

Evangelical School



Athletic Program Handbook

2023-2024

INTRODUCTION

The Evangelical School Athletic Handbook is intended to provide specific guidelines concerning the administration and everyday operation of the Evangelical Athletic Department. The policies and procedures outlined in this handbook are essential for successful growth, efficiency and quality of Evangelical athletics.

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The Evangelical School athletic programs exist to strengthen your faith and character. While the goal of competition is to win, your higher purpose is to bring glory to God by displaying discipline, sportsmanship, teamwork and perseverance both on and off the field of play. It is our goal to honor God with our competitive spirit and desire to excel. A dynamic athletic program is important to the educational development of students. It raises school spirit and develops school unity.

Participation in the Evangelical athletic program carries with it responsibilities to the school and each respective team. The student-athlete, parent, coach, Athletic Director, Administration and staff will work together to promote that participation in our athletic programs is a privilege and an honor, not a right. The athletic field and court are classrooms where teaching is foremost in the development of character, integrity, sportsmanship, school spirit and teamwork. *The successful operation of athletics depends upon a true commitment from everyone involved.*

GENERAL PROGRAM INFORMATION:

The Evangelical athletic program provides students in grades four through eight with the opportunity to improve their skills in specific sports through practice and competition outside of regular school hours. The Evangelical athletic program is an extension of Evangelical School and is subject to the policies of the Pastor, Principal, Athletic Director and School Board. The general administrative responsibilities are conducted by the Athletic Director. Policies and operating guidelines for the athletic program are recommended by the Athletic Director with compliance of the Illinois Elementary School Association (IESA) and/or the Southern Illinois Junior High School Athletic Association (SIJHSAA) and approved by the Evangelical School Board, Principal and Pastor.

The following sports will be offered for the **4th and 5th** grade levels:

- Cheerleading
- Basketball
- Volleyball

The following sports will be offered for the **Middle School** grade levels:

- Cross Country
- Golf
- Cheerleading
- Basketball
- Volleyball
- Track and Field

****Sports listed above will be offered based on student interest, available coaches and local competition.**

COMMUNICATION

Athletic Department Chain of Command:

1. Principal - Oversee the total school program
2. Athletic Director - Administrates and supervises athletic programs
3. Head Coaches - Oversee their specific sport including instructing the team, conducting practices, developing systems of play, etc.
4. Assistant Coaches - Assists the Head Coach with all responsibilities

*All parties must meet with the level directly above them before contacting a higher level. For example, a head coach should meet with the Athletic Director before contacting the principal.

Information Updates:

The Athletic Director will make every attempt to communicate with parents and students in a timely manner. Schedules will change. This is the nature of athletics. Inclement weather, logistical issues with opposing teams and/or facilities, school conflicts, etc. will often change start times or cancel games altogether. All questions pertaining to practice and games should be directed to the team coach.

TRAVEL

Parents are responsible for transportation arrangements to and from games and practices. If a team must leave during the school day, only student-athletes and team support such as coaches and/or managers will be allowed to do so. Spectators will not be allowed to leave school early. The only exception to this policy would be siblings of athletes who would be allowed to leave with their parents. The student-athlete must inform his/her teacher(s) as well that he/she will need to be dismissed early for a game. It is the responsibility of each student-athlete to get assignments from teachers prior to leaving for the game. They are also required to make arrangements for tests or quizzes that are missed prior to departure.

PARTICIPATION REQUIREMENTS

Each student-athlete is required to submit the following information **prior** to his/her participation:

1. Medical Forms
 - A. Physical
 - B. Proof of insurance
2. Parent and player signed Athletic Handbook
3. Registration fee

Students will not be issued a uniform until they have submitted all required documentation and the athletic fee is paid. Athletic fees are non-refundable after a sport's respective registration deadline. The participation fee for the 2023-2024 school year is \$50 per athlete per sport (\$60 for golf). Late fees are assessed for payments received after the registration deadline. Athletic fees help cover the cost of equipment, tournament/league fees, meet fees, transportation, uniforms, referees, end of season banquets, etc.

Athletes are subject to the sport specific rules set forth by the CAL (Christian Athletic League) athletic program, Illinois Elementary Athletic Association (IESA) and/or Southern Illinois Junior High School Athletic Association (SIJHSAA) for each sport.

ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Participation in extracurricular activities will be determined by the academic eligibility and attendance guidelines outlined below.

