

# Holy Ghost Lutheran School Athletics Program Handbook



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## Rationale

Interscholastic athletics at Holy Ghost are an important part of educating the total child. Our program exposes students to team activities and provides opportunities for them to learn and gain from the experience of competition that are found on the field and court. It is here and under these conditions that an athlete can put into practice the Christian values and ethics taught in our classrooms and in their church.

**I Corinthians 10:31 tells us, "So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God."**

Holy Ghost, in partnership with the parents, seeks to minister to the student athlete by teaching Christian sportsmanship and instilling the attitude that one can both win and lose with dignity, and without boasting or excuse. Young athletes on the playing field use their God given talents to bring Him glory and honor. By practicing good sportsmanship, an attitude of wanting to do their very best, cooperation and teamwork with fellow team members, self-discipline and dedication, the Holy Ghost athlete makes the statement to everyone watching that they are ultimately on God's team and they play to win praise for God.

The athlete will develop the fundamental skills at the Junior Varsity Team level through active participation. It is our goal to give all members at the JV Team level a chance for meaningful participation in all games and practices.

Those who desire to continue to use their skills at a more competitive level will have the opportunity to do so on the Varsity Team.

Since the teams our children compete against schools that have the same general attitude toward interscholastic athletics, we look forward to enjoyable, competitive contests. We expect our players, coaches, and spectators to conduct themselves in a Christian manner at these contests.

**Student/Parent Christian Sports Pledge for the 2019 – 2020 School Year**

Sign and submit to the Athletic Director before the beginning of the sports season.

**It is the goal of the coaches, teachers, and administration to assist all students in their spiritual, physical, and mental growth. Holy Ghost desires that each student grow to be more like Christ and “increase in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man.” -- Luke 2:52. With this goal set before you, we ask you to carefully read and sign the following pledge in order that we may put God first.**

We the undersigned are dedicated to Holy Ghost Lutheran School’s athletic program as representatives of our Lord Jesus Christ.

We realize we will be expected to behave in a Christian fashion throughout the season.

We understand that family and friends that come to the games will be expected to behave in a manner appropriate for a program dedicated to living the faith we profess.

We realize inappropriate behavior or failing to meet the academic standards of a student-athlete could result in a suspension or removal from the team.

We will abide by the decisions made by the school concerning the athletic program of Holy Ghost Lutheran School.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Student Signature

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Parent Signature

**Complete copy of Holy Ghost Athletic Handbook is available upon request.**

## Objectives of Program

Holy Ghost Athletes will:

- Recognize their talents as a blessing from God and will develop and use them in God pleasing ways
- Be given the opportunity to play as a child, not as an adult
- Learn the skills and strategies associated with each sport they participate in
- Unselfishly recognize and respect the talents and abilities of others on their team and in the competing teams
- Display the values of Christian sportsmanship
- Develop the understanding and attitude that trophies do not make the team a winner; instead everyone is a winner when they have done their best on the playing field
- Accept the responsibility for the hard work and commitment necessary for being part of a team
- Have fun through physical activity

## Sports Offered

Varsity Soccer (co-ed)	Grades 6 – 8	JV Soccer (co-ed)	Grades 4 – 6
Varsity Girls Basketball	Grades 6 – 8	JV Girls Basketball	Grades 4 – 6
Varsity Boys Basketball	Grades 6 – 8	JV Boys Basketball	Grades 4 – 6
Girls Cheerleading	Grades 4 – 8	Volleyball (co-ed)	Grades 6 - 8
Sparks Spirit Squad (co-ed)	Grades K – 2	Jr. Sports (co-ed)	Grades K – 5

## Expectations of Teams

**Junior Varsity (JV)** – This is the entry level, the learning stage, for this sport. The main purpose for this level is to learn the fundamentals and skills of the game. Provided that they meet eligibility requirements, all students at this level play in every game. However, they will not necessarily get equal playing time. Although winning the game is a goal, participation and experience are the main goals.

**Varsity** – The varsity teams apply all of their experience and ability to winning the game. Teaching of skills will continue to be stressed. Although everyone will have an opportunity to play it is possible that not every athlete will have the chance to play in every game. The game is played with the intention of bringing home an honorable victory. Players wishing to compete at the Varsity Team level are encouraged to develop their skills more fully through summer leagues, camps, etc.

## Eligibility

Although Holy Ghost Lutheran is primarily an academic institution, the school seeks to provide any interested student the opportunity of joining one or more of our athletic teams. Students may participate in our athletic programs if:

- a cumulative “C” average in all subjects is maintained
- no failing grade in any one subject
- proper conduct and behavior is displayed in school at all times

Where completion of assignments, quality effort, and conduct become a problem the teacher will notify the student, parent and Athletic Director. In these cases the following guidelines will apply:

### Temporary Suspension

The grades of each athlete are checked at the mid-terms and the end of the quarters. If the grades for any student fall below a “C” average for all subject areas of failing in any one subject, the parents and student are notified, and the students will be placed on a one-week suspension. If at the end of that week the student’s grades meet the above criteria, the student is again eligible. If at the end of that week the grades are still below the criteria, the student is ineligible until their grades meet the required mark. The student on suspension may not participate in practices or games.

Any student who has not consistently turned in homework assignments may be receiving a temporary suspension. The Athletic Director and/or the Principal will determine these suspensions with the aide of the teacher.

Any student who has failed to obey team rules established by the coach may also be suspended for up to one game. The Athletic Director and/or the Principal will determine these suspensions with the aide of the coach.

A student who receives a red card (soccer) or technical foul for **unsportsman like** conduct shall be ineligible for two halves.

### Removal from the roster

Repeated violations or serious inappropriate conduct may result in a student’s removal from a team roster. The Athletic Director and/or the Principal will determine the removal.

