



St. Alphonsus Athletics Handbook

2026-2027

MISSION

St. Alphonsus School is a community of faith which shares in the teaching of Christ as proclaimed by the Catholic Church. Athletics can be an important part of a young person's life. It teaches discipline and self-pride while helping one realize the importance of cooperation. Athletics are a part of the overall school program and interact with the spiritual, social and academic components. St. Alphonsus School recognizes that support from the administration, faculty, staff, coaches, parents and fans are necessary in providing a Catholic athletic experience for the student athlete.

CSAA MISSION AND PHILOSOPHY

The Catholic Schools Athletic Association (CSAA) provides an organized structure of interscholastic athletic programs for the students of the schools of the Diocese of Baton Rouge to participate. The CSAA emphasizes fair competition, developing character and good sportsmanship, building teams as moral communities, and encouraging talent.

Administrators of the Catholic elementary and middle schools of the Diocese of Baton Rouge consider and use the uniqueness of the schools' circumstances to provide the best Catholic education possible for their students. Catholic schools in the Diocese of Baton Rouge endeavor to Evangelize Hearts, Educate Minds, Encourage Talent, and Embrace the Future for all students within their schools. Within this basic tenet, the priority of such schools is the overall development and growth of each of their students--spiritually, socially, mentally, emotionally, and physically. CSAA-sponsored interscholastic athletic programs shall provide a medium by which students can:

- Develop an awareness of their abilities
- Learn and improve their athletic skills
- Acquire the true meaning of and practice sportsmanship
- Be a part of a team effort
- Enhance their self-esteem and feelings of belonging
- 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, parents, and fans are necessary components in nurturing a positive Catholic athletic experience.

SAS ATHLETIC PROGRAMS

FALL SPORTS:

- Tackle Football: Grades 3rd – 8th
- Girls Basketball: Grades 3rd – 8th
- Cheerleading: Grades 3rd – 8th
- Dance: Grades 6th-8th

WINTER/SPRING SPORTS:

- Boys Basketball: Grades 3rd – 8th
- Middle School Soccer: Grades 5th– 8th (Baton Rouge Soccer Club)
- Girls Volleyball: Grades 5th – 8th
- Track & Field: Grades 5th – 8th

FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT

St. Alphonsus School facilities and equipment utilized through participation in athletics should be treated with respect and are bound by the rules and agreements set forth by administration. It is our responsibility as Christians to be good stewards of the blessings God has bestowed upon us. Our expectation is that students, coaches, parents, and spectators will treat all SAS facilities and equipment with respect.

****The use of all facilities must be approved by the Athletic Director. ****

STUDENT ELIGIBILITY

To be eligible for extra-curricular activities, students must maintain prescribed standards of achievement in academics and conduct.

- Report cards issued immediately before the beginning of the sport will be used to determine eligibility. The student should have a passing grade in every subject and at least a 2.0 grade point average. The conduct grade must be at least a C.
- To determine eligibility in an activity that begins before the first 9 weeks report card, the final grades from the previous year will be used. The grade point average must be at least a 2.0 for the year with a 75 C in conduct.
- During the season, if a student's conduct grade falls below a C, that student will immediately be placed on probation. A decision will be made by the athletic director on the plan of disciplinary action and possible suspension or removal from the sport.
- If a report card is issued during the season, it will be used to determine continued eligibility.
- The school administration may choose to remove a student from an activity at any point in the school year.

PLAYER PARTICIPATION

In any sport, participation in games may be based on attendance and participation at practice, attendance at games, conduct and attitude.

- A student who is absent from school because of illness will not be able to attend practices or games that day.
- If a student cannot participate in PE (has a note from the doctor), he/she will not be allowed to participate in sports related activities that day.
- A student may be checked out of school after 1:00pm for a scheduled appointment and still participate in practices or games. If a student checks out sick, he/she may not participate that day.
- There will be consequences for detentions issued at school. This will vary according to sport and will be determined by the athletic director.
- If a student is suspended from school, he/she will not participate in practices or games from the time the suspension is issued until he/she is admitted back to school. If the suspension is on a Friday, he/she will not participate in any weekend school-related activities.
- In order for a student to participate in games, he/she must attend practice regularly.

EXPECTATIONS

Student athletes are expected to conduct themselves in a sportsmanlike manner and represent St. Alphonsus school to the best of their ability. The coach, the athletic director, or school administration may discipline an athlete who fails to do so. Discipline will be administered in accordance with the action committed, which may include game suspensions or dismissal from the program.

