Epiphany of the Lord Catholic School

Athletic Handbook

Introduction

Epiphany of the Lord Catholic School sponsors interscholastic athletic programs for our 5th - 8th grade students directed by employed coaches. ECS believes athletics are a privilege in which a student may participate. It is our philosophy that athletics should teach fair play, sportsmanship, and an understanding and appreciation of teamwork.

Epiphany of the Lord Catholic School participates within the Galveston-Houston Catholic Athletic Association (GHCAA) and administers the policies set forth by its governing body.

Mission Statement

Epiphany of the Lord Catholic School seeks to promote academic and spiritual growth in the foundations of faith, knowledge, compassion, and character in accordance with the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Purpose

To promote school spirit within the school, student body and community. To learn and display good sportsmanlike conduct and a competitive spirit towards other teams. Athletes are representatives of Epiphany of the Lord Catholic School (ECS) and should reflect the pillars of Faith, Knowledge, Compassion, and Character upheld by our school.

Athletic Philosophy

The Epiphany Catholic School community is dedicated to providing an education in an environment conducive to the development of the whole child (intellectually, morally, spiritually, socially, culturally, and physically) in partnership with family and parish and rooted in the teachings of Christ and Catholic tradition.

The philosophy of the athletic program at ECS is in accordance with the school's mission statement**.** ECS Athletic Department glorifies God through the discipleship of student athletes and the pursuit of excellence in athletics with faith, knowledge, compassion and character as the foundation and Jesus Christ as our focus.

ECS believes physical activity is an essential part of the development of the child's well-being. Through organized and cooperative competition, we support the whole child helping students grow physically, socially, spiritually and emotionally. Athletics provide opportunities to learn teamwork, responsibility, and good sportsmanship while building character, confidence, respect, and school pride. Another goal is to prepare students to face challenges with integrity and resilience, both on and off the field.

Galveston-Houston Catholic Athletic Association

All affiliated schools agree to the following goals:

- To build a community which strives to image Christ.
- To develop Christian spirit, school spirit, team spirit, and personal acceptance.
- To instill Christian sportsmanship in the lifestyles of the participants.
- To teach the participants the proper attitude towards winning, losing, and competing with dignity.
- To develop an acceptance and appreciation of others.
- To train and instruct athletic rules.
- To develop the student's physical abilities and coordination.
- To help form well-rounded students by fostering good and healthy habits.
- To provide a Christian environment and outlet for youthful energy.
- To teach the positive value of athletic participation.
- To show the necessity of practice, work, and management of time.

These goals are founded upon the principle of the infinite worth of each person because he/she is created in the image and likeness of God.

Sports and Seasons

- Grade-Level Participation
    - Students in grades 6, 7, and 8 are eligible to participate in athletics. Participation may be opened to 5th grade students in some sports.
- Participation Costs and Offered Sports by Season

Sport	Season	Grade Level	Cost
Volleyball	Fall	5-8th	$250
Soccer	Fall	6-8th	$250
6-Man Football	Fall	6-8th	$250
Cross Country	Fall	5-8th	$250
Girls Basketball	Winter	6-8th	$250
Boys Basketball	Winter	6-8th	$250
Track and Field	Spring	5-8th	$250
Golf	Spring	5-8th	$250
Softball	Spring	6-8th	$250
Baseball	Spring	6-8th	$250
Cheer			

Student athletes may participate in Cross Country plus one other fall sport, or Track & Field plus one other spring sport. Outside sports, including Parish sports and club sports, are not school-sanctioned activities and are expected to be a secondary priority.

