

ARCHBISHOP SPALDING HIGH SCHOOL

Athletic Handbook

For

Student-Athletes and Parents

Athletic Department Philosophy:

The Athletic Department at Archbishop Spalding High School views interscholastic athletics as an opportunity for student participation in an organized, competitive environment. While the ultimate goal of athletic competition is to know victory, the achievement of objectives such as fair play, sportsmanship, skill acquisition, and work ethic cannot be overlooked. Winning traditions are founded upon the concepts of pride, respect, dedication, character and loyalty. Coaches, athletes, and parents alike must strive to ensure that the athletic teams at Archbishop Spalding represent themselves in a manner that is conducive to both competitive spirit and good sportsmanship.

ATHLETIC HANDBOOK

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Archbishop Spalding High School Athletic Department

“Athletic Chain of Command”

Principal
Athletic Director
Head Coach
Assistant / JV Coaches
Players

**** If there are any questions or concerns regarding any aspect of the Player–Coach Relationship, the athlete should first contact the appropriate coach. If there is no resolution at this level, he/she should then move onward to the next level in the “Chain of Command” hierarchy, until resolution is achieved. (*The “Chain of Command” is a step by step process bringing together the primary individuals for discussion purposes. Each level is in place in order to assist in the process of conflict resolution.*) Parents are also asked to respect this “Chain of Command” model regarding problem resolution.

INTRODUCTION

Athletic Handbook for Athletes and Parents

Interscholastic Athletics can be a fun, rewarding, and memorable part of the high school experience. While academics offer the primary source for formal education, athletics can contribute to the total value of that education in many different ways. Building upon the concepts of teamwork, fair play, sportsmanship, and self-esteem, athletics can help to provide for a well-rounded educational experience. **Athletic participation is a privilege and not a right. To those who strive to succeed in the classroom comes the privilege to compete outside of it.**

Being an athlete or the parent of an athlete is often a very challenging ordeal. Sometimes this relationship can become complicated due to the nature and structure of athletics in general. It is the intent of this Athletic Handbook to provide some insights as to the role and responsibilities that athletes and parents face and share, separately and together, in the realm of high school athletic participation.

The interscholastic (high school) sport experience is much different than the recreational sport experience. **Whereas recreational sport philosophy stresses equal participation by all, at the interscholastic level playing time is earned and not guaranteed.** Student-athletes earn playing time through good work ethics in practice, skill development, sportsmanship, and overall team attitude.

Likewise, not all who tryout for a given team will endure through the final selection process, to make the team roster. **Coaches are responsible for the selection of team rosters and for the determination of playing time for those on the team.**

Activities held in the off season, whether it be for weight training and conditioning, team camps, summer / fall leagues, specialized training, or any other type of out of season participation, can in no way affect an athlete's ability to try out for or participate (playing time) on an **in season team**. Participation in any out of season activity is strictly **voluntary** on the part of the athlete. **Coaches may not mandate nor pass judgment based upon out of season participation.**

A parent reserves the right to send his/her child to any out of season source for the purpose of conditioning, training, or specialized instruction. **Participation in Spalding based out of season opportunities are simply that: Opportunities!**

SECTION A: Relationships

Player-Coach Relationship:

All too often during athletic events, situations arise where many adults become too involved in the game in progress, professing to know more than the coaches or even the officials in charge. While this expertise may heighten a person's appreciation for a particular sport, it in no way changes the status of the individual as a parent-spectator. You should be there only to observe and enjoy the athletic performance.

The player-coach relationship is perhaps the most critical of all relationships in athletics. Parents can have a very profound effect upon this important and delicate balance. While you as a parent may not agree with all decisions that a coach may make, how and when you express your feelings can have a decided effect upon your child. If you express a negative opinion in front of your child, you need to remember that he or she may carry your convictions to the next practice or game. This in turn can lead to a player-coach confrontation. You as a parent have great influence upon this delicate relationship. Please allow the coaches to do the job for which they were hired.