Parents are expected to conduct themselves in a manner which best exemplifies a Christian attitude. Parents are leaders by their actions. Any parent who physically or verbally abuses an official, coach or player will be asked to leave the facility. A parent's actions could result in the inability to attend school athletic events. Parent actions are a direct reflection of the St. Alphonsus School and Church Community.

PROGRAM GUIDELINES

- Once a student commits to participate in a particular sport, he/she must continue to play that sport for the entire season. If a student decides not to participate, the registration fees will not be refunded.
- The respective coaches for each sport will communicate with the parents regarding practice times and locations. Practices should not be held on Sunday before 12pm to allow each family their respective spiritual time. Any practice held on a Sunday or during a holiday must be approved by the Athletic Director. The Athletic Director will distribute a game schedule to the coaches as well as placing it on the school website.
- The guidelines for CSAA 8th grade volleyball and basketball, as well as 3rd-8th football state that there is no mandatory playing time. In those sports, coaches will make every effort to provide an adequate amount of playing time to make the players feel a part of the team effort.

PARENT RESPONSIBILITIES

As a parent of a student athlete, you agree to and understand the following regulations:

- **Parent Pledge** – As a parent/guardian, I acknowledge that I am a role model. I will remember that school athletics is an extension of the classroom, offering learning experiences for the students. I must show respect for all players, coaches, spectators and support staff. I understand the spirit of fair play and good sportsmanship expected by our school and its leagues. I hereby accept my responsibility to be a model of good sportsmanship that comes with being the parent/guardian of a student athlete.
- **Uniform Contract** – I understand that I am responsible for the upkeep and maintenance of my athlete's uniform. I agree to turn in the uniform items in the condition they were received or in an acceptable condition. Removal of tags, writing your athlete's name on

the uniform, and placing tape on or in the uniform is prohibited. I understand that failure to return equipment or the returning of equipment in a usable condition will result in paying for the replacement.

- **Return to Participation** – I understand that it is required that any athlete who has been removed from practice, by a coach or “self-imposed”, for medical reasons must provide a doctor’s note clearing them to practice again. If a note is not provided, the athlete in question will not be able to return to athletics until clearance by a medical professional is given. This is in place for the safety of your child, other athletes, visiting school athletes and all faculty, staff, volunteers, and coaches.
- **Parent Participation**– I understand that it is required as a parent of a student athlete to help support the program by working gate, concessions, and line judging (volleyball) at home sporting events. The Athletic Director will assign parents in a way that is most conducive to allowing parents to participate while also watching their child compete.
 - **Facilities** - The parents of the team who plays last in the gym each night has the responsibility of helping the site supervisor with putting away chairs, sweeping the floor, cleaning the bleachers and any other tasks to keep our facilities nice.
- **Communication** – I understand that it is the coach’s responsibility to make decisions related to playing time, positions, strategy and overall team well-being. I pledge to have respectful communications related to the appropriate topics listed above.

COMMUNICATION

Parent/Coach Communication

Parenting and coaching are both extremely important and challenging vocations. By establishing an understanding of each position, we are better able to accept the actions of the other and provide a greater formation to our children. As parents, when your child is involved in our program, you have the right to understand what expectations are placed on him/her. This begins with clear communication from the coach of the sport.

Communication coaches expect from athletes & parents:

- Concerns expressed directly to the coach.
- Notification of any schedule conflicts in advance (24 hours min.)
- Notification of illness or injury as soon as possible

Discussing concerns with coaches:

As students become involved in programs at school, they will experience some of the most rewarding moments of their lives. It is important to understand that there also may be times when our students experience challenges and struggles. At these times, discussion with the coach is encouraged. It is the first and most integral step to cultivate understanding and to find a resolution.

The following topics are appropriate for discussion:

- The treatment of your child.
- Ways to help your child improve.
- Concerns about your child's behavior.

Parents care deeply about their children and want the best for them. Coaches also want the best for their players. They make decisions based on what they believe to be best for all student athletes involved in their sport. As you have seen from the list above, certain things can be and should be discussed with your child's coach.

The three items listed below should be left to the discretion of the coach:

- Playing time, positioning and event entry.
- Team strategies, game tactics, play calling.
- Discussion about other student athletes.

There are situations that may require a conference between the coach and player, or coach and parent. It is important that all parties involved have a clear understanding of the other person's position. When a conference is necessary, the following procedure should be used to help resolve any concerns.

- Parent / Coach Discussion
- Parent / Athletic Director Discussion
- Parent / Administration Discussion

Please do not attempt to confront a coach before or after a game or practice. These can be emotional times for both the parent and the coach.

SKILLS ASSESSMENT

A skills assessment for boys basketball, girls basketball, and volleyball will be held only if more than one team is needed. A date prior to the official season start date designated by the Athletic Director.