Student Eligibility

- **Enrollment**- Student must be enrolled fully at ECS.
- **Attendance Requirements**- Students with an absence on the day of a game or practice may not participate in athletic activities that day. A minimum of half day attendance is required to participate in athletics (in attendance by 11:30 am).
- **Age Requirements**- In any given school year, students who turn 15 prior to September 1st are ineligible.
- **Sportsmanship Expectations**- Student athletes are expected to treat teammates, opponents, officials, and spectators with respect at all times. This includes using positive language, avoiding negative comments or online posts, and demonstrating self-control during practices, games, and school. Good sportsmanship is required by athletes and all supporters, and inappropriate behavior in the classroom or at events may result in consequences.
- **Academic & Behavioral Standards**
    - Each student participating in an extracurricular activity is expected to meet the minimum academic and conduct standards of ECS. Students may be ruled ineligible for athletics if they fail to meet any of the following criteria:
        - A student athlete may not have any more than two D's (70%-77%) in any subject.
        - A student athlete may not fail (69% or below) any subject.
        - A student athlete may not have a conduct grade of two N's or one U in any subject
        - Grade Checks- Grade Checks will be conducted at the time of each progress report and report card. If a student is determined to be academically ineligible, they will be suspended from athletic participation for two weeks. After two weeks, the student's grades will be checked again to determine eligibility.
            - 5^{th} and 6^{th} graders competing in a middle school sport for the first time will receive a grace period on the first progress report of their sport season.
        - Grade Check Form- When a student becomes academically ineligible, they will receive a Grade Check Form. The form must be completed by the student and turned in to the Athletic Director within the specified time frame. If the Grade Check Form is not completed and submitted by the deadline, the student's period of ineligibility may be extended.
    - Additionally, serious infractions in academics and conduct may lead to immediate removal from the team as determined by the administration. Eligibility criteria will be checked on progress reports and report card published dates. Student athletes who fail to meet eligibility criteria will not be able to participate in practice or games for two (2) weeks from the progress report/report card published dates. If the student athlete does not meet the eligibility criteria after two (2) weeks, the student athlete will remain ineligible until deemed eligible by school administration. The two-week period will consist of days when school is in session and does not involve holidays or times when school is not in session. Student athletes still ineligible after the initial two-week period will be reinstated

based on meeting eligibility criteria, past eligibility concerns, behavior, effort by the student to correct issues, and previous athletic participation status (being in good standing with the athletic department and teams).

- Athletes will be well-behaved in the classroom. Any undesired classroom behaviors reported to coaches will be handled on the team as well. Coaches and School Administration reserve the right to assign additional disciplinary actions as appropriate.
    - Consequences may include in-practice consequences (loss of privileges, etc.), being benched for part or all a game, suspension from the team for a period of time, or dismissal from the team for repeated or serious offenses
    - Detention: Athletes assigned detention will serve it on Wednesday. If a scheduled game or competition falls on that Wednesday, the athlete will sit out that game. If there is no game or competition on Wednesday, the athlete will sit out the next scheduled game or competition.
        - In-School Suspension (ISS): An ISS will result in the athlete being suspended from all team practices and competitions for the week of the suspension.
        - Out-of-School Suspension (OSS): An OSS will result in immediate suspension from the team, and reinstatement will be at the discretion of the School Administration.

- Financial Obligations
    - An athletic fee for each sport is required for a student-athlete to participate in an athletic team: the fees vary and are non-refundable. The fee must be paid to participate in practices, tryouts, or competition. Students wanting to play sports that need financial assistance should contact the Athletic Director.

Athletic Operations

- <u>Team Selection & Tryouts</u>
    - The head coach or sponsor in concurrence with the athletic director is responsible for the team selection process for the individual sport/activity. Practice schedules are prepared by the head coach. Playing time is determined by the coaches. Sixth grade and junior varsity teams provide an opportunity for all players to learn the finer points of teamwork and improve personal skills. Absence from practice and lack of effort or commitment will affect play time. Varsity teams are competitive, and not all players may play every game. Tournament, play-off and championship game individual participation is at the coaches' discretion, meaning that not every team member is guaranteed playing time. Coaches are instructed to be honest with parents/guardians and student-athletes regarding the following:
        - Coachability
        - Learning opportunities
        - Playing time
    - Student athletes who are selected for a team should not expect to participate in competition simply based on making a team. Playing time will be based on practice, participation, and performance at the coaches' discretion.

- Season Meetings
    - Each season, a mandatory Team and Parent meeting will be held before competitions start. Parents and athletes are required to attend a meeting for each season they are participating in. Parents/legal guardians unable to attend meetings may request an appointment with the coaching staff only under extenuating circumstances.

- Practices
    - Students are expected to attend all practices, games, and meetings called by the coach. If a student misses a practice, game, or meeting, the coach must be notified immediately. Parents should notify the coach no later than noon on the day of practice or competition if an athlete must miss or leave early. Students who miss practices, games, or meetings may lose their playing time. Athletes are expected to remain for the entire practice or competition unless prior approval has been given by the coach. Students are expected to be picked up immediately after practice and at the conclusion of any competition with definite plans prearranged. A 10-minute grace period for athletes will be allowed prior to late fees of $1.00 per minute being assessed. This procedure adheres to general school policy for late pick-ups.