Coaches are expected to be leaders to their players and role models for their players. They are expected to teach and guide the players who play for them. They are not there to be friends or buddies. Coaches must demand respect from their players and give respect to their players in return. **Concepts such as integrity, and character, and sportsmanship provide the foundation upon which our coaching philosophy is based.**

Parent-Coach Relationship:

As a parent you obviously want what is best for your child. Allowing the coach to guide and instruct the team is crucial. Again, you are asked to please allow the coach to do his/her job.

Should you have any questions or concerns, do not approach the coach immediately after a game. At this time, coaches have other responsibilities and it may be a very emotional moment. Call and make an appointment for a later time and approach this meeting in a calm and logical manner.

For many coaches, one of the post-game responsibilities is to meet with his/her players. Athletes should not be expected to stop and talk to parents and friends immediately after a game is over. These team meetings are essential to the learning process and are important in efforts to build team unity and understanding.

Parent-Player Relationship:

Sometimes parents may try to re-live their own athletic memories through the real life athletic efforts of their children. Being positive and supportive is very important, but adding pressure and unrealistic expectations may be extremely harmful. Allow your child to enjoy and to grow and to take responsibility for his/her athletic experiences. Encourage your child to give 100% effort and to become a team player, not an individual statistic seeker. In the end, it is the child's perception of the game that really matters, not that of the parents.

Relationship With Game Officials:

It is often the case that if a game is seemingly leaning toward one side over the other, irate fans will infer an unfair advantage given by the officials. The home school does not select the officials. A sport commissioner assigns all officials and neither team has a say in which officials are assigned to a given game or contest. Game officials agree to and follow a code of conduct and ethics. They really do not have a vested interest in which team emerges victorious. It is very essential to understand that officials are an integral part of the game.

While you may not agree with all of their calls, please do not harass and taunt game officials. Parents are supposed to be good role models for their children. Remember that officials are in charge of the game and have complete authority to have unruly spectators removed. Many times a given team may see the same officials on several occasions throughout the course of a season. Coaches, Athletic Directors and School Administrators work hard to establish good working relationships with game officials, which can be easily damaged or destroyed by spectator interference.

So please let the players play, let the coaches coach, let the officials officiate, and let the spectators be positive."

SECTION B: Responsibilities

Responsibilities of the Athlete:

Athletes are expected to adhere to the following guidelines

1. The team's goals and success should always come before individual interests.
2. Athletes need to be in attendance at all scheduled practices and games, including weekends and holiday breaks.
3. Athletes must be receptive to coaching styles.
4. Team members are responsible for all issued uniforms and equipment.
5. Athletes are responsible for the security of all personal items. Use assigned lockers.
6. As a team member an athlete must abide by established team rules.
7. All injuries must be reported to the coach and to the Athletic Trainer.
8. Strive for academic success in order to assure athletic eligibility.
9. Take pride in being a student-athlete at Archbishop Spalding

Responsibilities of the Coach:

Coaches are responsible for all of the following:

1. Running fair tryouts and using an effective evaluation process.
2. Determining the style of play, including offensive and defensive philosophy.
3. Teaching, instructing, and overseeing all practice sessions.
4. Determining starting lineups and making decisions regarding playing time.
5. Selecting position players.
6. Establishing and enforcing team and school rules.
7. Selection of team captains.
8. Coordinating communication with players and parents with regards to games and practices.
9. Provide appropriate supervision at all times (before, during, after all games and practices).
10. Presenting themselves as appropriate role models.
11. Be willing and available to discuss player-coach or parent-coach issues.
12. Be consistent, fair, and respectful of individual differences.
13. Develop team and individual objectives and goals.
14. Foster a healthy atmosphere for athletic competition.
15. Lead by example.

****** It is important to remember that participation on an athletic team is a privilege and not a right. Being part of and maintaining one's membership on a given team means accepting all the responsibilities of an athlete. Unlike recreational or intramural teams, equal or guaranteed playing time is not assured. Coaches will make the necessary decisions and utilize those players best suited to the conditions or demands of the particular contest on any given day.**

Post Practice – Game Responsibilities:

Athletes should not be loitering on school property after practices or games. In an effort to avoid potential risk of injury, property damage, or theft, the following responsibilities have been established.

