

# **Holy Ghost Catholic School**

## **Athletics Handbook**

**2009-2010**

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## **1.0 LEAGUE AFFILIATION AND PHILOSOPHY**

Holy Ghost Catholic School is affiliated with the Catholic School Athletic League (CSAL) of the Diocese of Baton Rouge. The CSAL is an extracurricular sports program operated through the Diocesan Principals Association. The CSAL is organized to provide an opportunity for students enrolled in Catholic schools in the Diocese of Baton Rouge to participate in an organized interscholastic athletic program which is consistent with the philosophy and values of the diocesan schools.

The diocesan philosophy of school-sponsored athletics for elementary and middle schools is as follows:

The greatest strengths of the Catholic elementary and middle schools of the Diocese of Baton Rouge are the opportunity and responsibility of the administration of each school to consider and use the uniqueness of its circumstances to provide the best Catholic education possible for its students. Within this basic tenet, the first priority of such schools is the overall development and growth of each of their students-spiritually, socially, mentally, emotionally, and physically. School-sponsored interscholastic athletic programs shall provide a medium by which students can:

- 1) develop an awareness of their abilities
- 2) learn and improve athletic skills
- 3) acquire the true meaning of and practice sportsmanship
- 4) be a part of team effort
- 5) enhance their self-esteem and feelings of belonging
- 6) form foundations for a healthy adult lifestyle

Such programs should emphasize the positive accomplishments of the individual through recognition, praise, and positive constructive criticism. Athletics should be a component of, and interact with, the spiritual, social, and academic components of the overall school program. Administration, faculty, staff, coaches, parents, and fans are necessary components in nurturing a positive Catholic athletic experience.

While most of our athletic games are played within this league, it is not uncommon for games to be scheduled with other schools not in the CSAL.

## **2.0 PRAYER**

Prayer is an important part of our spiritual formation. Coaches and players will keep God as their focus by praying prior to each practice and game.

## **3.0 CHAMPIONSHIP PLAY AND DIVISIONS**

There is no CSAL 8<sup>th</sup> grade division championship. The CSAL league is divided into three divisions: AAA, AA, and A. Holy Ghost School will play in the AAA division. Holy Ghost School will also play in the NIAL league for track, cross country, and softball. Our soccer team will play in the Baton Rouge Soccer Association and our baseball team will play in the Westside league in Port Allen.

## **4.0 HOLY GHOST SCHOOL WINNING PHILOSOPHY**

We win when our student athletes, by their participation in our athletic programs, develop pride in themselves through hard work and honoring the commitment to their teammates, team, school, and church parish; develop respect for the rights and privileges of their teammates, coaches, opponents, and officials; succeed academically; develop a sense of responsibility to the team and their teammates; communicate with their teammates and coaches candidly and develop a desire to excel and be the best they can be.

## **5.0 SPORTS AND ACTIVITIES**

Holy Ghost School offers the following athletic activities, during the time frames indicated, and for the corresponding grade levels, unless changes are made:

<u>Activity</u>	<u>Time Frame</u>	<u>Grades</u>
Football (boys)	August – November	3 <sup>rd</sup> - 4 <sup>th</sup>
Football (boys)	August - November	5 <sup>th</sup> – 8 <sup>th</sup>
Basketball (girls)	August - November	6 <sup>th</sup> – 8 <sup>th</sup>
Basketball (boys)	November - January	6 <sup>th</sup> – 8 <sup>th</sup>

Volleyball (girls)	February - April	6 <sup>th</sup> – 8 <sup>th</sup>
Baseball (boys)	February - May	5 <sup>th</sup> – 8 <sup>th</sup>
Soccer (boys & girls)	October - February	5 <sup>th</sup> – 8 <sup>th</sup>
Track (boys & girls)	February - April	2 <sup>nd</sup> – 8 <sup>th</sup>
Softball (girls)	February - May	5 <sup>th</sup> – 8 <sup>th</sup>
Cross Country	August - November	2 <sup>nd</sup> – 8 <sup>th</sup>
Cheerleading (girls)	August - February	6 <sup>th</sup> – 8 <sup>th</sup>
Dance Team (girls)	August - February	6 <sup>th</sup> – 8 <sup>th</sup>

Cheerleaders and dance team members are selected at the end of the school year for the following term.

Tryouts for all activities will be announced by the coaches/sponsors in advance. Written communication will be sent to parents outlining specific times for tryouts and other requirements. Once tryouts have been completed and the team selected, there will be no additions to the team unless there are extenuating circumstances. Tryouts will be no less than 2 days.