- Uniforms & Equipment
    - School-issued uniforms and equipment are to be used for all ECS games, competitions, practices, and special activities. Athletic uniforms may only be worn for athletic competitions. Uniforms may not be worn outside of school or on Spirit Day unless specific permission is given on special occasions. The wearing of team uniforms for PE classes is unacceptable. Care must be taken to keep uniforms and equipment in good condition. All school-owned uniforms and equipment should be returned to the athletic department on the designated turn in day cleaned and in good condition. Students may not compete in another sport until uniform matters are resolved. Students who leave a team before the end of the season must return uniforms and equipment immediately. Students are responsible for furnishing some equipment and uniform items including their own socks, shoes, knee pads, and shin guards, etc. These must meet team specifications for color, etc.
    - Practice uniforms may be determined by the coach and administration and must adhere to school standards (no spandex or leggings). Athletes must dress out each day. If an athlete does not have their practice gear, they are not excused from workouts. They will be expected to work out in their school clothes.
    - No jewelry, including watches, during practices or games.

- Forgotten Items
    - If a student has forgotten an item at school after he/she has been dismissed for their sport, they will not be allowed to return for their items.

- Injury Protocols
    - Injured athletes are expected to attend practices and competitions unless excused by the coach or athletic trainer. Remaining involved helps athletes continue learning systems, strategies, and team responsibilities.

- Facilities Use
    - ECS is responsible for providing the facilities and some equipment needed for practices and games. Students are responsible for personal equipment such as kneepads, safety glasses, shin guards, and other designated items.
    - Student athletes are expected to leave all playing areas, locker rooms, and buses cleaner than they found them. This includes picking up all trash, bags, and water bottles. Any items or trash left behind that a coach picks up may result in a coach-determined consequence.

- Transportation
    - Transportation to away league games may be provided through an area bus company if available. Only parents or pre-designated carpool arrangements will be allowed to pick-up players from "away" competitions. Students must be signed out by the parent or designated adult. In the event of scrimmages or a weekend competition/tournament, parents are responsible for arranging transportation. Parents must also provide transportation to off campus practice venues.
    - Walkers/Bikers- Approval will be granted only to students who actually walk or ride their bike to their home in the neighborhood. Directions will be given to these students upon approval.

Changing Room and Dismissal Process

- Room 213 Girls
- Room 214 Boys

- Once dismissed from class for athletics, students are expected to collect all their belongings from locker and head straight to changing rooms. Once in changing

rooms, students will not be able to return to classrooms or lockers for any items. They can go to the bathroom and get water. If they roam around or go back for something, they may receive a silent lunch through FACTS.

Practices:

On campus sports- 3:30-5:00 practice time/ dismissed to changing rooms at 3:30
Off campus sports-

- Volleyball- 3:30-5:00 practice time/dismissed to changing rooms at 3:05
- Golf- 3:30-5:00 practice time/dismissed to changing rooms at 3:05
- Softball- 3:30 – 5:00 practice time/dismissed to changing rooms at 3:05

    - A coach will ALWAYS be present at the changing rooms when students are dismissed.
    - **Games:** Typically, when there is an away game at a below location we will follow this dismissal time. Students will be released with a coach to the Church Circle Drive (across from the rectory)

Travel Location	Transport	Dismissal Time (from class)
Christ the Redeemer	parent	3:10
Regis	Parent	3:15
St Anne Tomball	Bus (1 way)	3:00
St Anthony of Padua	Bus (2 way)	2:45
St Martha	Bus (2 way)	2:34
St Rose	Bus (1 way)	3:10
St Theresa MP	Bus (1 way)	3:10
Katy United	parent	3:19
Top Golf	parent	3:19
St John XXIII KGSA	Parent Parent	3:19 3:19

- If there is a sibling the parent needs to check out, they need to email the Athletic Director, the child's home room teacher, the teacher the student will be with at the time of dismissal, and their coach before noon on the day of practice. The AD or Coach will come around to collect students needing to be checked out.

Conduct

- If a concern arises, please follow the 24-hour rule: do not approach or contact the coach for at least 24 hours after a game or incident. This allows time for reflection and ensures all communication remains respectful and productive.

Registration Requirements

- Physicals and Medical Forms
    - All student-athletes will be required to receive a physical exam prior to the first day of practice or try outs, valid within a school year. He or she will not be allowed to participate or try out until all forms are returned to the athletic office. These should be turned in to the athletic director prior to the start of their sport.

Transportation Clause

Epiphany of the Lord Catholic School Athletics Department provides team transportation to and/or from athletic events whenever possible. By signing this form, I agree to release ECS, the GHCAA and all its employees and volunteers from all liability with reference to the above stated transportation.

Parent/Guardian Name: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Date: _____

We agree to follow all the rules and regulations in this document. We understand that failure to follow these rules and regulations will result in dismissal from the team. We further understand that this signed form must be returned to the coach at the parent meeting or the following day.

Parent/Guardian Name: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Student Athlete Name: _____

Student Athlete Signature: _____

Parent/Guardian Email: _____

Date: _____