

8. Exceptions to these policies may be made on an individual basis for certain students. All exceptions should be brought to the principal and decided in consultation with the classroom teacher along with the athletic director.

9. Any student who has displayed the symptoms of a possible concussion will be ineligible to participate in any athletic activities until they have received written clearance from a healthcare provider.

Unexcused Absences

All student athletes are responsible to a team. A team cannot improve as a unit unless all athletes are present and on time for every practice and game. If an athlete is unable to attend practice or will be tardy, the athlete or parent must notify the coach at least one day before the absence (illness the exception). Excused absences would include, illness, appointments, family vacations, family emergencies, etc. Please communicate with the coaches. If a student misses games, **cross country meets, track events/meets** or practices without an appropriate or acceptable excuse, the following penalties will apply:

- First offense: The player will be unable to play in the following game.

First offense: The athlete will receive limited playing time as decided by the coach and/or athletic director.

Second offense: The athlete will be unable to dress and participate in the following game or meet.

- Multiple offenses: Player may be removed from the team.

Third Offense: The athlete will be removed from the team for the remainder of the season.

Coaching Guidelines

We ask that our coaches be guided by Romans 12: 6-7

“We have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us. If your gift is prophesying, then prophesy in accordance with your faith; if it is serving, then serve; if it is teaching, then teach; if it is to encourage, then give encouragement; if it is giving, then give generously; if it is to lead, do it diligently; if it is to show mercy, do it cheerfully.”

Coaches are representatives of St. Stephen’s Lutheran School and Christ. They are approved by St. Stephen’s School Board, the athletic director and the principal.

They are informed of the goals and expectations at a preseason coaches meeting held with the athletic director. St. Stephen’s coaches will:

1. Be members/acquiring membership of St. Stephen’s Lutheran Church and School or a sister WELS Church.
2. Be regular in church attendance and at the Lord’s Supper.
3. Have knowledge of the athletic handbook and the school handbook and be in agreement with them.
4. Have a general knowledge of the sport they are coaching.
5. Encourage all athletes, at all levels.
6. Demonstrate organization and responsibility for his/her team at all practices and games (Scheduling changes of any nature must be submitted to and approved by the Athletic Director).
7. Encourage prayer before all athletic events.
8. Be informed about the handling of health and safety issues, including concussions
9. Be a role model for our student athletes by modeling Christian attitudes in victory and defeat.
10. Demonstrate respect for opposing teams and the referees. It is acceptable to disagree with the referee, it is acceptable to point out concerns to the referee, but to blame a loss or disrespect the referee in front of the students is not acceptable behavior to be modeled for our student athletes.

Parent Guidelines

Just as we ask the coaches and players to strive to reflect the love of our Savior in their words and actions, parents are encouraged to do the same. Parents participate by watching, cheering, and supporting the efforts of all participants of the game. The following guidelines are expected to be followed by all St. Stephen Lutheran School parents.

1. We ask that parents be responsible for their children before and after all home and away games. If the child's own parents are not able to attend the athletic contest, the parents will be responsible for finding a "caregiver" when a child is not under the direct supervision of the coach. While we encourage our student athletes to cheer for their schoolmates, we want the students to know they'll be accountable for their actions and choices.

2. Parents are also responsible for any additional child they bring to sporting events. Do not just drop off your children or allow them to play outside of your supervision. We ask this out of concern for their safety, and the safety student athletes competing.

3. Parents/guardians together with the athlete are responsible for transportation of the athlete to and from all games and practices.

4. Communication is the key. Any problems which do arise should be worked out in a God-pleasing way. Parents are asked to resolve conflicts using the following protocol:

4.1. Discuss the matter in private with the coach, never in front of the student athletes.

4.1.1 We ask for at least a 12 hour "cooling off" period after a game, if it is a game related issue.

4.2 Contact/meet with the athletic director (along with the coach if deemed necessary).

4.3. If the problem continues, the athletic director along with the coach will involve the principal.

4.4. If the problem cannot be resolved following the above steps the athletic director and principal will confer with the School Board.

5. Parents are expected to model the correct behavior for the students in attendance. This means following rules that are posted (No Food or Drink in the Gym), rules for player safety (sitting and standing in proper areas so as not to affect the competition), and refraining from unwholesome language or criticism of the coaches, players or referees.

6. Volunteers are needed to truly make the athletic program work. This may require parents to help out in various ways such as scorekeeping, line judging, hallway supervision, and working in the concession stand, among others. These ways will be made known throughout the school year.

Badgerland Lutheran Athletic Conference (BLAC)

We are part of the Badgerland Lutheran Athletic Conference which consists of 20 area Lutheran grade schools. The main purpose of this conference is to glorify Jesus and develop Christian character through athletics. It was also created to consolidate area Lutheran schools under one league and to consolidate the scheduling of games, tournaments, and meets between conference schools. The conference oversees and schedules volleyball and cross

country in the fall, basketball in the winter, and softball and track during the spring. Teams, rules, schedules, game results, and standings can be found on the conference website at <http://blac.smls.org/>.

Fall Sports

1. Girls' Volleyball

- 1.1. Volleyball is offered for girls in grades 5-8.
- 1.2. Season is approximately from the middle of August to the middle of October.
- 1.3. Girls may participate in cross country and volleyball at the same time.
- 1.4. A schedule for practice and games will be given prior to the beginning of the season.

2. Cross Country

- 2.1. Offered to girls and boys in grades 4-8.
- 2.2. Girls may participate in cross country and volleyball at the same time.
- 2.3. Season is approximately from the middle of August to the middle of October.
- 2.4. A schedule for practices and meets will be given prior to the beginning of the season.
- 2.5. Practices will be held outside and participants should dress appropriately.

3. Boys Volleyball

- 3.1 Offered to boys 5-8.
- 3.2 Season is one tournament but practices will begin when girls' volleyball has ended.
- 3.3 Tournament date and location will be sent out before the practices begin.

Winter Sports

1. Basketball

- 1.1. Offered to girls and boys in grades 5-8 divided into A-B levels.
- 1.2. Season begins early November and concludes late February.
- 1.3. A game/practice schedule will be sent home prior to the season.
- 1.4. Changes to the practice schedule must be approved by the athletic director and the principal.

2. Poms

- 2.1 Poms is offered to 8th Grade girls first and then 7th Grade girls
- 2.2 Poms season lasts typically from Mid-November until Early February
- 2.3 The routine and music must be approved by athletic director and Poms director (Mrs. Brace).

Spring Sports

1. Track

- 1.1. Offered to boys and girls in grades 5-8.
- 1.2. Practices will start approximately late March and to the middle of May.
- 1.3. The gym may be used for early season practices and outside practice will begin as soon as weather permits.
- 1.4 Outside practices will be held at Beaver Dam High School's track as long as the track is available to us.

Contacts

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Sources

David's Star Lutheran Athletic Handbook

Athletic Director: John Giddings Email: jgiddings@davidstar.org

St. Paul's Lutheran Lake Mills Athletic Handbook

Athletic Director: Kyle Seim Email: kseim@stpaulakemills.org

Bethany Lutheran Athletic Handbook

Principal/AD: Aaron Krause Email: akrause@bethanyeagles.org