HOLY SPIRIT PREP ATHLETICS PHILOSOPHY AND STUDENT-PARENT-COACH HANDBOOK

Athletics at Holy Spirit Prep play an essential role in the advancement of the school's mission, providing experiences that help student athletes develop physically, spiritually, emotionally, and intellectually. They exist to foster and develop character in our students, rooted in the teaching of the Catholic Church. Effort, perseverance, sportsmanship, humility, teamwork, and self-sacrifice are but a few of the incredible virtues and life skills we strive to instill in our student athletes.

Our athletics department exists to support our student athletes in their holistic development. Student athletes are encouraged to passionately compete and to pursue athletic excellence, but it is imperative that good sportsmanship always prevail and that the educational values of competition be emphasized. Participation in athletics is an integral part of the educational experience at HSP. That participation carries with it responsibilities to the student athlete's team, the student body, and to the greater HSP community.

Handbook Acknowledgement

HSP Athletics requires a Handbook Acknowledgement on file for each student, every year.

Please electronically sign the following form by using the link or scanning the QR code, prior to the first game of the season.

Acknowledgement form:
https://payit.nelnet.net/form/vkCxJwRA

Academic Eligibility

All school academic eligibility rules apply to Holy Spirit Prep athletics. Please review the relevant Student Handbooks for more information.

Athletes/Coaches/Parents/Spectators Behavioral Expectations

All athletes, parents, coaches, and spectators are expected to represent Holy Spirit Prep in an exemplary manner as outlined below. This behavior is expected both on and off the court/field/track/course. **At the end of this Handbook, there is a Sportsmanship and Handbook Acknowledgement Form that all student athletes and their parents must sign and return to their head coach before the first game/match.**

Good sportsmanship is the expectation, not the exception. The penalty for unsportsmanlike behavior during a practice or game will be left to the discretion of the coach and the Director of Athletics. This can range from sitting out at practice to suspension. In extreme cases when a student has been ejected from a game, multi-game suspensions and dismissal from the team may be appropriate. The Director of Athletics will make the final decision following a meeting with the student athlete, parent, and coach.

Athletic Event Days

Each athlete will have the opportunity to purchase gameday wear from the online store to wear only on game days. This will be uniform across all sports and will be the only alternative to the school uniform currently in use. For travel to away games, students will represent the school in a well-groomed and dignified manner. All team members will dress the same, whether in a team polo or the approved warm-up uniform of their sport. No exceptions! Deviation from this will result in disciplinary issues.

Athletic Trainer's/ Referees Rooms

No student athlete is to access the trainer's or referee's rooms without being accompanied by a trainer, coach, or someone from the Athletics Department.

Coaches' Equipment Room

There will be NO STUDENTS in the coaches' room without express consent from the athletics department. If a coach needs something from the room, they must access it themselves.

Cougar Athlete of the Week

In the Green and Gold school newsletter, we like to highlight a student athlete from each team based on their demonstrations of character, improvement, work ethic, service to others, the virtue of the month, etc. Coaches will select one student athlete per team and write a few sentences explaining why they chose the athlete. Be sure to check the Green and Gold each week to see who is selected!

End of Season Sports Celebrations/Banquets

At the conclusion of the fall and spring sports seasons, there will be official sports banquets conducted by the Athletics Department to honor all the athletes who have participated in sports throughout the year. Each coach will recognize a select number of student athletes for various team and individual awards. All high school

coaches, in conjunction with the Athletics Department, will nominate student athletes for grade-level Cougar Athlete of the Year awards as well as all school and GIAA awards for which they are eligible. Academic All Americans and any other merit-based awards will be decided on by the school's faculty and registrar's office. Any other team party and or celebration is at the discretion of the individual coach and will be funded by the parents. No official awards may be given at these gatherings.

