

St. Andrew's Episcopal School
8012 Oak Street
New Orleans, LA 70118

Athletics Policies
2013-2014
(Revised August 2013)

Introduction

Athletics and Physical Education comprise an essential part of the St. Andrew's curriculum. The School's mission is to "educate the mind, body, and spirit of children," and exposure to required Physical Education and optional after-school Athletics supports the School's ability to serve each St. Andrew's student.

St. Andrew's believes in the philosophy of *mens sana in corpore sano*—a healthy mind in a healthy body—and thus strives to educate each child holistically, through the mind, through the body, and through the spirit. A healthy and active child is best equipped to tackle the academic, emotional, and social challenges of Elementary and Middle School.

The following Athletics Policies represent the School's best effort to articulate and codify practices and procedures that guide the School's activities in afterschool, interscholastic Athletics. As with all matters at St. Andrew's, we are principally guided by the School's mission and by our desire to do right by the children in our care.

Interscholastic Athletics (Team Sports)

The goal of the School's Interscholastic Athletics Program is to instill in each student-athlete the fundamental skills, knowledge, and strength of character to allow him or her to be successful on and off the field of competition. There are lifelong lessons to be learned through athletic competition, and we aim to teach our children both how to win and how to lose. Ultimately, winning is important at St. Andrew's, but it is not our sole or primary objective. Rather, we seek for each child to achieve to her or his potential, to grow as an athlete and as a person through each sports season, and to benefit from the discipline, teamwork, and good sportsmanship that can be gained through training and competition.

We aim to cultivate the proper interpersonal relationships—both player-to-coach and teammate-to-teammate—in order to teach each child not only the rules of the sport but also the lessons that can make athletes good competitors, team players, and ultimately, successful students.

Student-athletes of all ability levels—beginner, intermediate, and experienced—are encouraged to participate in the St. Andrew's Athletics Program and contribute to the growth and success of our school community.

Expectations of Student-Athletes

When a student decides to join a sports team at St. Andrew's, he or she is making a commitment to learning, to listening to their coaches, and to being a good teammate. It is also expected that the child exhibit her or his best behavior, manners, and sportsmanship both in practice and in games. When students wear the St. Andrew's jersey, whether at home or away, they are representing their school and the entire St. Andrew's community.

Upon making the commitment to a team, a student will be expected to:

- Attend all practices and games unless there is an illness or important family commitment. In such cases, the coach should be notified immediately.
- Come to practice and games on time and with appropriate clothing and footwear. On game days, students should bring or wear their team jersey to School.
- Keep track of uniforms in season and return them promptly at the end of the season. Jerseys that are checked out and not returned will result in a charge to the family to replace the uniform.
- Attend each practice and game with a positive and encouraging attitude. Players are expected to give their best effort at all times in games and should commit to learning and improving at each practice. Students must listen to the coach and follow all directions to the best of his or her ability. Arguing with a coach or being disrespectful can have a serious impact on a player's role on the team.
- Encourage and support teammates regardless of friendship or ability level. Teasing a child about his or her performance or ability level is considered bullying and is therefore unacceptable. Any instances of bullying will be handled by the coach through the School's disciplinary policies.
- Be respectful and polite to referees, teammates, opposing players, and coaches. The coaches are the only individuals permitted to address the referees.
- Strive to achieve the highest level of competence and ability in his or her sport.

Expectations of Coaches

Coaching is teaching, albeit in a modified environment. In most cases, the pedagogical methods and approach employed by our coaches will be very similar to the methods and approaches of our classroom teachers. While some coaching situations may call for an approach that may be different from a St. Andrew's classroom approach, all methods will

reinforce and support the core mission and philosophy of St. Andrew's. Care and consideration for the needs and perspectives of the student-athlete and her or his team must be paramount. Decisions regarding instruction, reinforcement, rewards, and consequences should be within the purview of St. Andrew's coaches and the Athletic Department. In addition, decisions regarding, playing time, game strategy, and practice procedures should be left to the St. Andrew's coaching staff.

St. Andrew's Coaches will be expected to:

- Develop and manage a schedule of practices and games.
- Notify parents, the Office, and the Athletic Director about all scheduled games and practices, and notify all of these parties of schedule changes as soon as possible.
- Maintain an "everybody plays" philosophy and allocate playing time for every member of the team in each game.
- Run organized and productive practices that include activities that improve the knowledge and skills of participants.
- Maintain the skills and knowledge necessary to teach their sport.
- Treat players with respect and mentor them toward their goals.
- Act as an ambassador for St. Andrew's at all games and events, demonstrating respect for all players, coaches, officials, and spectators.
- Serve as a positive role model for all players in pursuit of their athletic goals.

Expectations of Parents

St. Andrew's supports meaningful school-home relationships in all aspects of a child's education. Clear and consistent communication and partnership between coach and parent will result in improved educational outcomes for the child. St. Andrew's expects and requests parental support of our Athletic Program, through attendance at practices and competition and demonstrated support of our students.

When a child is not pleased with his or her role on a team, whether it be because of matters pertaining to playing time, practice requirements, or the general progress of a team, St. Andrew's expects its students to first address those matters with her or his coach. Only after such dialogue has been deemed unsuccessful by the student involved should a parent address matters with the coach. As our student athletes enter and navigate our Middle School Program, we wish to teach our children to be advocates for themselves and to problem-solve with adults. The vast majority of issues are easily

resolved between student and coach, and handling them within the team framework is empowering to both the coach and the players.

In certain cases a parent may feel that the coach is not responding to the player's concerns, or that the player is not voicing his or her concern. Coaches are expected to and will be happy to discuss player- or team-related concerns with parents. In the event that a concern cannot be addressed from player to coach, parents should take the following steps:

- Inform the coach that you would like to talk about your player.
- Schedule a meeting as soon as possible for both parties to discuss the issue in private.
- Meet with the coach and create a dialogue about the issue.
- Encourage the student to talk to the coach once the meeting has occurred.

It is important that meetings occur outside of practice or game days so that both parties have time and space to create a thoughtful discourse that aims to help the player, coach and family achieve their goals. Whenever possible, please try to handle these situations face-to-face and not over e-mail.

Game days are a time for both coaches and players to be focused on the task at hand. Please refrain from addressing your concerns before or after games or practice, as this is a difficult moment for both parties to have their thoughts collected. Neither coaches nor parents should discuss a player in front of the student or her or his team.

While it is appropriate for parents to meet with coaches regarding matters pertaining to their children, parents should not discuss matters pertaining to other children or pertaining to game strategy or tactics. Those matters are strictly within the purview of the School's coaching staff.

Integrity

While everyone likes to win, St. Andrew's will not do so at the expense of its integrity. Coaches and players are expected to compete within the rules of the game and the Metro League. Any dishonesty, cheating, or breaking of league, school, or sports rules can result in being excused from the team. Coaches and players are expected to comport themselves with character and integrity and uphold the concept that we play to learn, not just to win.

Academics

As student-athletes, a child's academic responsibilities and progress take precedence over athletic activities. If a student is struggling academically it should be brought to the attention of her or his coach as soon as possible. In some cases, a student's academic achievement may be compromised by athletic commitments. In other cases, students may perform better academically when they are involved with an afterschool sports team. Therefore, as a small school, St. Andrew's will take a case-by-case approach to

determining eligibility for athletics based on each student's needs and circumstances. Teachers, coaches, and parents will work together to make individual decisions in the best interest of the child involved. Any decision to suspend a child from athletic participation for academic reasons must be made jointly by the child's homeroom teacher/advisor and the coach.

St. Andrew's coaches, teachers, and administration are committed to making the School's athletic program the best that it can be. We are excited by the growth and development of our athletic programs over the past several years, including record numbers of participants and teams, and we look forward to maintaining our success in the future. Please do not hesitate to contact any member of the St. Andrew's Coaching Staff or the School Administration if you have any questions or suggestions regarding these Athletics Policies.

Go Cardinals!