For the Coach:

1. Call in game results
2. Secure all equipment, locker rooms, and appropriate facilities.
3. Supervise locker rooms, lobbies and hallways until all athletes have vacated.

For the Athlete:

1. Arrange in advance for transportation after practices or games.
2. Leave school property within one half hour after the end of practices / games.
3. Do not leave personal property unattended or unsecured.

SECTION C: Sportsmanship

Sportsmanship Procedures: The School's Role:

It is the expectation of Archbishop Spalding High School, and more specifically the Athletic Department, that everyone in the Spalding community will conform to and demonstrate good sportsmanship and fair play during all athletic contests. This concept is presented to the staff and to the athletes throughout the school year.

1. At the General Staff Meeting in August sportsmanship is addressed with all current year coaches.
2. Once team rosters have been established each team is addressed by the Athletic Director regarding sportsmanship expectations and procedures.
3. The student body is reminded of sportsmanship at all Pep Rallies and other athletic activities.
4. The Sports Boosters Club is addressed as to the need for good sportsmanship.
5. The sportsmanship slogan is posted and announced at all home games.
6. Student-athletes sign an "Athlete's Pledge" form. (downloadable)

****** The Athletic Department at Archbishop Spalding High School views the need for good sportsmanship as a very important issue. We will continue in our efforts to assure that every student-athlete understands that need as well.**

Sportsmanship: The Parent's Role:

Since the concept of athletics should be educational in nature, it is important that all parents demonstrate good sportsmanship and serve as role models for our students and athletes. *"Sportsmanship is an overt display of respect for the rules of sport and for all others – players, coaches, officials, and fans". (National Federation News, March 1995, p.10)* It also involves a commitment to fair play, ethical behavior, and integrity. This means that:

1. Vulgar or inappropriate language from fans is not tolerated nor permitted.
2. Taunting or trash talking with opponents or with their fans is not tolerated.
3. Spectators may not leave the bleachers or step onto the court or field of play during a game or contest.
4. Fans should be supportive and positive. Cheering should be done for our team, not against our opponent.
5. Fans should not interfere with the opponent's cheerleaders preventing them from leading their cheers.
6. Fans should let the officials officiate. Remember it is after all, only a game.

THE ATHLETE'S PLEDGE

***At Archbishop Spalding sportsmanship is an expectation.
So please let the Players play. The Coaches coach. Let the
Officials officiate. And let the Spectators be positive.***

As an athlete at Archbishop Spalding High School

I promise to:

- Represent my school, my coaches, my teammates and myself
in a manner which is appropriate and just.***
- Maintain a healthy and competitive approach to athletics.***
- Accept responsibility for my actions both on the playing field
and in the classroom.***
- Lead by example in the areas of self-respect and respect for others.***
- Compete to the best of my abilities.***
- Refrain from the use of prohibited substances such as steroids, drugs,
alcohol, and tobacco products.***
- Demonstrate good sportsmanship and fair play at all times***
- Understand that academics take priority over athletics.***
- Thank Jesus Christ for granting me good health and athleticism.***

Signature: _____ **Sport:** _____ **Date:** _____

SECTION D: Important Participation Information

Risks Associated with Athletic Participation:

The very nature of athletic competition provides for potential risk and injury to occur. Even with protective equipment, proper supervision, and sound instruction, injuries still do happen. In extremely rare cases, even death could result. All athletes and parents need to be aware of the potential hazards that exist within the athletic arena. We in the Archbishop Spalding Athletic Department will always do whatever we can to ensure that our athletes have a safe and healthy athletic experience.

Pre-Tryout Eligibility Checklist:

Athletes and their parents have certain responsibilities to uphold even before tryouts begin. All of the following requirements must be satisfied before any student will be allowed to tryout, practice, or participate on an athletic team at Archbishop Spalding.