Locker Rooms-Upper School Only

Locker room use is a privilege. It is the responsibility of **every** student athlete and coach to keep the space tidy. A team may lose their right to use the locker room if not kept orderly. Athletic equipment and uniforms that do not fit into the student athlete's hall locker should be neatly stored in a bag in the locker room during the school day. Bags must be dropped off in your assigned locker in the locker room before 8:30am. Locker rooms will be locked between 8:30am and 3:30pm. Only HSP athletic equipment and uniforms should be stored in locker rooms. Other items left in the locker room not in a locker, including other bags and loose uniform items, will be discarded at the end of each day. If a player loses his/her uniform due to it being improperly stored, they will not receive a second uniform and will therefore lose playing privileges. The school is not responsible for valuable items left unattended on campus. Each student athlete may receive one (1) locker as assigned by their coach and only the teams playing at that point in time will have access to the locker room. Any physical damage done in the locker room will be the responsibility of the player/players causing the damage and may result in discipline from the school as well as financial costs to the families of the student athlete.

Match/Meet/Game Schedule

Once they are finalized, the game schedules can be found on the Holy Spirit Prep website. Please understand that this schedule may change due to issues that are outside of our control. ***Please have your student athlete let the coaches know if they will miss a game/meet/match.*** To be eligible for an athletic event on a given school day, the student must have been in school for at least 50% of the day according to school records. School sponsored functions such as religious retreats or field trips do not count as this is only for unexcused absences or sick days.

NIL

Right now, although some state statutes are bringing high school student-athlete into their language, no student-athlete can be a professionally paid student by virtue of their identity as a student-athlete while at HSP. The high school locker room is arguably the last bastion of amateurism within an education-based setting, and we want to protect that. The purpose of high school athletics is very different from the professional level – and even the college level. High school students can enjoy some success with NIL, but it cannot be done while wearing the school uniform. Furthermore, any NIL deal that is struck must be approved in advance by the administration of the school to keep in line with the core values, principles, and overall mission of the school. Any athlete not adhering to this policy will be subject to removal from the team and additional school discipline.

Official Registration, Waiver, and Sports Fee

Everyone participating in a sport must fully register and pay the associated fee upon receiving placement on a team. This fee must be paid before a student receives their uniform and/or plays in their first game. Fees cover facility rentals, referees, uniforms, coach stipends, etc. Those who have not completed the registration process and made payment before the start of the season will not be permitted to participate in any team activities.

Parent and Student Athlete Meeting

Each team will have a parent/student athlete meeting either before or at the beginning of the season. Each coach will set up this meeting and will notify the Director of Athletics as well as students and parents as to the date it has been scheduled.

Parent Contact Information

Please make sure that you provide the correct contact information in FACTS Family Portal as well as through the relevant team registration forms.

Parent Volunteers

All parents are expected to volunteer in one capacity or another for our athletics at HSP. Some sports require more support than others and everyone must do their part to step in and assist where needed. Parent volunteers will assist with working the concession booth/stand, stocking the booth, game set up/break down, sideline help, admissions, and PA announcing, among others. Team Parent(s) and coaches will communicate volunteer needs. All families are expected to volunteer in one capacity or another and all help is greatly appreciated.

Play Like a Champion Today

The *Play Like a Champion Today Educational Series* has been crafted by leaders in the fields of educational development, sports psychology, and Catholic theology to partner with catholic schools in creating a more positive climate in sports. The series is comprised of unique and comprehensive programs designed to meet the needs of youth and high school partners by delivering research-based programs, resources, and consultation. *Play Like a Champion* is designed to elevate the culture of sport and enhance the life of each participant.

All *Play Like a Champion* programs share these important characteristics:

- *Play Like a Champion* is delivered primarily through personal interactive workshops and consultations for coaches, parents and student-athletes.
- *Play Like a Champion* establishes ownership on the part of the school or league and its key personnel through an integrative approach that involves the full range of stakeholders – coaches, parents, administrators and, ultimately, the athletes.
- *Play Like a Champion* is centered on the principles of justice, cooperation, integrity, respect and kinship.

