Sioux Falls Lutheran School

**Athletic Handbook**

**2019-2020**

“I can do all this through him who gives me strength.” – Philippians 4:13

***We value an integrated, extraordinary education and whole child development and believe that each child deserves an extraordinary education by focusing on strong academic fundamentals, supplemented by Scripture, outstanding music, arts, and extracurricular programs geared toward fully developing the mind, body, and spirit of each child…(excerpt from SFLS’s Vision Statement, 2010).***

We believe that the opportunity for participation in a variety of sports is a vital part of the student’s educational experience. Such participation is a privilege that carries with it responsibilities to the activity, to the student body, to the community, and to the students themselves. Sioux Falls Lutheran School’s (SFLS) athletics are considered co-curricular to the school’s academic programs. As such, these experiences contribute to the student’s social, emotional, spiritual, and academic development. Additionally, we are grateful for each athlete’s opportunity to be mentored by Christian coaches in an environment that provides social, emotional, and physical safety, who nurture faith and self-discipline, and who teach respect for those in authority, and dignity and empathy for everyone.

SFLS’s athletic program is designed to promote participation in interscholastic sports for both boys and girls. SFLS believes and expects their student-athletes to emulate Jesus Christ in all that they do, including how they compete. Sportsmanship ought to flow from the basic principles of a Christian lifestyle. To that end, we believe that parents, coaches, and the athletic director hold a shared responsibility to develop these ideals in each student-athlete.

# ATHLETIC PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

1. To provide a Christian environment for athletes to share with the community their God-given abilities.
2. To allow student-athletes to witness their Christian faith through the athletic experience.
3. To provide a superior program of interscholastic sports that includes appropriate sports for those who wish to participate.
4. To encourage and promote school spirit and good sportsmanship.
5. To practice self-discipline and emotional maturity in learning to make decisions under pressure.
6. To be socially competent and to operate with a set of rules, thus gaining a respect for the rights of others.
7. To develop and understanding of the value of athletics in a balanced educational process.

TEAM INFORMATION

SFLS offers volleyball for girls, intramural flag football for boys, co-ed soccer, girls’ & boys’ basketball, and track. These teams will be competitive and will be coached to win, but not at the expense of safety, compromising values, or hurting the self-esteem of any child. We stress fundamentals and putting their best effort into every practice and game.

With parental permission, all SFLS 5th through 8th grade students are eligible to participate in certain SFLS’s athletic programs. Depending on available space on each team, we also welcome area homeschool students. We operate under the philosophy that, ideally, all student-athletes who wish to participate will have an opportunity to play. However, because it is often the case that there are many more athletes than available spots on a team, ***playing time is not guaranteed***. Where possible, additional (B) teams will be formed and games specific to their level scheduled. The decision by the coach to move players from one team to another is made upon the best interest of the player and the athletic program.

Additionally, in partnership with Lutheran High School of Sioux Falls, 7th and 8th grade students may participate in junior varsity level athletics. For SFLS students to be eligible to participate for a LHSSF team they need to participate in the SFLS team for the same sport. For example to participate for LHSSF boys’ basketball our student needs to participate in SFLS boys’ basketball. SFLS practices take precedent over LHSSF practices. Athletic events/games take precedent over practices. SFLS students will also need to complete a SDHSAA athletic physical form to participate for LHSSF athletics. Some LHSSF athletic events are during the SFLS school day. The decision of dismissal time will be left to the discretion of SFLS administration. LHSSF offers the following sports: girls' volleyball, girls' and boys' cross country, girls' and boys' basketball, girls' and boys' track and field.

PARENT INFORMATION

The following information is provided to assist parents and coaches in guiding our young athletes through what can be very joyful, and at times, stressful times. It is our hope that together, and with God’s help, we can make SFLS’s athletic programs positive, memory-making experiences for our student-athletes.

1. Each student participating in the SFLS athletic program shall have on file with the coach a signed **Code of Ethics** form. Students will not be allowed to participate without this form.
2. Athletic Fees are used to pay for equipment needs, referees, tournament entry fees, and to help compensate for coach’s salaries. Each student will be charged an athletic fee for each sport in which he or she participates as follows:

 Flag Football $20.00

 Volleyball $50.00

 Basketball $60.00

 Track & Field $30.00

1. SFLS’s coaches have been carefully selected, and are dedicated to building rapport (relationships marked by harmony, conformity, and accord) with and among their athletes. Unfortunately, coaches are not with parents enough to build this same mutual understanding and spirit. It is our hope that parents place a high degree of trust in our coaches, and are supportive and encouraging of their decisions. During times of conflict, our goal at SFLS is to resolve disagreements, preserve and restore relationships, and be reconciled to each other based on Scriptural principles and examples. Therefore, please use the following guidelines when voicing concerns:
	1. Athlete talks to the coach, if not resolved then;
	2. Athlete/Parent(s) talk to the coach, if not resolved then;
	3. Athlete/Parent(s) talk to the Athletic Director, if not resolved then;
	4. Athlete/Parent(s) talk to the Administrator.

Appropriate concerns to discuss with coaches:

* The treatment of your child, mentally and physically
* Ways to help your child improve
* Concerns about your child’s behavior

Issues not appropriate to discuss with coaches:

* Playing time
* Team Strategy
* Play calling
* Other student-athletes
1. We hold to a **24 hour rule.** To allow time to thoroughly reflect, please “table” concerns and questions surrounding a game for 24 hours before approaching a coach—again, using the process as outlined above.
2. We emphasize oneness of team (I Peter 3:8), and encourage our fans to be friendly and welcoming to everyone.
3. An athletic schedule will be sent home with athletes at the beginning of each season. This schedule is subject to change. Updates in the schedule will be communicated through email.
4. For away games and tournaments, we depend on parents for transportation—thank you! When teams must travel to away games and tournaments, it is the responsibility of each family to provide transportation to these contests. If a family cannot provide transportation for their child, coaches will work with players to secure a ride to and from the event.
5. Games held in our gym require more supervision than the coach and/or school staff is able to provide. Therefore, all students (not on the team) must be supervised by a parent or another adult.
6. Athletes ***may not leave*** the campus when staying for co-curricular activities unless under the direct supervision of their parent or another adult assigned by the athlete’s parent.
7. From time-to-time athletes participate in athletic programs outside of SFLS.   While we respect the desire to strengthen athletic skills and enjoy extra competition, we believe that these programs ought to be considered supplemental to the complete educational experience that is offered at SFLS. Therefore, SFLS’s programs should have priority over other outside activities. Please discuss any concerns and/or potential schedule conflicts with your child’s coach.
8. Referees deserve respect at all times. There is no such thing as a perfectly officiated game, coached game, or played game. Much goodwill for our school will result by encouraging officials with words of praise. Un-Christian and/or unsportsmanlike behavior, relative to other fans, players, officials, or coaches may result in suspension from future athletic events. Moreover, it is always helpful to help your child understand his or her personal accountability concerning the outcome of a game (Matthew 7:5).
9. Please pick up athletes by the northwest door of the school after practices and home games. Exceptions to this are when a practice is held at an alternate location. Players will always be bussed back to the school, but if parents would like to pick up their child from the alternate practice location, arrangements should be made before practice begins, so the coaches are aware of how players will be transported. Teams will NOT wait at alternate locations for a parent; they will be bussed back to SFLS immediately after practice is over if parents are not present.
10. Please be considerate of the coaches’ time by ensuring that arrangements have been made to have your child picked up shortly after practices/games have ended. Players/parents need to inform coaches if they are being picked up by another parent or different adult. Athletes not picked up directly after practice will be checked into A-OK.
11. Please make sure athletes have all the necessary clothing/equipment for practices and games. Players may not be allowed to participate in practice/games or lose playing time if items have been forgotten. This is done not as a punishment, but rather to teach responsibility to our student athletes.
12. All injuries should be reported to the coach. If at any time a coach feels that a participant will bring harm to himself or others, the coach may remove the participant from the activity. If an injury is sustained outside of school, please assist the coach by helping them understand the injury. If the athlete is under doctor’s orders not to participate, a written release from the doctor needs to be given to the coach before the athlete will be allowed to participate again.

ATHLETE EXPECTATIONS & ELIGIBILITY

1. The athlete is expected to display good Christian citizenship at all times. An athlete’s misbehavior may warrant a suspension from participation in athletics as determined by the coach and/or administration.
2. Each athlete is first a student then an athlete. Therefore, athletes not maintaining a C average (84%) in all of their classes, may be required to meet with parents, homeroom teacher, athletic director and/or administrator to develop a plan of action to best help the athlete improve academically. Overall attitude, effort, and evidence of academic improvement will be considered in determining short or long term suspensions.
3. The athlete is expected to display good effort both in the classroom and in athletic practices and games.
4. Protective wear such as kneepads for volleyball and proper footwear for each sport are required. If a coach determines than an athlete is not properly dressed for safety, the athlete may not be allowed to practice or play until proper clothing/equipment is worn.
5. No jewelry is to be worn at practices or games. Please have a safe place for your child to keep these items during these times.
6. Athletes must attend all practices. It is expected that the athlete communicate to the coach directly and well in advance when unable to attend a practice or game. Please don’t rely on a friend or teacher to tell the coach. A natural consequence of missing a practice may be loss of playing time in the following game.
7. Injured players should attend practices in order to learn and encourage from the sidelines.
8. If an athlete is not in attendance at school on the day of an athletic event for at least ¾ of the school day, (which means he/she cannot be absent for more than 2 hours), he or she may not participate in the event that day. Exceptions would include doctor’s or orthodontist’s appointments, funerals, etc.
9. Disciplinary issues during the school day and/or school sponsored events may result in forfeiting participation in extra-curricular activities as determined by school administration, coaches, and staff. ***Please note that all disciplinary policies as outlined in the Student Handbook apply to extra-curricular activities and school-sponsored events, both on and off the school campus.***

UNIFORM CARE

SFLS provides uniforms for every sport throughout the school year. Please take care when washing these so that we may get maximum use from them. Please wash uniforms in cold water and **do not** put them in the dryer. This allows the screen print to last longer and avoids shrinkage in the material. If the uniform is lost, the athlete will have to pay the replacement cost of the uniform. This is approximately $40 per item. Uniforms need to be turned in within **2 weeks** of the final contest in each respective sport. Uniforms can be turned into the coach, the athletic director, or the school office. Please make sure they are labeled with the athlete’s name.

HOME TOURNAMENTS

Sioux Falls Lutheran School holds two tournaments each year—a volleyball tournament in September and a basketball tournament in January. Parents and families help run concessions at these events as well as perform other assignments that help the tournaments run smoothly and successfully. Generally, all fall sports athletes and families work together to help run the volleyball tournament and all basketball families work together to help run the basketball tournament.

Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one receives the prize? So run that you may obtain it. Every athlete exercises self-control in all things. They do it to receive a perishable wreath, but imperishable. So I do not run aimlessly; I do not box as one beating the air. But I discipline my body and keep it under control,lest after preaching to others I myself should be disqualified. I Cor. 9:24 - 27