## **6.0 PLAYING RULES**

Copies of playing rules for the various sports may be viewed in the school office or through the athletic director.

## **7.0 GAME/PRACTICE SCHEDULING**

Games are scheduled by the CSAL based upon team, gym or field availability. Tournaments are scheduled by the athletic director based on the league schedule and gym availability. Participation in tournaments at other schools is determined by the athletic director. Practices are scheduled based on the league schedule, coach, and gym, field, or track availability. All practices will end by 8:00 p.m. No practices are to be held on Sunday unless approved by the Athletic Director. During Terra Nova testing, there will be no tryouts, practices, or games that week.

## **8.0 SPORTSMANSHIP CODE**

Sportsmanship and the team concept are essential to a successful program. These elements will be stressed for all sports and sports-related activities. It is true that we want to win and we enjoy victory. Our top priorities, however, are the development of skills, self-esteem, respect for others, honesty, and ethical behavior. Good sportsmanlike behavior is not only expected of our players but of our coaches, referees, parents, and fans. Coaches and players are expected to exhibit positive attitudes within their teams and towards their opponents. Holy Ghost has been fortunate to have the support of positive adult role models.

If a fan, parent, coach, or staff member is ejected from an athletic event, the person ejected will be suspended from the next athletic event of the same sport.

## **9.0 ATHLETIC PROGRAM GUIDELINES**

We would rather lose games than lose players. All participants shall receive equal instruction in the rules and strategy of the sport and shall be provided equal opportunity to develop basic skills.

Every effort will be made to allow all students who desire to join a school-sponsored sport this opportunity. However, due to league guidelines and practical restrictions, this may not always be possible. Alternatives, such as school-based recreational sports, will be sought when this occurs.

Coaches shall encourage cooperative teamwork between students of widely different abilities and shall prevent separation of highly skilled and lesser skilled groups of players.

No student shall be publicly embarrassed or loudly criticized by coaches or by teammates. Coaches shall correct students in a dignified manner in a spirit of encouragement.

No student, parent, fan, or coach shall publicly criticize or openly show displeasure toward game officials.

The players present and available to play at a CSAL league game in the 6<sup>th</sup> or 7<sup>th</sup> grade division must play at least one quarter without substitution during the four regulation quarters of a game. However, in 8<sup>th</sup> grade, those mandatory play guidelines do not apply.

Coaches shall encourage chatter between teammates and forbid razzing of the opposition.

## **10.0 SUPERVISION**

There must be an on-site supervisor present at each home event. The site supervisor cannot be a coach involved in coaching the activity taking place. The site supervisor must introduce him/herself to the game officials, provide game balls to the officials, help with crowd control, be prepared to discuss with official the calling off of games due to inclement weather, lighting problems, or other emergencies that might occur.

The coach/sponsor is responsible for supervising team members before the start of a game, during a game, and for dismissing team members after a game. No player shall be left to wait unsupervised for a ride home. The principal or his/her designee will assist with overall supervision of home athletic events.

## **11.0 ADMINISTRATION**

The athletic program is made possible through the generous donation of time and talent of many. The support of teachers, parents, and other caring adults is vital to the continued success of our program. An athletic director, appointed by the principal, serves as liaison between various coaches and league coordinator. His/her responsibilities include but are not limited to assisting with scheduling, enforcing eligibility requirements for participants, assisting in the recruitment of coaches, attending league meetings, and planning required in-services for all coaches. The athletic director will consult with the principal concerning all plans, schedules, etc. Administrative approval shall be obtained prior to implementing plans.

## **12.0 USE OF FACILITIES**

The coaches of each sport shall schedule use of the school gym with the school secretary. All requests shall be made well in advance of the date needed. Use of the gym will be scheduled on a first-come, first-served basis. When using the gym, proper care, up-keep, and security will be the coaches' responsibility. The use of any off-campus facility shall be scheduled by the athletic director with the approval of the principal.

## **13.0 UNIFORMS AND EQUIPMENT**

The school will provide the basic protective wear/uniforms for tackle football and uniforms for basketball, track, volleyball, soccer and baseball. Shoes and other desired items shall be purchased by the individual student. Uniforms for other spirit team activities shall be purchased by the student.

## **14.0 ELIGIBILITY**

Students who participate in school-sponsored athletics must put forth effort in academic work and meet the minimum academic standards listed below, be cooperative with teachers and coaches, and comply with the disciplinary standards listed below:

***Academic requirements:*** A student must maintain a 2.0 grade point average in conduct and the six major subjects (Religion, Math, Social Studies, Reading, Language Arts, Science). A student must also maintain a "C" or above in conduct on their report card to be eligible for tryouts or to remain on a team once selected. The nine-weeks report card issued prior to tryouts will be the instrument used to determine eligibility. Continued eligibility is based on maintaining a 2.0 grade point average in the six major subjects as evidenced by the progress report or report card.