Eligibility will be checked every Friday at 2:00 p.m. beginning on the third week of the season (Fall, Winter, Spring sports seasons). Students are considered ineligible if their grade in any one subject falls below 75 percent. Students who become ineligible will be placed on probation effective the following Monday. Probation consists of the following:

- Week 1: Required to practice and attend games, but may not participate in games
- Week 2: Required to attend practice and games, but may not participate in either
- Week 3: Suspended from games and activities; may not dress out or sit on the bench with the team
- Week 4: Dismissed from the team

Student-athlete participation in practices/games will be determined by the following **attendance** guidelines:

- If a student is absent with an excused absence (i.e. funeral, doctor's appointment, dental appointment), that student may participate in the practice/game.
- If a student is absent with an unexcused absence, regardless of whether or not it was a partial absence, that student may not participate in the practice/game.

PRACTICE/GAME ATTENDANCE

Student-athletes are expected to attend all practices and games unless otherwise excused by the coach. Playing time or travel should not play a role in attendance decisions. Attendance is mandatory. Coaches must be notified 24 hours in advance if a practice or game will be missed. It is understood that there may be times where a 24-hour notice is not possible; however, student-athletes and/or parents should make every effort to notify coaches as soon as possible with a specific reason for the absence. Please consider that coaches are working on strategy days in advance of a scheduled game. Athletes who do not attend practice disrupt strategy. Homework or other academic pressures are not a reason to miss practice and will be considered unexcused.

Excused absences include:

- Illness
- Death in the family
- Family wedding
- Necessary tutoring with Evangelical Staff
- Evangelical sponsored extracurricular activities if pre-approved by the coach

Unexcused absences include:

- Family vacations
- Discipline related detention or suspension
- Select sport practices/games
- Ineligibility
- Homework

If a practice is scheduled at Evangelical for later than 3:30 p.m., a student-athlete must be picked up from school and brought back for practice, or he/she must go to after care. Evangelical cannot allow students to be unsupervised after school hours as this is a liability risk for the school.

*It is the responsibility of the athlete to notify the coach 24 hours in advance if they know they are going to miss a practice/game. **Notifying the coach does not mean that the athlete is automatically excused from practices/games.** The coach of the team will use his/her discretion to determine if an absence is excused or unexcused. Consequences resulting from an unexcused absence will be determined by the coach of that team.*

GUIDELINES FOR QUITTING A TEAM:

If a student-athlete chooses to quit a team, he/she must turn in his/her uniform within a week after informing the coach of his/her decision. The athletic fee is not refundable once a player quits a team and the student-athlete is not allowed to participate in any other sport within the same season. In addition, the student-athlete is not allowed to rejoin the same team after quitting. A player who has three consecutive unexcused absences will forfeit his/her team membership.

UNIFORMS AND TEAM EQUIPMENT

Uniforms and equipment are property of Evangelical School, unless otherwise stated. Players are responsible for all uniforms and equipment issued to them. At no time should uniforms be worn when not in competition, unless allowed by A.D. At the conclusion of the season, all uniforms will be turned in on or before the specified return date and inspected to ensure that they are in good enough condition to be worn again. Players will be financially responsible for any uniform pieces that are unwearable or unaccounted for. If a uniform is not turned in by the end of the school year the student-athlete will be charged \$100. Report cards will be withheld until all of the player's uniform pieces have been returned to the athletic Department or paid for by the player.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE STUDENT-ATHLETE

The conduct of participants in athletics at Evangelical School shall be as such:

- Abide by all rules and guidelines outlined in this handbook.
- Understand that a commitment to a team is a sacrifice, and requires dedicated time commitment, loss of schedule flexibility and increased academic pressures.
- Display a positive and respectful attitude toward coaches, teammates, opponents, fans and the rules of competition. Refrain from displaying a negative attitude toward others. Disrespect may result in game suspension.
- Adhere to all game rules of play.
- Accept and respect the decisions of the coaches and referees.
- Conduct themselves in a spirit of good sportsmanship.
- Respect the coach's authority. Never question a coach's decision in front of the team.
- Respect the game officials and their decisions at all times.
- Respect the building, equipment and uniforms used during all athletic activities.
- Understand that the following infractions may result in immediate suspension from the team:
 - Abusive language, fighting, obscene gestures, insubordination, etc.
 - Use of tobacco, drugs or alcohol, anytime or anywhere.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF PARENTS

Parents are required to volunteer (2) of their SOS hours to benefit the Evangelical athletic program if their child participates in a sport. Parents are needed to coach, work the score table, admissions table, the concession stand as well as set up and clean up. A work schedule will be distributed when game schedules are made available. Parents who cannot work their scheduled time slot are responsible for finding a replacement worker (i.e. another parent). If no replacement can be found, the parent needs to contact the Athletic Director the day prior to the game.