- A skills assessment day for the above sports will be scheduled if more than one team is needed. A date prior to the official season start date designated by the Athletic Director.
- 3rd- 5th (for basketball) 5th (for volleyball) will be divided evenly based on skill to give both groups an equal opportunity to grow and develop throughout the season.
- 6th-8th grades will be divided into JV and Varsity based on their current skill levels.
- All evaluators at skills assessment will be non-parents of the athletes they are assessing and parents are not allowed to attend skills assessment.

- In cases where the Athletic Committee has knowledge of a non-volunteer coach providing outside training/lessons to participating St. Alphonsus students, those coaches will be removed from the selection process at assessments.

FORMATION OF TEAMS

- At the conclusion of the assessment, the Athletic Director, along with the evaluation team, will form all teams.
- All developmental teams will be formed with the intent of each team being equally competitive and with similar talent levels.
- Varsity teams will be formed with the intent to place the top talent from that grade level on a team.
- Junior Varsity teams will be formed with the intent of each team being equally competitive and with similar talent levels.

TOURNAMENTS

- The Athletic Director will ask for volunteers to be part of the tournament committee to help run the tournament. The Athletic Director, along with the Athletic Committee, reserve the right to cancel a tournament should not enough volunteers sign up. Parent participation is required for tournaments to be successful.
- It is the responsibility of the site supervisor to oversee and execute all tournament details related to decorations, concessions, music, awards, volunteers, etc. The Athletic director will oversee team registration, facility scheduling and officials.
- The school will fund up to two tournaments per sporting season. If parents wish to attend more than two tournaments the parents of that team must pay the tournament entry fees.

ALL COACHES

- All new coaches will be interviewed, vetted and selected by the Athletic Director.
- All coaches will be required to read the St. Alphonsus Athletic Handbook and sign the acknowledgement page.
- All coaches will be required to undergo official child protection certification through the diocese.
- All coaches are mandated reporters and should follow proper protocol should a concern or incident arise.
- Coaches shall conduct themselves in a professional and respectful manner at all practices, games, and school-sponsored athletic events.
- Coaches acknowledge that the Athletic Director and Principal retain final authority over all athletic events and related decisions.

CSAA Code of Conduct

PLAYERS will always

- follow the regulations set up by the CSAA, the school, and the church parish.
- respect the judgment of officials and abide by the rules of the contests. Technical fouls, unsportsmanlike conduct penalties, and ejections are never acceptable.
- treat opposing players, coaches, fans, and officials with respect.
- conduct themselves in a positive manner, reflecting Catholic Christian values.
- adhere to the decisions of the league manager, school principal, and pastor of the parish.

COACHES will always

- follow the regulations set up by the CSAA, the school, and the church parish.
- respect the judgment of officials and abide by the rules of the contests. Arguing with officials, technical fouls, unsportsmanlike conduct penalties, and ejections are never acceptable.
- set a good example for players and fans to follow, exemplifying the highest moral and ethical behavior.
- treat opposing players, coaches, fans, and officials with respect.
- instruct players in proper sportsmanship and demand they behave accordingly.
- coach in a positive manner, encouraging players through positive reinforcement.

- be drug-, alcohol-, and tobacco-free at all CSAA practices and games.
- ensure that my behavior and actions are always representative of the moral community that I am charged with building.
- adhere to the decisions of the league manager, school principal, and pastor of the parish.

SPECTATORS will always

- respect decisions made by contest officials and never publicly criticize their work.
- be a role model for our youth by positively supporting teams and not shouting instructions or criticism to the players or coaches.
- remember that the players are children and are playing for their enjoyment, not mine.
- not make derogatory comments or gestures to players, coaches, spectators of the opposing team, officials, or game administrators.
- be drug-, alcohol-, and tobacco-free at all CSAA games.
- ensure that my behavior and actions are always representative of my commitment to the mission and philosophy of the CSAA.
- adhere to the decisions of the league manager, school principal, and pastor of the parish.

ENFORCEMENT

Each coach, player and parent must sign the Code of Conduct Agreement prior to participation in any CSAA activity. Violations of this code may result in coaches, players, and/or spectators being suspended from participation in CSAA activities or additional penalties as explained under the sanctions section of the CSAA Handbook. My signature below indicates that I have read the CSAA Code of Conduct and agree to follow these guidelines in my presence and participation at CSAA events.

HANDBOOK ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FORM

I hereby acknowledge that I have read and agree to the handbook.

Print Student-Athlete Name:

Student-Athlete Signature:

Print Parent Name:

Parent Signature:

Date:
