



Holy Ghost Catholic School



Patriot Athletics Guidelines for Participation

2023-24

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1.0 PHILOSOPHY

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.

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 and at the conclusion of each practice and game.

3.0 LEAGUE AFFILIATION

All Holy Ghost Catholic School athletic teams will compete in the North Shore Independent Athletic League (NIAL).

4.0 HOLY GHOST SCHOOL WINNING PHILOSOPHY

We win when our student-athletes participate and develop pride in themselves through hard work and honoring the commitment to their teammates, team, school, and church parish. Additionally, they 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, based upon participation and the availability of volunteer coaches unless changes are made. The formation of teams will be determined based on the number of students and at the discretion of the Athletic Director and Administration.

Activity	Time Frame	Grades
Flag Football (Boys)	August - November	6 th - 8 th
Cross Country (Boys/Girls)	August - November	2 nd - 8 th
Volleyball (Girls)	August - November	5 th - 8 th
Soccer (Boys/Girls)	November - February	5 th - 8 th
Basketball (Boys/Girls)	November - February	5 th - 8 th
Track & Field (Boys/Girls)	February - April	5 th - 8 th
Baseball	February - March	5 th - 8 th
Softball	February - April	6 th - 8 th
Golf (Boys/Girls)	February - April	5 th - 8 th
Basketball (Boys/Girls)	February - April	3 rd - 4 th

Any questions concerning Spirit Team (Cheer & Dance), please consult the Spirit Team Handbook.

6.0 Tryouts

Tryouts for all activities will be announced by the Athletic Director in advance. Written communication will be sent to parents outlining specific tryout times 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 determined by the Administration. In order to qualify for tryouts, students must meet all academic and conduct requirements along with having a current physical on file.

7.0 PLAYING RULES

Copies of playing rules for the various sports may be viewed via the Holy Ghost website, www.hgschool.org, in the school office, or through the athletic director.

8.0 GAME/PRACTICE SCHEDULING

All practices will be scheduled by the coach/sponsor of each individual team based on the availability of practice facilities and league schedule. No practices may be scheduled on Sunday without prior approval of the Holy Ghost School Athletic Director. All practices must end by 8:00 p.m.

League games will be scheduled through the NIAL based upon team, gym or field availability. Tournaments are scheduled by the athletic director in coordination with each coach based on the league schedule and the availability of facilities.

During standardized testing, all practices and/or games must end before 7:00 p.m. There will be no try-outs during standardized testing.

9.0 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. Violations of the sportsmanship code could result in the removal from the program.

10.0 ATHLETIC PROGRAM GUIDELINES

All participants shall receive equal instruction in the rules and strategy of their respective sport and shall be provided equal opportunity to develop basic skills during practice/training sessions. Participation in games is not a guarantee but all efforts will be made to ensure that all athletes receive “playing time”. Playing time will be kept to the discretion of the coaches.

Coaches shall encourage cooperative teamwork and sportsmanship. No student or coach shall be publicly embarrassed or loudly criticized by coaches, teammates, parents, or visitors. Coaches shall correct students in a dignified manner in a spirit of encouragement.

11.0 SUPERVISION

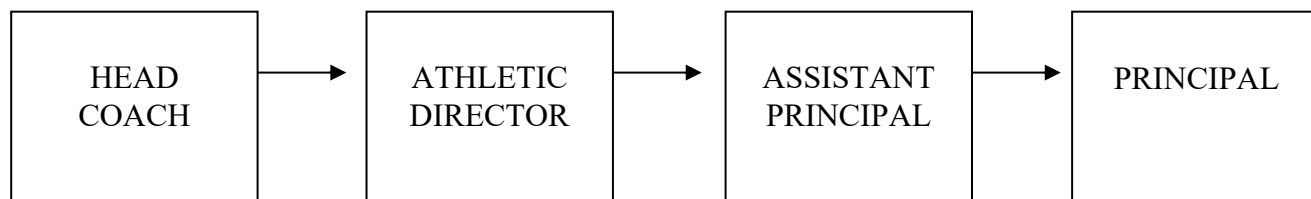
There must be an on-site supervisor present at each home event. The role of the site supervisor is to introduce him/herself to the game officials, help with crowd control, and be prepared to discuss with official the calling off of games due to inclement weather, lighting problems, or other emergencies 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.