Physical Examination Form: This form must be completed, signed by the parents/guardians and the physician and submitted to the Athletic Trainer's Office to be kept on file. Athletes' must have a "current year" physical exam form on file in order to be cleared and eligible for athletic participation. It is suggested that physical exams be scheduled over the summer months so the entire school year will be cleared for athletic participation. **(downloadable form)**

1. **Athletic Permit Form:** This form must be completed and signed by the parents/guardians. Sports to be played should be indicated as well as all applicable insurance information. This form should be submitted to the Athletic Trainer's Office **(downloadable form)**
2. **Student-Parent Compliance Form:** This form must be signed by both the athlete and his/her parents/ guardians as evidence of reading and understanding the information contained in the Athletic Handbook. Athletes who tryout and are selected as team members must bring this form with them to the pre-season Meet the Coaches night for their sport. This meeting is mandatory for rostered players and their parents. **Failure to attend this meeting and to submit this Compliance Form will result in the athlete being rendered ineligible for participation.** **(downloadable form)**

Sport Tryouts:

1. All Pre-tryout Checklist Eligibility items must have been completed
2. All athletes should be given a fair and equitable tryout evaluation
3. Coaches should utilize an evaluation tool in order to keep track of strengths and weaknesses of those trying out for their sport
4. Efforts evaluated over the tryout period are the most important factors used to determine team selection. **Out of season workouts, camps, or other sport participation are not considered as criteria for selecting team rosters.**
5. Not everyone who tries out for a team will make it through to the final selection process. **Coaches are responsible for selecting final team rosters and determining playing time during the season.**

Expectations of Rostered Players:

All athletes, who after tryouts, are selected as final rostered players must agree to the following:

1. Agree to sign the “Athlete’s Pledge”. As a rostered student athlete you are expected to serve as role models for others. Efforts in the classroom are just as important as efforts on the field. Respect and responsibility are go hand in hand. You lead by example when it comes to sportsmanship.
2. As a rostered student athlete you agree to comply with all school and team rules
3. As a rostered student athlete you agree to maintain academic and disciplinary eligibility throughout the season.

Practice Sessions and Games:

Practice sessions may be closed to spectators at the discretion of the coaches. These sessions are the equivalent of a teacher’s classroom and there is real instruction taking place. Interference and interruptions to an athlete’s concentration and focus in practice cannot be allowed any more than a disruption would be tolerated in an academic classroom. Coaching should not be compromised.

Practice Sessions:

1. May last up to, but not more than two and one half hours. (after tryouts)
2. May start and end at different times due to the schedule of coaches and or the availability of our facilities.
3. Will not be held when school is dismissed early or closed due to inclement weather.
4. May be held in the evening, on weekends, and over holiday break periods.
5. Attendance is mandatory. Lateness will not be tolerated.

6. Under no circumstances may practices be held on Sunday's before 12:00pm
7. Athletes may not be penalized for missed practice time in order to gain academic help or to make up missed tests or quizzes.

Eligibility; Academic or Disciplinary:

The student athletes at Archbishop Spalding High School are here for their education first and foremost. Athletic participation is a privilege and granted only to those who are deserving of this opportunity. Problems with grades and or behavior are justifiable reasons for Academic or Disciplinary Ineligibility. Athletes are expected to:

1. Maintain a cumulative academic average of no less than 2.0
2. Meet all academic criteria for eligibility as stated in the Student Handbook
3. Remain in good disciplinary standing.
4. Attend school on time in order to be eligible to practice or play on a daily basis.

****** Please refer to the Student Handbook for specific interpretations of all Academic and Disciplinary Eligibility procedures and regulations.**

Uniforms and Equipment:

At the beginning of each season, the Head Coach distributes all necessary uniforms and equipment. As an athlete you are responsible for the care and return of all issued goods at the end of the season. The Head Coach will determine the collection times. **Failure to return uniforms or equipment will result in an extracurricular ineligibility and a financial obligation for replacement of the outstanding items.**

Changing Teams:

In fairness to coaches and team members, an athlete can leave one team and join another but only after the following conditions have been satisfied.

- 1 Any player cut from a team during tryouts may immediately tryout for another team if that team has not already completed its scheduled tryouts.
2. Any player quitting a team must have the original coach's approval to try out for another team. All uniform and equipment obligations must be met before approval can be given.
3. Any player dismissed from a team must have the original coach's and the Athletic Director's approval before joining another team.

