

Trinity Lutheran School



Athletic Handbook

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Dear Parents,

Attached is the school's policy on interscholastic athletic activities. Our school covenant applies to the relationships and activities of athletics as well. This policy speaks in more detail to the importance of each child, provides opportunity for all interested students to enjoy interscholastic sports, and gives more specific direction to students, parents, and coaches. The following guidelines have been established for our athletic program so that all things can be done appropriately, in order, and that all words and actions may glorify our Savior, Jesus Christ. We encourage you to take time to read this document carefully. We trust that you too will be pleased with the direction it gives. Thank you for your support.

DJ Schult, Principal Holly Prah, Athletic Director The Day School Ministry Board

Section 1. Philosophy

The purpose of interscholastic athletics at Trinity is for the athlete to improve his/her God given talents through team sports, developing their skills and building relationships.

Playing time in games will vary according to the player's ability level and his/her effort in practice. It is our goal to give all team members meaningful participation in games and practices. Players wishing more playing time in competition should meet with the coach to learn which skills need to be developed in off-season and after-practice situations. Athletes and parents might consider developing their skills more fully through summer leagues, camps, etc.

Trinity applies Christian attitudes in athletics. 1 Corinthians 12:12 says, "*The body is a unit, though it is made up of many parts; and though all its parts are many, they form one body.*" I Corinthians 10:31 tells us, "*So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all to the glory of God.*" As God's children, we all are commanded to use every opportunity to reflect the love of the Savior. We expect our players, coaches and spectators to conduct themselves in a Christ-like manner at all games and practices.

Section 2. Research on Young Athletes

In our efforts to develop policies that promote the healthy development of our children and in the context to try to understand the appropriate place and level of competitive activities it is important to have some sense of the developmental characteristics of children in grades K-8. Realizing that it is very difficult to briefly describe the many facets of development, we will focus on psychosocial development. A primary area of our concern is the impact of competition on the child's developing sense of self and his/her relationship with others.

The Age of Expansion: 4-7 years

At this age children are busy formulating their own perspective, their own plans, purposes and ideas. Their minds and bodies are growing a mile-a-minute and they don't seem to have time to take it all in. The child is taking a serious interest in the social world around him/her and they thrive on lots of love and attention. They are eager to please and have a difficult time when they sense disapproval. This is an age of energetic social learning through play and watching closely to see what grownups and older children are like and what they do. Activities should be fun, playful and focused on skill development. Some caution needs to be exercised to watch that they don't develop expectations too far beyond their abilities.

The Age of Striving for Achievement: 7-11 years

The child in this stage is learning the feeling of satisfaction in saying; "I can do it!"; "I know how/why!"; "Look at what I made!". This is the time when fantasy lessens and the child settles down to do real things and wants to be good at them. The child is developing specific interests in activities and is likely to be beginning to shy away from those that he/she thinks they have little chance of success or is embarrassed to try because they're "not good enough". The child needs encouragement and assistance in doing things at which they can succeed and feel good about themselves. This is also the time when team membership is becoming very important with the approval of one's peers having a significant impact on one's self-image. Children at this age are a little more accurate in their self-perceptions; however, a sense of failure and fear of embarrassment can leave them with the impression that "I'll never be any good at" Children at

this age are very readily picking up the attitudes and values of the community around them, they are keenly aware of what counts.

Early Adolescence: 12-14 years

This is a time of many changes coupled with a very self-conscious and often self-critical appraisal of these changes. Early teens tend to be easily embarrassed, very sensitive to comparisons and strongly motivated to avoid the disapproval of peers. Peer pressure is probably at its greatest and the teen is very much aware of those avenues that seem to lead to popularity, status and recognition as well as those that often result in unpopularity and disapproval.

Typically, teens have a strong need to "prove" themselves often turning to sports and other peer/society defined activities as a means of being accepted. The young adolescent is also in the process of refining their sense of identity with the particular danger of often allowing one or two activities or relationships to become the core of their identity. Those who can't live up to the abilities and expectations of others may find themselves left out or actively avoiding many activities. Perhaps the most challenging aspect of this age group is their moodiness, inconsistency and belief that they are a lot more grownup than they really are.