In addition, parents are expected to:

- Complete all necessary forms and submit appropriate fees.
- Treat all coaches, referees and opponents with respect and courtesy.
- Provide transportation to and from all games, both home and away.
- Maintain their child's uniform.
- Respect the parent-coach relationship.
 - A negative parent-coach relationship can have an extremely harmful effect on the team and athletic program as a whole. It is very difficult to accept that your child may not play as much as you hope. Coaches are teachers. They make judgment calls based on what they believe to be in the best interest of everyone involved. Certain things can and should be discussed with the coach such as notification of injury/illness, treatment of your child, ways to help your child improve or concerns about your child's behavior. Other things, such as the ones listed below, must be left to the judgment of the coach:
 - Playing time
 - Team strategy
 - Play calling
 - Other student-athletes
 - It is also imperative that a parent refrain from speaking negatively about the coach at home. This too can have an extremely harmful effect on the team.

Occasionally the student-athlete, parent or coach may have a question or a problem relating to the student-athlete's involvement in the athletic program. Prompt, open communication is important when this occurs and can usually resolve the situation before it becomes a major issue. The recommended sequence for this communication is as follows:

- A. A STUDENT-ATHLETE and THE COACH should discuss the situation/issue.
- B. If not resolved, the COACH, the PARENTS, and the STUDENT-ATHLETE should meet to talk about the issue.
- C. If the issue is still not resolved, the PARENTS, the STUDENT-ATHLETE, the COACH and the ATHLETIC DIRECTOR should discuss the issue.
- D. If still not resolved, all of the above should meet with the PRINCIPAL.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF COACHES

Teachers and parents are needed to coach Evangelical athletic teams. Parents who coach receive a waived athletic fee for their child for that particular sport. In addition, coaching one sport fulfills all SOS hours for the school year. Becoming a head coach requires the responsibilities listed below:

General responsibilities:

- Be aware of and adhere to the guidelines outlined in this handbook.
- Be aware of and adhere to the rules of game play.
- Discipline fairly and consistently.
- Submit purchase order requests to the A.D.
- Complete a background check before first practice

Pre-season responsibilities:

- Attend a pre-season coaches meeting with the Athletic Director.
- Meet with athletes and parents at least once before the season.
- Notify athletes and parents of the necessary forms that must be completed before they are allowed to participate. The school office or Athletic Director(s) will distribute the necessary forms to the coaches.

During-the-season responsibilities:

- Teach fundamental skills, techniques and strategies that enable the student-athletes to develop to their full potential.
- Teach life skills such as hard work, discipline, teamwork and leadership skills.
- Give all athletes equal *coaching* time (not playing time) and encouragement.
- Model good sportsmanship at all times. Avoid the use of foul language.
- Organize and schedule practice sessions a minimum of once per week at the 4th-5th grade level and at least twice per week at the 6th-8th grade level.
- Work with AD to set up initial practice schedules and reservation of facilities for practices. If a coach wishes to schedule practice for a time other than originally scheduled, the coach should contact the AD.
- Attend all practices and games.
- Oversee and be held responsible for the safety and behavior of the athletes during practices and games.

Post-season responsibilities:

- Collect and inspect uniforms.
- Attend the end of season sports banquet.
- Give feedback regarding the season and make recommendations regarding policies, procedures and equipment to the AD.

POLICY REGARDING TEAM SELECTION AND PLAYING TIME

The focus of the Evangelical athletic program is to help student-athletes learn fundamental sports skills and sport-specific playing strategies as well as life skills such as hard work, discipline and mental toughness. School sports programs are designed to be competitive. Our coaches have a responsibility to put players in the best position to win. While winning is not the end all, be all of a sports program, it is a major goal. In most athletic programs, there is a mix of players who are at different stages of development and the coach has a responsibility to help each athlete move to the next stage of their development. *Playing time and the selection of starters at all levels will be at the discretion of the coaches and will be dependent upon the coach's evaluation of the student-athlete's ability, attendance, attitude and behavior at practices and games. Equal playing time is not guaranteed.*

When numbers allow, tryouts will be conducted to determine teams, not to cut students or prohibit them from playing. Tryouts allow students of similar ability to be placed together for the purpose of competitive fairness and skill progression.

A student-athlete may “play up” to help another team avoid forfeiture.

GAME CANCELLATION

In the event of a cancellation of games or practices, the coach will notify his/her players as soon as possible. However, if there is a school cancellation due to inclement weather such as a snow day, it should be presumed that all school sponsored events and extracurricular activities will be canceled for the day. No practices or competitions on snow days.

FUNDRAISING

Individual athletic teams may fundraise periodically. These fundraisers must be approved by the Athletic Director and Principal.

Parent/Student Signature Form

I have read the Evangelical School Athletic Handbook and agree to follow the policies and procedures stated within the document.

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

Print Student Name

Grade

Homeroom

Student Signature

Date