****** According to league rules:**

MIAA Athletes participating on an In Season team cannot participate with another Out of Season team.

IAAM A student must complete one season's play before being permitted to participate in tryouts or practices for the next season.

Transportation:

Athletes must travel as a team to athletic contests, on the bus provided. Once a game is over athletes are expected to return to school as a team, on the bus provided. (Proper behavior is expected of all athletes when on bus trips)

The only exception to this rule is if a parent wishes to take his/her own child home with them. Arrangements must be made in advance if a parent will be transporting someone else's child. Notice must be received, by the coach, in writing from the other parents at least 24 hours prior to the event.

Athletes may drive to a game with written parental permission only. Permission letters must be received, by the coach, at least 24 hours in advance of the event.

Off Site Practices and Games:

In some sports such as ice hockey, swimming, golf, tennis and cheerleading, off campus facilities are used. Transportation is an issue that must be organized and planned. Spalding does not have the budget to provide daily transportation for these activities so parental assistance, coaches as drivers, or individual driving may be necessary. Again, parental permission is essential in response to any transportation issues outside of normal team transport (buses)

Early Dismissals:

For many athletic events students must be dismissed from school before normal dismissal times. Early dismissal from classes for athletic reasons does not release student athletes from class-work responsibilities. Each athlete must make arrangements for getting assignments, taking missed quizzes or tests, or handing in homework. Athletes will have 15 minutes from dismissal until bus departure.

Lateness / Absenteeism:

As per the School's Student Handbook, absence of more than four academic periods in one day will be considered as a full day's absence and the student will be unable to participate in extracurricular activities that day. (This includes practices and games) A student who is dismissed from school early due to illness is also unable to return to school to participate in extracurricular activities that day.

Dress for Away Athletic Events:

Because our student athletes are ambassadors of our school each time they leave our campus, it is expected that their appearance will be appropriate. Teams that do not dress in their sport uniform before leaving campus are to be in school uniform. Warm ups over top of non athletic team uniforms are not allowed.

Game Jerseys on Home Game Days:

Due to the abuse of the game day jersey procedures and the non-impact upon home game attendance, Spalding will not be supporting the continuation of this process in the future. All athletes will be in school uniforms everyday, unless otherwise advised.

Injuries:

Any time that an athlete becomes injured in a practice or game setting, the head coach should be made aware and an accident report completed by the coach and athlete. The Athletic Trainer should be advised of the injury by the coach, the athlete should see the Trainer, and the Trainer will recommend a prescribed course of action to be taken.

A visit to a Doctor will yield a determined return to play date. No athlete will be allowed to participate further until that date is reached and a note of clearance is issued by the attending physician and received by the Athletic Trainer.

Athletic Awards:

Varsity letters and pins and JV numerals and stars will be awarded at the completion of each sport season. Seasonal Athletic Award Ceremonies will be held for this purpose. Attendance at these ceremonies is mandatory if you are to receive your awards.

In order to qualify for post-season awards the student athlete must have completed the season in good standing and have fulfilled all team obligations. (including return of uniforms and equipment)

SECTION E: Associated Items of Information

Steroids:

The Archbishop Spalding Athletic Department does not condone the use of prohibited substances such as steroids, nor support the use of other over the counter supplements which contain artificial or naturally occurring substances that increase heart rate, blood pressure, or promote unhealthy muscle tissue growth. **Use of any of these products, which may be detrimental to your health, is a violation of the Athlete's Pledge.**

Drugs, Alcohol and Tobacco:

School rules are very specific as to the use of drugs, alcohol and tobacco products. The use of or possession / distribution of any of these substances is forbidden. Athletes who violate this "no use" policy are subject to possible dismissal from athletic teams. **Use of any of these products, which may be detrimental to your health, is a violation of the Athlete's Pledge.**

Theft:

Stealing will not be tolerated under any circumstances, whether it be from teammates, opponents, or others. Any athlete involved in a theft will be immediately dismissed from his/her team and normal disciplinary procedures will be imposed. This is a zero tolerance policy. Do not leave personal items unattended or unsecured in locker rooms or hallways. Take personal items to practice with you, if necessary. (This includes team media guides, etc.)