Competition Perspective

From a developmental perspective, questions about competition seem to boil down to two major concerns. First, competition tends to involve significant social evaluation of one's abilities (often for the adolescent of one's total identity). Any achievement situation involving social evaluation of an ability that the child considers important can be threatening if he/she anticipates failing or getting negative appraisal from others. In evaluating the place and role of competition, we must consider the social evaluation potential of the activity recognizing that some activities may be inherently more evaluative than others and therefore require more planning or management. Those activities that have one or more of the following characteristics may lead to an intensity of competition that is counterproductive:

- highly visible performance
- focus on individual performance
- tend to emphasize key positions or situations
- activities where winning or losing tends to be taken very personally by self/others

The second consideration is that we must remember that competition is a process, not a product. Competition, at the appropriate intensity can be helpful for skill development as well as personal and social maturation. The problem with competitive situations seems to be that competition is often reduced in meaning to the final score, winning or losing. The literature on the negative impact of competition on children seems to clearly point out that it is extremely important to put the win-loss aspect of competition activities into perspective. To create an atmosphere fostering both healthy development and achievement, realistic performance goals should replace winning as the principle criteria for success. (Performance goals focus on skill development and cooperative team efforts.) By striving for and attaining performance goals, a feeling of personal accomplishment can be achieved by all participants; regardless of the outcome.

Section 3. Participation

Participation in extracurricular activities is a privilege, not a right. Students, as representatives of the Christian school community, must demonstrate the lordship of Jesus Christ in their daily lives. All children who demonstrate an interest to participate in any aspect of the interscholastic athletic program will become a team member. Trinity has a "no cut" policy.

The number of students opting to participate in a particular sport will determine the playing time, in addition to effort and ability. The younger the grades, the more playing time is shared. Not everyone sees action in tournaments, but the coach will try.

The "A" and "B" teams shall be determined by the coach. If a coach sees that there is a lower grade athlete with significant playing ability to place him/her on the "A" team, the coach shall have that right.

Parents are required to attend the fall athletics meeting with their child.

Any failing grade on a report card or 3 week progress report or a grade point below a C average triggers the following actions:

1. A written warning by the teacher, to the student/ parent/principal.
2. Immediate suspension from sports until demonstrated improvement, as determined by the principal.

The yearly interscholastic athletic schedule should include a minimum of:

- 5 co-ed soccer games, plus one tournament
- 6 girls' volleyball matches, plus one tournament
- 10 games for boys/girls basketball, plus one tournament

Individual students must attend all scheduled practices, team meetings, and games.

- a. Students will be excused because of illness (parental communication required).
- b. Students will be excused for other circumstances with excuse one day in advance and communicated by the parent.
- c. Any student who has an unexcused absence from a scheduled practice, team meeting, or game will not suit for the following game.

If sick during the school day, the individual should not attend games or practices. The coach need not be contacted if the child leaves school because of illness. If the child is in school for the 2nd half of the day, they may attend practice or games.

Individual students must demonstrate their desire to cooperate with the coaching staff and other team members during practices, team meetings, and games. Continued failure to cooperate will jeopardize individual playing time and may even lead to suspension from the team.

Students who consistently demonstrate lack of respect to fellow students or authority, demonstrate poor attitudes, do academic work below their level of ability, or become involved in behaviors which diminish Christ's name, may lose the opportunity to participate in extracurricular activities. Notification of probation or suspension will be given to the student and

his or her parents by the principal or athletic director when any of the above occurs. A suspension from any extracurricular activity will be a minimum of one week in duration; permission to participate in extracurricular activities will not be granted until improvement is obvious.

Section 4. Discipline

The coach is responsible for the actions of the children under their supervision at the time of games or practices. All major disciplinary actions will be reported to the Athletic Director/principal. The signed school covenant applies to athletics as well.

Steps for Handling General Misconduct

- Step 1 Set the child out of practice or game and parent(s) will be notified
- Step 2 The coach will notify the parent(s) and meet to plan a course of action
- Step 3 The coach, Athletic Director, and parent(s) will meet further to discuss the situation and to join in a united effort in disciplining the child.
- Step 4 Disciplinary action will be taken by the principal

Gross Misconduct will be reported to and handled by the Athletic Director and/or principal, using the school discipline guidelines. Gross misconduct may include but is not limited to: Fighting, Stealing, defiance or disrespect to coaches, Vandalism, use of alcohol, tobacco and other drugs.

Section 5. Communication/Reconciling Conflict

In all cases, if there is a concern that needs to be discussed, he/she should go to the source of that concern (Matthew 18:15-16), *"If your brother sins against you,^[a] go and show him his fault, just between the two of you. If he listens to you, you have won your brother over.¹⁶ But if he will not listen, take one or two others along, so that 'every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses.'^[b] Steps should be taken in order to resolve the problem and restore the relationship. If no resolution can be made, involve the Athletic Director. If no resolution is made, involve the Principal. If the principal is a coach, the Day School Ministry Chair is the contact.*

Appropriate topics for parents-coaches to discuss...