Football and girls basketball start before the first report card is issued. The progress report will be used as the tool to determine continued eligibility.

If an athlete has a GPA less than 2.0 in the six major subjects, he/she will be put on probation. Probation requires the athlete to attend all practices and dress out in uniform for the games without participating. After the initial

two weeks, the GPA will be checked to see if the athlete has regained a 2.0 in the six major subjects. If after the two week probation, the athlete has not regained a 2.0 in the six major subject areas, the athlete is unable to attend practices or attend the game (s). If another two weeks has passed and the athlete has not regained a 2.0, the athlete is removed from the team.

***Conduct Requirements:*** If an athlete receives a D in conduct at any time during the nine weeks due to infractions, the athlete will be put on temporary suspension for two weeks. Temporary suspension is defined as a suspension from participating in all games for two weeks. However, during that two week period, the athlete must attend all practices and dress out in uniform for the games without participating in the games. At the end of the two week period, if the athlete has not received another infraction, he/she will be put on probation and allowed to play with the team. At any time during the temporary suspension or probation period, the athlete receives another infraction, he/she will be removed from the team.

If an athlete receives a D in conduct at any time during the nine weeks due to detentions and /or suspensions, the athlete/spirit team member will be removed from the team.

Students who become ineligible to participate in a sport/performance because of conduct will not be permitted to participate in any awards program or be pictured with that team in the yearbook.

We have many opportunities for boys and girls to participate in school activities. We ask parents to take some time to discuss these possibilities with their children. It is important that students honor their commitment to a team or club. Practices and meetings shall not be missed without a written excuse from a parent and/or physician. Parents are requested to reaffirm to children the importance of commitment. Specific guidelines are distributed by sponsors to all participants.

A full-day or half-day absence from school will render a student ineligible for any school activity, practice, scheduled game, or any other athletic event on that day. A student entering the school between 7:35 a.m. and 9:30 a.m. is considered tardy and is eligible to participate. If a child checks out and returns to school between the hours of 9:30 a.m. and 2:30 p.m., he/she will be considered a half-day absent. This makes the student ineligible to play in a school activity. However, the student can participate in a school activity if

he/she has a doctor's excuse or if he/she attended a funeral service. No money will be refunded if your child is removed, dismissed, or quits and extracurricular activity.

***Disciplinary Action:*** A student may be removed from any extracurricular or co-curricular activity for a temporary or permanent duration as a consequence for inappropriate behavior choices made by the student at Holy Ghost School. **Fees are non-refundable.** For a suspension, the athlete must sit out for the next entire game. If an athlete receives a major-offense detention, he/she must sit out for half of the next game. See explanation below. Any member of a team who is asked to resign may not try out the following year for the same sport.

Football – sit out the first half of the game

Basketball – 1<sup>st</sup> half of the game (2 consecutive quarter)

Cross Country – miss 1 race

Volleyball - 1 game (since the athlete plays 2 or 3 games)

Baseball – 1<sup>st</sup> 3 innings

Softball – same as baseball

Track- sit out 2 events

Soccer – sit out the first half of the game

### ***Major Offenses Detentions and Suspensions***

#### **Class A - Major**

Step 1: Detention issued and conference with parent and student. After two detentions for Class A Major violations, the student may meet regularly with the guidance counselor for a specified amount of time.

Step 2: Referral to school administrator as a Class B violation

If a parent fails to attend the scheduled disciplinary conference, the child will not be allowed to return to school until the conference occurs. A detention for a major violation lowers the conduct grade by one letter grade. After four detentions in a school year, a student will receive a one-day suspension. If a fourth detention is issued for a Class A major violation and a child receives a suspension, the conduct grade will be lowered two letter grades (one for the detention and one for the suspension).

Examples of Class A major violations:

1. chewing gum
2. persistent or hurtful name calling/teasing/bullying
3. untruthfulness
4. extreme classroom disruption

5. using a hall pass for an unintended purpose
6. shoving, pushing, tripping from anger
7. throwing objects in anger
8. throwing food in cafeteria
9. possession of skateboard
10. offensive inappropriate behavior, attitude, language, or gestures
11. possession of electronic devices /cell phones without permission from faculty/staff
12. biting
13. playing “punch buggy”
14. spitting
15. cell phone left in “on” position
16. no writing on shoes, uniform, or body
17. inappropriate use of or behavior in restrooms
18. harassment of another student

### **Class B violations:**

Step 1: Referral to school administration for one of the following:

- a. conference with student and/or parent
- b. detention
- c. suspension
- d. discipline committee review

If a parent fails to attend the scheduled disciplinary conference, the child will not be allowed to return to school until the conference occurs. After two detentions for a Class B violation, the student will meet regularly with the guidance counselor for a specified amount of time. After four detentions, a Behavior Modification Plan will be implemented along with scheduled visits with the guidance counselor. After five detentions in a school year, a student will receive a one-day suspension. Upon the 6<sup>th</sup> detention, the administration will determine the consequence.

Examples of Class B violations:

1. possession of any type of drug not checked in at the office first
2. inappropriate use of website/internet
3. blatant defiance of a teacher or staff member/verbally arguing
4. severe disruption of class
5. unlawful entry of a building or property
6. instigating a fight
7. inappropriate language, gestures, or materials
8. persistent or extreme teasing/bullying
9. obscene language, gestures, or material
10. fighting
11. disrespect of authority
12. damage to school property
13. leaving or not reporting to class
14. verbal arguing that leads to a serious offense

15. stealing
16. leaving campus without written permission (suspension)
17. consistently out of uniform
18. cheating (this also results in a "0" on the test, homework, or assignment)
19. actions that cause harm
20. note writing that is mean and hurtful
21. horseplay that results in injury
22. pulling fire alarms on emergency pulls or boxes
23. use of inappropriate slang words
24. leaving a chaperon during a field trip
25. inappropriate behavior at the parish fair
26. inappropriate writing/drawing
27. inappropriate use of or behavior in restrooms
28. spreading or repeating of stories that sheds a negative light on an individual

**Class C violations** will be handled by the administration and/or the School Discipline Committee with one of the following:

1. suspension
2. expulsion
3. psychological evaluation by a school-approved psychologist/psychiatrist. A copy of the psychological evaluation must be provided to the school administration prior to the child's re-admittance. The school reserves the right to contact the psychologist or psychiatrist.

**Examples of Class C violations:**

1. arson
2. bodily harm of a staff member or student
3. disgracing school off-campus
4. possession of illegal drugs
5. extreme disrespect of authority
6. possession of a gun, weapon, anything that can be used as a weapon, or anything that can cause harm
7. possession of pornographic material
8. destroying school property or vandalism
9. actions that cause grave danger
10. stealing or theft (severe occurrences)
11. threatening students or staff members
12. possession of prophylactics
13. removal of articles of clothing from another person
14. possession of alcohol or tobacco products
15. verbal threat of bodily harm
16. violation of cell phone policy
17. extreme or persistent bullying or teasing
18. inappropriate behavior at the school fair
19. inappropriate writing/drawing

20. leaving a chaperon during a field trip
21. inappropriate behavior/use of restrooms
22. spreading or repeating of stories that sheds a negative light on an individual

***Parental Permission:*** Parents shall complete the required form granting permission for their son/daughter to participate in any sport.

***Physical Examination:*** A student shall be examined by a physician at least once during the school year. The physical exam will be in effect from May 2009 to May 2010. A form bearing the physician's signature shall be submitted prior to participation in any sport.

***Insurance:*** It is required that an insurance and health form be kept on file for each student athlete. A release form for emergency treatment must also be completed. Each participating student is required to either provide proof of insurance (waiver) or purchase school accident and health insurance. All required documentation will be provided following tryouts and team selection and must be on file in the school office by a designated date.

***Limitations:*** The commitment to an activity is for the duration of the season. Therefore, no student shall be permitted to quit one activity in order to participate in another activity. If an athlete misses 2 consecutive practices, the athlete will not be allowed to participate at the next game. If an athlete misses 3 or more games without extenuating circumstances, their continued eligibility will be reviewed by the coach, athletic directors and administration. Members of the cheerleading squad and dance team are committed to performing during football and basketball seasons, but will be eligible for tryouts for other sports. Cheerleading and dance team members are committed to perform at major events and competitions. These students will perform at all games that they are scheduled for unless they are a player in that game. It is important to keep in mind that members of these squads must participate in all competitions and relinquish their participation in games scheduled at the same time.

***Illness:*** A written doctor's release is required before an athlete may resume play after a communicable disease, after three consecutive sick days, or after a serious injury.

## **15.0 AWARDS**

Rather than a homecoming, an 8<sup>th</sup> grade banquet will be held at the end of the school year to recognize all 8<sup>th</sup> grade athletes for their participation in any sport throughout the year. This will be a very special evening to recognize our 8<sup>th</sup> grade athletes and their parents.

## **16.0 TRANSPORTATION**

We rely on parents to assist with all transportation. It is recommended that parents of participating students carpool on a rotating basis. The individual parents are responsible for transportation arrangements. Coaches are not responsible for transporting students by car or arranging for transportation by car.

## **17.0 COACHES**

Over the years, Holy Ghost School has been blessed with a number of dedicated individuals who have volunteered their services to coach various sports. Coaches are selected by the Athletic Committee on a year to year basis. The primary factors considered in the selection of coaches are evidenced Christian values, depth of character and personality, ability to communicate with athletes, and technical knowledge of the sport. Some responsibilities of the coaches include:

- 1) meeting with the principal and athletic directors prior to holding tryouts
- 2) having all written communication approved by the principal before being sent home
- 3) furnishing parents with written information regarding tryouts, practices, schedules, expectations, and other requirements
- 4) in-servicing students on proper use and care of equipment
- 5) up holding the athletic policies of the school
- 6) participating in any required training clinics
- 7) being familiar with the policies outline in this handbook

Coaches have the authority to discipline and enforce all team and school rules and to dismiss a member of the team if necessary.

## **TEAM SELECTION**

A letter will be given to all interested athletes of a given sport. This letter of intent must be signed by the parent and returned in the allotted time. Non-participant official will use an objective instrument in all team selections. All team selection results will be posted by student number rather than name on Friday. All dates and times concerning tryouts will be distributed to the students. Make-up tryouts will only be conducted if approved by the Principal and Athletic Director. Any questions concerning team selection should be addressed to the athletic director.

No student will be allowed to play up a grade, unless special circumstances are approved by the athletic director and administration.

To encourage and foster community spirit, mergers with the other Catholic schools in the area will be allowed.

## **18.0 PARTICIPATION REQUIREMENT AND FEES**

There will be a parents meeting at the beginning of the school year for all sports. The athlete will need to turn in the following items after they make the team: a completed insurance form, a completed physical signed by the athlete's physician, a signed permission slip, and the participation fee. Fees are non-refundable. No student will be allowed to participate in the first game of the season unless all of these items are turned in to the athletic director by the assigned date.

Parents will have a mandatory time to work at an athletic event. Certain assignments will be given out according to the sport. The following information breaks down each sport and explains in detail what is needed from the parents:

Football: work the gate; help with concessions; clean up afterwards.  
Basketball: work the gate; work the concession stand; help clean up after the last game; work the clock; keep the book.

Volleyball: work the gate, work the concession stand; be a line judge; work the clock; keep the book.

Baseball and Softball: pick up concessions from school; sell concessions; return concessions to school.

You will not be assigned a time to work while your child is playing. The assignments will be given to you after the team is selected. If you cannot be there for your assigned time, it is your responsibility to find someone to take your place. If no one shows up during your assigned time, the school will bill you \$50.00. This \$50.00 is for each sport, not for the whole year.

The following fees will be assessed for participation in the Holy Ghost sports program. Participation fees will be used to assist with utilities, clean-up of gym, equipment, uniforms, awards, league fees, refreshments, referees, etc. This fee shall be paid in full before a student is permitted to participate in a sport:

Basketball:	\$50.00	Football:	\$75.00
Volleyball:	\$50.00	Track:	\$50.00
Baseball:	\$70.00	Soccer:	\$75.00
Softball:	\$60.00	Cross Country	\$35.00

If uniforms are not returned to the athletic director on the due date, a \$25.00 late fee will be charged. Any student who does not return a uniform cleaned will be assessed a \$35.00 cleaning fee. If the uniform is not returned at all, there will be a replacement fee, which is the cost to replace the uniform.

## **19.0 BUDGET**

Operating an athletic program is quite expensive. Every effort is made to develop a quality sports program that is self-supporting. Athletic funds generated through participation fees, gate receipts, concession profits, clinics, donations, or fundraisers shall be used to maintain and improve the athletic program. Therefore, all coaches and sponsors are required to adhere to the following guidelines:

- 1) submit an inventory of all equipment, uniforms, etc. for each sport prior to and at the end of each season

- 2) train students in the proper care of equipment, uniforms, and other property
- 3) check out any school equipment needed for individual use to students at the start of the season
- 4) require that all school equipment checked out to students be returned clean and on time at the end of the season
- 5) submit requests in writing to the athletic director at the conclusion of the season for the next school year; the athletic director will meet with the principal to review those requests