Fund Raising:

Only school sanctioned fundraisers are permitted. All other inquiries regarding fund raising must be directed to the Office of Institutional Advancement.

Sports Boosters Club:

The Sports Boosters Club exists to support all teams of the Athletic Department at Archbishop Spalding High School. The Athletic Director serves as the liaison between the Sports Boosters and the School. The Sports Boosters run and promote various activities in effort to support the athletic program and promote school spirit and pride.

Parents are encouraged to join this organization and to become active members. The Sports Boosters Club holds monthly meetings, has several standing committees, and participates in numerous events throughout the school year.

Athletic Team Trips:

Just as the classroom is designed to provide for an educational experience the realm of sports can also be very educational. At times, athletic opportunities provide for teams to take overnight and extended team trips. The experience of travel, and the opportunity to compete, make these events valuable additions to the overall high school experience.

Student athletes are representatives of Archbishop Spalding High School and as such carry a great deal of responsibility when teams travel. Best behavior is not only requested but mandatory. All school rules apply when teams travel, and violation of school and team rules carry disciplinary consequences. Athletes should be sure to familiarize themselves with the Student Handbook, regarding rules and consequences.

In order for a team to travel certain mandates must be specified. There must be a rationale of why the trip is being considered. The trip must count in the seasonal record as a competitive event. (games, tournaments) There must be adequate and appropriate chaperones. Financial obligations must be determined and satisfied before the trip occurs. No more than 2 school days can be missed. This includes travel days. The Administration must approve the trip (Principal and Athletic Director)

College Visitation:

Student athletes are allowed, as excusable absences, one college visit during the Junior year and two visits during the Senior year. Students are responsible for any missed academic work during these visits. Coaches may not penalize an athletes for missing practice time due to a college visit.

Hazing Procedures:

The process of hazing, forced or coerced commitment of an unpleasant or undesired action, by members of a team or the coaching staff, is strictly forbidden.

Hazing activities will carry a punishment to include, possible dismissal from a team by those involved, and any other stated disciplinary procedures established by the school.

Fitness Center:

The Fitness Center is available for use by all members of the Archbishop Spalding community. During the school year the center is open for General Student use between 2:45pm and 3:30pm weekdays. Blocks of time will be established for use by teams between 3:30pm and 7:00pm. Coaches must schedule time for their teams in advance of use. Teams may only use the Fitness Center at the confirmed (supervised) times. The Fitness Center may not be used as an inclement weather location. Only those teams that have been scheduled will have access. In season teams will receive priority over out of season teams for scheduling purposes.

League Guidelines and Information

(MIAA) Maryland Interscholastic Athletic Association (Boys League)

All applicable league rules, policies and regulations can be accessed by going to the following website: www.miaasports.com

(IAAM) Interscholastic Athletic Association of Maryland (Girls League)

All applicable league rules, policies and regulations can be accessed by going to the following website: www.iaamsports.com

Conclusion Statement

It is my hope as the Athletic Director, that you will find the overall athletic experience to be worthwhile, enjoyable and a valuable contribution to the total educational process at Archbishop Spalding High School. You should be proud of your school, confident in your education, and satisfied with your athletic experience. If you can look back as a graduate of Archbishop Spalding and feel good about the overall process, then we have done our jobs correctly.

ARCHBISHOP SPALDING HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETIC HANDBOOK

Compliance Form

As a rostered student athlete and as the parents/guardians of this student athlete, we affirm that we have read and understand the contents of the “Athletic Handbook for Athletes and Parents”

We understand and will abide by the “Athletic Chain of Command”

We will strive to make the “Athletic Experience” a positive one

We will attend the mandatory pre-season Meet the Coaches meeting

Athlete Signature

Parent/Guardian Signature

Sport

Date

Date

DOWNLOADABLE ATHLETIC FORMS

- 1. Physical Exam Forms**
- 2. Athletic Consent Forms**
- 3. Student – Athlete / Parent
Athletic Handbook Compliance Form**
- 4. Athlete’s Pledge Form**