- Ways for the child to improve
- Concerns about the child's behavior
- Treatment of the child mentally and physically.
- Concerns regarding coaching philosophy and expectations
- Immediate notification of scheduling conflicts
- Practice-game schedule

Inappropriate issues for parents-coaches to discuss...

- Other student athletes

Section 6. Responsibilities

Lights/Locker Rooms

The lights and the locker rooms are the responsibility of the last coach present on a practice night. The lights can be found on the north gym wall to the East of the doors. Locker Rooms should be checked at the end of the evening. The lights should be turned off.

Equipment

Balls, practice jerseys and other equipment are put away. Uniform replacement cost is \$75.00.

Practice

Practice Plans- Practices are to be run efficiently.

Scheduling- All scheduling is done by the Athletic Director based on availability. The individual coach can add additional practices if the appropriate area is available. Practices and games should not exceed four nights per week, with three nights as the standard.

Games

Transportation- Is the responsibility of the parents for all away games. Some parents consider ride sharing.

Use of Host Facilities-All Trinity representatives should make sure the locker room and bench area are as clean or cleaner than originally found.

Supervision

Coaches are expected to remain on site until all players have left the facility. Parents are expected to be on time for pick-up. Consistent late pick-up will require administrative follow-up.

Phone Use

Parents and athletes should plan ahead to avoid extra phone calls and waiting time.

After School Home Games

After School care is the responsibility of the parents, unless the coach has asked the team to meet after school. Siblings of players will not be allowed to stay with the team(s). Students staying after school unsupervised will be sent to ECC at a per half-hour cost.

Game Setup/Cleanup

Game set up/cleanup is done by the teams, parents, coaches, and Athletic Director.

Section 7. Uniforms

Uniforms are to be worn for games only.

Handing out and Returns-All uniforms are the property of TLS. They will be handed out and collected by the Coach or Athletic Director. The cost of replacing uniforms will be charged to the student. Uniforms will be charged to the students account and report cards may be held until it is returned/replaced.

Care- The individual athlete is responsible for care of his/her uniform. Uniforms are to be washed in cold water and air-dried. Machine drying may cause damage to the material and numbers.

Forgetting Uniforms- Extra uniforms are not taken to away games, and are not always available at home games. If a student forgets his/her uniform they may not, depending on the sport be allowed to play. Extra uniforms must be returned prior to the next game in order for the child to participate.

Section 8. Coaching

All coaches will be interviewed by the principal and/or athletic director. Interview questions will address Christian commitment, past experience, personal goals as they relate to the position, and the applicant's ability to work within the guidelines of this policy.

Coach Selection

1. be active members of Trinity Lutheran Church or another Christian church
2. possess faith which resembles strong Christian characteristics
3. be able to discipline athletes with proper Law and Gospel
4. abide by the policies that have been set up by the faculty, Athletic Director, and Trinity Lutheran Day School Ministry
5. have proven skills necessary to coach that specific activity

Coaching Guidelines

1. Coach and player relationship/roles will be explained by the coach at the onset of each sport season.
2. Coaches will also explain their goals--which will be in harmony with those of the school--at this time.
3. Coaches are responsible for working with the athletic director and other appropriate school personnel to accomplish the goals and objectives of the Trinity interscholastic sports program as stated in this policy.
4. Coaches will maintain a high level of Christian self-discipline at all times.

5. The coach's first concern must be the best interests of the children (God's imagebearers). This implies a wholistic approach to coaching--team members are spiritual beings with spiritual needs. Children must learn that everything must be done to glorify God. They are His disciples today, in all things including interscholastic sports. They must be enabled to grow in their relationship to self, neighbor, and God. Practice and team meeting times are the best places to evaluate, discuss, and establish team and even personal goals. Coaches must be careful not to reduce spiritual growth to what can sometimes be perceived as "good luck" prayers before a game.
6. Student discipline matters requiring long or short term suspension will be brought to the attention of the athletic director. He/she will work with the school principal in the administration of said suspension.
7. Coaches are expected to keep accurate stat books, including general evidence of shared playing time, and may be requested to submit them to the athletic director.

The Coaches Responsibility to the School:

- represent the school in a God-pleasing manor;
- use language becoming of a Christian;
- report to the athletic director any need, problem, scores, etc.;
- see that the building and any equipment is properly cared for and secure;
- Ensure that the eligibility policies are followed as per the athletic director.

The Coaches Responsibility to the Team:

- emphasize the Glory of God in all situations;
- represent Trinity Lutheran School responsibly;
- have fun;
- win;
- lose graciously;
- practice appropriately;
- be a positive Christian role model in words and actions.