12.0 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.

Communication Flow Chart



Please make every effort to have all communications through the head coach of each sport before contacting the Athletic Director, Assistant Principal, or the Principal.

13.0 USE OF FACILITIES

The coaches of each sport shall schedule use of the school gym with the school's 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 but must be shared with other teams. 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 only with the approval of the principal.

14.0 ELIGIBILITY

Only Holy Ghost Catholic School students whose accounts are current may participate in Holy Ghost School Athletic program. 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. No money will be refunded if the student is removed, dismissed, or quits an extracurricular activity. **Fees are non-refundable.**

Academic requirements: A student must maintain a 2.0 grade point average **OR** a 75% cumulative GPA, in the six major subjects (Religion, Math, Social Studies, Reading, Language Arts, and Science) as well as maintaining a "C" or above in conduct to be eligible for tryouts or to remain on a team once selected. The nine-week report card issued prior to tryouts and participation will be the instrument used to determine eligibility. Continued eligibility will be based on the student maintaining a 2.0 grade point average in the six major subjects as well as maintaining a "C" or above in conduct.

Continued eligibility will be checked at every mid-term progress report and report card issued at the end of a each nine-week period.

If an athlete has a GPA less than 2.0 in the six major subjects, he/she will be placed on a probation to pull their grades up to a 2.00 until the next progress report or report card, which ever comes first. During the probationary period, the athlete may participate in practices but may not participate in games until a 2.0 GPA is attained. If a student does not meet academic eligibility requirements by the probationary period they will be dismissed from the team.

If an athlete receives a D in conduct at any time during the nine weeks due to an infraction, the athlete will be removed from the team.

Eligibility based on attendance: It is important that students honor their commitment to a team. Practices 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. Sponsors to all participants distribute specific guidelines. 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 early or is absent on a game, practice, or special function day, they will not be allowed to participate in any extracurricular activities without a medical excuse or in case of bereavement. The excuse should be given to the sponsor/coach at the time of the after-school activity that day. No money will be refunded if your child is removed, dismissed, or quits an extracurricular activity. Please note that HG on-campus extracurriculars take precedence over non-HG extracurriculars. Your commitment needs to be with HG first.

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. If a student receives a suspension, they may not participate in practices or games throughout the duration of the suspension. If a student is suspended from school on the day before the weekend or a school holiday, they may not participate in games or practices until the suspension has been served.

Parental Permission: Parents shall complete the required form granting permission for their son/daughter to participate in any sport.
http://www.hgschool.org/student_handbook.htm

Physical Examination: A student shall be examined by a physician at least once during the school year prior to participation of the sport. The physical exam will be in effect for one calendar year. Only forms approved by the athletic director and school administration will be accepted. Neither notes nor prescription pads stating that the student is healthy to compete in athletic activity will be accepted. All physicals must be signed/completed and returned into the Athletic Director before the 1st day of tryouts/practice.

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 must be provided before tryouts.

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 a student either withdraws from or is dismissed from a particular team before the season has ended for that sport, he/she may not practice nor tryout for another sport until the season has ended for the sport, they either withdrew from or were dismissed from. In addition, if a player withdraws from a sport that player is ineligible to tryout for that sport the following school year. If an athlete misses 3 or more games without extenuating circumstances, their continued eligibility will be reviewed by the coach, athletic director and administration.

Illness: A written doctor's release is required before an athlete may resume play after an injury in which the athlete was under a doctor's care. A written doctor's release may be required at the discretion of the Athletic Director and Administration.

15.0 AWARDS

Awards and celebrations may be celebrated after the end of each season but are not required. Certificates and awards can be given out to recognize a student's participation in a particular sport. It is the parent's responsibility to organize any activities for any awards or celebrations. Coaches are not responsible for award programs.

16.0 TRANSPORTATION

Parents are responsible for transportation arrangements. Coaches are not responsible for transporting students by car or arranging for transportation by car.

17.0 COACHES

In order to participate in any Holy Ghost School athletic function as a coach, each individual must fulfill the requirements mandated by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops and the Diocese of Baton Rouge.