- *Play Like a Champion* is research-based. Every aspect of the program is designed using the best "athlete-centered" practices at each age, supported by years of research into character development through sports-based education.
- *Play Like a Champion* resources are developed in collaboration with physicians as well as social scientists, philosophers, theologians, sports scientists and faculty at Notre Dame's Shaw Center for Children and Families and other universities nationally.
- Each *Play Like a Champion* program has been designed by national leaders in sports psychology, moral development, and Catholic spirituality.

Through the *Play Like a Champion Today Educational Series*, program partners are in the vanguard of a movement to transform the culture of sports and better fulfill their Catholic educational mission by fostering character development and faith formation through sports.

Physicals and Concussion Baseline Testing

Any student athlete wanting to play sports at HSP must complete a physical prior to the start of the school year and have the results uploaded into the student's SchoolDocs page. This is nonnegotiable. Also, if the student athlete is participating in a contact sport, they must additionally complete a concussion baseline test with their coach or someone from the athletics department during the first week of school.

Practices and Practice Expectations

A practice schedule will be set by the coach and given to families at the start of each season. Please note, this practice schedule is subject to change. The coaching staff will communicate any changes to you via email or other avenues of communication. **Communication is key to our team success.** It is imperative that your student athlete is at practice. Please communicate in written format with the coach if your student will be absent.

1. Students are **not allowed to miss practices or games** unless they have an excused absence approved by the coach in written format. Please communicate via email or in writing before the practice or game to obtain approval. Students are expected to **be on time**. Remember, your teammates always expect you to be there! An excused absence is defined as follows:
    a. Personal Illness (with doctor's note)
    b. Death or serious illness in the immediate family
    c. Conditions rendering school attendance impossible or hazardous to a student athlete's health or safety
    d. A pre-approved (at least one-week notice) excused absence (school function or another pre-scheduled event)
2. Athletes should be dressed and ready to practice with all required items. Don't forget to bring water and stay hydrated!

3. **Athletes are expected to stay the entire practice.** If an athlete needs to be dismissed early from practice, he/she should notify the coach at the start of practice.

St. Sebastian Society

This award exemplifies one member of the team that demonstrated and lived the virtues and values listed above on and off the field of play. These include sportsmanship, teamwork, representing HSP in a positive light, and showing respect to the other teams, players, parents, and coaches. Everyone on the team is eligible and will be voted on by the team members or chosen by the coaching staff.

Team Gear

There are additional items that your student athlete will need that are not covered by the Sports Athletic Fee. For example: tracksuits, t-shirts, sweatshirts, hats, socks, practice gear, shoes, etc. Some of these items will require purchase through our on-line vendor, BSN Sports. Each team will have their own team store set up prior to the start of their respective season. The coach will communicate what team gear is required. Parents can make purchases from the store at any time during the year to support their student athlete.

Team Parent(s)

Each team should have a Team Parent to communicate specific needs throughout the season. This could be to help coordinate pre-game meals/snacks, help with set up and break down at events, and other things throughout the season. The coach will determine their team parent(s) based on their team needs.

Transportation & Game Carpools

An approved coach or another approved HSP driver will drive the players on the Holy Spirit Prep bus when available. The Athletics Department will do their best to provide transportation for our student athletes. We will also rely on parent carpools. HSP is not responsible for coordinating carpools if a bus is not available. The HSP Cougar buses hold 14 students. In some cases, we will need additional drivers to help transport athletes to different locations. If a team bus is traveling to an away site and there is room on the bus, ALL players are required to ride the team bus. Only in the event of an overflow will students be permitted to drive separately. No student will be allowed to drive by themselves and must have at least one other teammate with them. For a student to travel separately from the rest of their team, they must both ask in advance and receive approval from the coach as well as have written permission from the parent/guardian. For any student riding with someone else and not driving, there must be written communication, preferably by email, from that student's parent/guardian authorizing them to travel with the person driving. After each trip, the team is responsible for cleaning the bus. Any supplies that are left on the bus will be placed in the school's lost and found. If a bus is left in a poor condition, that team may lose their bus privilege for future events. Students need to be accountable and pick up after themselves.