### Absences

Any student absent on the day of a game or practice may not participate in that game or practice. A daily absence is defined by a student not reporting to school prior to their scheduled lunch time. Students who miss school on Friday will not be allowed to play in games on Saturday.

The Athletic Director and/or the Principal may grant an absent student permission to play based on extenuating circumstances.

## Expectations of Student Athletes

Team players are representing their Lord and school. They will do this in a Christ-like manner.

Players will show respect for property when visiting other schools.

Players will try their best, but not make winning their most important goal, but rather that they display Christian action.

Players will win with humility, and lose with grace.

Players are not to question the decisions of referees, but accept that the referees are doing their best and abide by their decisions graciously.

Players will play within the rules and keep a fair sense of play.

Players may never use crude, vulgar, or un-Christian Language.

Players are to be polite to opposing coaches and teams.

Players will never belittle or make fun of the other players.

Players will respect their coaches as their parents' representative.

**Failure to follow any of the above could result in a suspension from the team.**

## Expectations of Parents & Families

Spectators at games should at all times behave in a Christian manner.

Cheering should always be positive.

Fans who are parents should give a Christian witness to their children on the team.

Fans at all times should show respect for the referees.

Spectators should encourage one another to behave in a Christian manner.

Fans should respect others property when visiting other schools.

Spectators should be kind and polite to opposing teams, coaches, and fans.

Parents of players should instruct their children that their Christian witness and fair play are more important than winning.

Fans should be humble in victory and gracious in defeat.

Rude, vulgar, and un-Christian language by spectators will not be tolerated.

Parents should maintain close supervision of younger siblings. Any child seen running in the hallways of another school or behaving in an inappropriate manner will be told to go sit with their parents.

## Expectations of Coaches and Athletic Director

Coaches represent our Lord, the school, parents, and teachers when with players.

Therefore coaches will:

- Emphasize as their main goal the development of Christian attitudes toward athletics.
- Represent their Lord in appearance, attitude, and action
- Question referees decisions only in a God pleasing manner
- Coaches by their speech and action demonstrate a proper game behavior to their players and fans
- Rude and Vulgar language are never to be used.
- Coaches should discipline athletes who are not demonstrating Christian behavior by removing them from the competition.
- Coaches should instruct players about the proper respect of property when visiting other schools.
- Coaches will check the locker rooms before players are allowed to leave.

## Chain of Command

Since we are all working together for the benefit of our children let us make good use of the encouragement we get from God in **Matthew 18. If your brother sins against you, go and show him his fault, just between the two of you. If he listens to you, you have won your brother over.**

We understand that not every concern that parents or coaches have will deal with sin. However, we believe that Matthew 18 shows a clear chain of command to be followed. In order for steps to be taken in an orderly way, this chain of command has been developed and may be helpful in situations that may arise.

## **Order for parents to seek answers to questions.**

1. Coach (Individual Sport Coach)
2. Athletic Director
3. Principal
4. Board of Education

## **Coaches Communication to Parents**

The following are ideas that may help you, as parents know what to expect from our coaches. Coaches should communicate:

1. Coaches expectations of athletes
2. Location and time of all practices and games
3. Team requirements, i.e. practices, special equipment, out-of-season conditioning, etc.
4. Injury – if an injury takes place that the coach is aware of they should bring it to the attention of the parents
5. Discipline – if an athlete is being disciplined, by the coach, for any serious offense the coach should make sure the parents are aware the offense and disciplinary measures to take place.

## **Parents Communication to Coaches**

1. Concerns regarding coaching practices and expectations should be expressed to the coach during a scheduled appointment.
2. Immediate notification of any scheduling conflicts

### **Appropriate topics for parents to discuss with coaches:**

1. Treatment of child mentally and physically
2. Ways for child to improve
3. Concerns about child's behavior

### **Inappropriate topics for parents to discuss with coaches:**

1. Playing time
2. Team strategy
3. Play calling
4. Other student athletes



## **Misc. Items**

### **Sports Fee**

There is a \$40 sports fee per student for each sport. If a girl is participating in both basketball and cheerleading a \$60 combined sports fee is required. This must be turned into the office prior to the first scheduled game. Athletes will not be allowed to play in games until this fee has been paid. The Athletic Director will use the funds in the procurement of sports related items. The Principal will oversee the use of these funds.

### **Uniforms**

Uniforms are the property of Holy Ghost Lutheran School. Proper care of uniforms is expected. Uniforms should be changed into and out of at the sight of the game (unless student athletes have special permission from the coach or Athletic Director). Washed and cleaned uniforms shall be returned to the school office one week after the conclusion of the season. Uniforms that are lost or damaged will be the responsibility of the athlete and his/her parents. Parents will be expected to pay the replacement cost of the uniform. If a uniform is damaged during a practice or a game the coach will determine the responsibility. In special occasions, costs of uniforms and/ or accessories may be the responsibility of the parents. Athletes who have not turned in uniforms will not be able to participate in any other sport until the missing uniform is returned or paid for.

### **Transportation**

Transportation to and from games is the responsibility of the parents. If a parent is unable to attend a game, please make arrangements for your child. Coaches will assist in helping arrange carpooling when necessary. Driver Affidavit forms should be completed and on file at school for every adult driving students to a school sponsored sport event.

### **Cuts**

All students desiring to play on a reserve team will be given the opportunity to participate. Every reasonable effort will be made to accept all students on the varsity level. However, if the eligible number of team members is deemed unmanageable, cuts may have to be made. This decision will be made after consultation with the Coach, Athletic Director and Principal.

### **Practice and Games**

Practice is an important part of being a member of a team. Coaches have the right to determine playing time based on practice time put in by the student athlete.

The coach will hand out a printed schedule of all games and practices as soon as possible.