Coaches are selected by the athletic director with assistance from school administration 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 but are not limited to:

- 1) Meeting with the athletic directors prior to holding tryouts
- 2) Having **ALL** written communication approved by the athletic director before being sent home
- 3) Furnishing parents with written information regarding tryouts, practices, schedules, expectations, and other requirements
- 4) Scheduling practices and securing a practice facility in coordination with the athletic director
- 5) Training students on proper use and care of equipment, uniforms, and other property
- 6) Upholding the athletic policies of the school
- 7) Participating in any required training clinics
- 8) Being familiar with the policies outlined in the Athletic Handbook
- 9) Submitting an inventory of all equipment, uniforms, etc. for their team(s) prior to and at the completion of each season
- 10) Checking out any school equipment needed for individual use to the students at the beginning of the season
- 11) Requiring that all school equipment checked to the students be returned clean and on time at the end of the season
- 12) Assisting the athletic director in obtaining the necessary volunteers to man the concessions stand and the gate.

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

18.0 PARENTS

During practices and games, it is imperative that parents follow the guidelines listed below.

1. Observe the “24 Hour Cushion”. Holy Ghost coaches will naturally and deliberately reflect on game situations and decisions. Please allow coaches the time they need to process their decisions before approaching them with any questions. Coaches will not discuss playing time, coaching strategies and specific plays, or information pertaining to other athletes.
2. Support and encourage all players at all times.
3. Place the emotional and physical well being of all players ahead of any personal desire to win.
4. Ensure that players are on time to all practices and games.
5. Refrain from talking about and criticizing the coaches and/or players.
6. Keep sideline comments positive. Cheer and encourage the team during the game. Never criticize the officials, your child, the coach, his/her teammates, or opponents.
7. Do not shout instructions to any player on the field/court.
8. Do not come onto the field/court during the game unless it is a medical emergency.
9. Be proactive. Get involved in your child’s team and Holy Ghost in general. There are several opportunities to volunteer to make our school and athletic department better.

20.0 TEAM SELECTION

Students in grades 5th-8th are eligible to be selected to a Varsity team. Only students in 5th and 6th grades are eligible to be selected to a Junior Varsity team. Students in 4th grade may be eligible to be selected to a Junior Varsity team at the coach’s discretion. All team selection results will be posted by student number rather than name. Any questions concerning team selection should be addressed to the athletic director.

21.0 PARTICIPATION REQUIREMENT AND FEES

There will be a parent's meeting at the beginning of each sport season for parents to meet the coach(es) and gather and receive necessary information. The athlete will need to turn in the following items before try-outs/practice begins: a completed physical signed by the athlete’s physician, a signed sport/activity consent form, and proof of insurance before the student will be allowed to practice. Participation fees are not due until the student makes the team. Participation fee must be provided before the student will be allowed to practice. Fees are non-refundable.

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:

Flag Football:	\$125.00	Basketball:	\$125.00
Volleyball:	\$100.00	Track & Field:	\$80.00
Baseball:	\$125.00	Soccer:	\$125.00
Softball:	\$125.00	Cross Country:	\$80.00
*3/4 th Basketball:	\$100.00	Golf:	\$25.00

If uniforms and equipment are not returned to the athletic director by the due date requested, a hold will be placed on the student's report card and a replacement fee will be charged to the student's school account. Uniforms must be returned or paid for before the athlete will be eligible to participate in another sport. Any uniform returned not cleaned will be assessed a \$35.00 cleaning fee.

PARENT/STUDENT CONTRACTUAL AGREEMENT

I have read the 2023-24 Holy Ghost Catholic School Athletic Handbook in its entirety. I am aware of the policies and expectations of the school and agree to be governed by the policies stated herein. Discretionary Clause: Although the rules set forth in our handbook address the frequent rule violations of student-athletes, parents, and coaches, the school reserves the right to vary the discipline procedures on individual circumstances. The school also has the right to pass judgment on behaviors, not specified in our Handbook, which are clear violations to the values on which we are established as a Catholic, Christian school.

Parent Name _____ *Parent Signature* _____

Parent Name _____ *Parent Signature* _____

Date _____ *Homeroom Teacher* _____