Uniforms

Holy Spirit Prep will provide the student athletes with school-issued uniforms at the beginning of their sport's respective season. The school-issued team uniform must be turned into the coach immediately following the final day of play for that season. If the student athlete is not present for the final day of play, then the uniform must be returned to the coach or Athletic Director the next school day following the event or whenever the student returns to school. NO DROPPING OFF! The item must be delivered in person so that it may be properly accounted for. The student athlete is responsible for the replacement cost of any item not returned at the end of the season. The coach is responsible for updating the athletics inventory sheet at the beginning and end of each season to ensure that all items are accounted for. Depending on the sport, there are certain uniform items that your student athlete will keep – those items will be purchased by each family at the beginning of the season.

Varsity Letters and Jackets

Student athletes will receive a varsity letter and sport-specific pin upon completion of their first year on a sports team. Each year following, student athletes will receive a bar for every year they have lettered on the team. All athletic pins and bars are to be attached to your varsity letter. Student athletes who have lettered in a varsity sport are also eligible to purchase a varsity letter jacket from our provider, U.S. Awards. A personal fitting will be done at the school by the U.S. Awards representative during the winter and each student will be given advance notice to request a jacket and provide any items they would like sewn on their jacket, such as all region or state patches.

Weight Room

The weight room is for athletes and those participating in Strength & Conditioning classes only. Anyone using the weight room will be responsible for placing all equipment back in its proper place at the conclusion of their time. All weights will be taken off the bars and placed on the racks and all equipment will be wiped down for the next user. All outside doors will be closed and locked prior to departure and there will be no propping of doors during the season. No student athletes will be allowed in the weight room unsupervised and no student unrelated to the team working out is allowed in the weight room during said workout.

Yard Signs and Magnets

Sport specific yard signs may be purchased and personalized with your student athlete's name and jersey number, if you desire. These are available for purchase during the registration process. Each student will also receive one sport specific magnet. Additional magnets can also be purchased during registration.

2024-25 Virtues of the Month

Aug	**Generosity:** "unselfishly giving to others what they need" *A moral virtue:* a virtue gained through human effort which builds on the theological and cardinal virtues (Acts 20:35)
Sept	**Prudence:** "figuring out the right thing and how to do it" *A cardinal virtue:* one of the four pivotal virtues
Oct	**Humility:** "giving the credit to God" *A moral virtue:* a virtue gained through human effort which builds on the theological and cardinal virtues (Mt 11:29)
Nov	**Gratitude:** "giving thanks to God and to other people who have given us things we need" *A moral virtue:* a virtue gained through human effort which builds on the theological and cardinal virtues (1 Thess 5:18)
Dec	**Magnanimity:** "opening your heart to help everyone" *A moral virtue:* a virtue gained through human effort which builds on the theological and cardinal virtues
Jan	**Justice:** "giving God and neighbor what is due to them" *A cardinal virtue:* one of the four pivotal virtues
Feb	**Obedience:** "following the loving commands of God and those in authority" *A moral virtue:* a virtue gained through human effort which builds on the theological and cardinal virtues (Col 3:20 Mt 25:21)
March	**Temperance:** "controlling what we want so we don't take too much" *A cardinal virtue:* one of the four pivotal virtues (2 Tim 1:7)
April	**Fortitude:** "standing strong in the face of temptations" *A cardinal virtue:* one of the four pivotal virtues
May	**Joy:** "choosing to always be positive because Jesus has saved me" *A moral virtue:* a virtue gained through human effort which builds on the theological and cardinal virtues (Ps 118:22-24)

Please feel free to contact Sam Walker (swalker@holyspiritprep.org) or Erik Richmond (erichmond@holyspiritprep.org) in the athletic office or any of the coaches with any questions you have throughout the season. GO COUGARS!